Introduction:

A. Divorce is an *old* problem. (text)
B. Divorce is a *common* problem.
   1. In the world.
   2. In the church - even among preachers.
C. Divorce is a *painful* problem.
   1. For the couple.
   2. For the children
   3. For the families
   4. For the church.
D. Divorce is a *serious* problem.
   1. Has temporal consequences.
   2. Has eternal consequences.
   (Teach children to memorize Matt. 19:19 as well as Mk. 16:16)
E. Divorce is a *preventable* problem -- if we overcome common short-circuits to a good marriage.

Discussion:

I. Liberal Thinking Short-circuits Many Marriages.
   A. Permissive attitudes about sex outside of marriage. (cf. Heb. 13:5)
   B. Permissive attitudes about divorce and remarriage.
      2. Take liberties with 1 Cor. 7:15.

II. Confusion Over Proper Roles For Each Partner Short-circuits Many Marriages.
   A. Use modern trends in the world as role models.
   B. Confused about who should be the head. (cf. Eph. 5:23-27).
      1. Husband fails to exercise real leadership. (cf. 1 Pet. 5:7)
         a. May be too timid.
         b. May be overbearing.
      2. Wife ignores husbands leadership.
         a. Behind the scenes circumvents his headship.
         b. Overrules husband in handling of children.
   C. Confused about family economics.
      1. Man should be primary providers. (cf. 1 Tim. 5:8).
      2. Wife should be primarily homemaker. (Tit. 2:4-5).
      3. Each may assist other (cf. Prov. 31:16,24), but not take over role of other.

III. Conflicting Values Short-circuits Many Marriages.
   A. Differ over the what is essential, important and unimportant.
      1. Causes problems over where they go.
      2. Causes problems over where they live.
      3. Causes problems over what they spend.
      4. Causes problems over child-rearing.
   B. Differ on willingness to yield -- basic conviction not negotiable.

IV. Neglect of Marital Duties Short-circuits Many Marriages. (1 Cor. 7:1-5)
   A. Too busy elsewhere.
      1. Work - even “The Lord's Work”.
      2. Social life.
      3. Civic affairs
      4. T.V.
      5. Children
   B. To indifferent.
      1. To the needs of partner.
      2. To high priority it holds (cf. 1 Cor. 7:5)
      3. To the consequences of neglect.(cf. 1 Cor. 7:5).

V. Careless Preparation Short-circuit Many Marriages.
   A. By looking for wrong things in a husband or wife.
   B. By letting emotions rule out common sense.
   C. By ignoring differences in basic moral, religious and ethical values.

Conclusion:

A. Let God's word be common ground to avoid conflicts.
B. Let both respect Bible teaching on all aspects of marriage.