

DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE

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The Bible teaches that marriage is to be permanent. There is considerable confusion, however, concerning what the Bible teaches about divorce and remarriage. We must take our stand on this subject from specific statements of the following Biblical passages, which seem to summarize the teaching of the whole Scripture concerning divorce and remarriage. We believe that, since Jesus Christ is God Himself manifest in the flesh (John 1:1-3, 14; Rom, 9:5; Titus 2:13, and many other passages), since Jesus Christ died for our sins (John 3:14-18; Rom. 4:25; 5:8; I Pet. 2:24), since our sins nailed Christ to the cross of Calvary (Heb. 6:6; Rom. 6:3-4), therefore, all believers in Jesus Christ as personal Savior should also obey Him. First John 2:4; 3:6-10 and Hebrews 12:6-8 state that those who deliberately constantly disobey Christ have never actually trusted Christ as their Savior, regardless of their doctrinal stand.

The following analysis of the Scripture passages dealing with divorce is to help you see exactly what the Bible teaches concerning the subject of divorce and remarriage. We strongly urge you to obey what God asks of you, and by this, honor our Lord Jesus Christ who died to remove our sins, to forgive us, and to give us eternal life. Determine that you will honor Him in all that you do throughout your whole life (Col. 3:17, 23, 24).

Romans 7:1-4

<u>The Scripture:</u>	<u>The Principle:</u>
Or are you ignorant, brethren, I speak to those knowing the Law, that the Law lords it over a man over such time as he lives? To a living husband the married woman is bound by Law .	Marriage is for life.
But if the husband dies she is freed from the Law of husband. Therefore the husband living , if she becomes another man's (wife), she shall be accused as an adulteress .	Double marriage is adultery.
But if the husband dies , she is free from the Law,	Death of either spouse dissolves the marriage.
not becoming an adulteress by marrying another man.	Remarriage after the death of a spouse is allowed.

Deuteronomy 24:1-4

The Scripture:

When a man has taken a wife and **married her**,
and it happens that **she does not find favor** in
his eyes,
because he has found **improper behavior** in
her,
and he writes a **bill of divorcement** to her, and
he puts it in her hand,
and he **sends her out of his house**, and she
leaves his house,
and she goes, and she **becomes another man's
(wife)**,
and the latter husband **hates her**, and he writes
her a **bill of divorce**,
or if the latter husband who took her to be his
wife **dies**,
Then **the former husband who sent her away
may not take her again to be his wife**
after she has been **defiled**. For it is an **abomina-
tion** in the presence of Jehovah, and **you shall not
cause the land to sin** which Jehovah, your God,
gave to you for an inheritance.

The Principle:

Marriage is the foundation.
Broken relationships happen.
Biblical sanctions (Lev. 18).
Divorce results.
The spouse leaves.
Remarriage occurs.
Second divorce occurs.
Or the death of the spouse.
**The Prohibition: Remarriage is
forbidden.**

Matthew 19:3-12

The Scripture:

Is it lawful for a man **to put away** his wife for
each and every reason?
Did you not read **(Scripture)**? that He made
them (mankind) male and female? And He said: For
this reason a man shall **leave** his father and
mother,
and shall **be welded to** his wife,
and the two shall become **one flesh**,
so that they **no longer** shall be two, **but** shall be
one flesh.
What then **God has yoked together** (Aorist Ind.)
let no man separate. (Pres. Imp. Act., 3 S)

The Principle:

1. Divorce is not the answer to domestic strife.
2. Marriage is separation from the control of families.
3. Marriage is by God.
4. Marriage is unity.
5. Marriage is lasting.
6. Marriage is permanent.]
7. Interrupting marriage brings penalty (Heb. 13:4).]

Matthew 19:3-12 (con't)

<u>The Scripture:</u>	<u>The Principle:</u>
<p>They say to Him, Why did Moses command to give a bill of divorce, and to put her away? He says to them, Moses, allowed you (Aor. Ind. Act. 3S, “yielded to”, “tolerated”)</p> <p>to put away your wives because of the insensitiveness of your hearts.</p> <p>This was never so (Perf) from the beginning.</p> <p>But I say unto you,</p> <p>Whosoever shall divorce his wife, and shall marry another commits adultery</p> <p>unless (<i>ei me</i>, “Except,” “Unless” Lk. 5:21; 18:19; John 14:6; Rom. 7:7; Phil. 4:15; Rev. 9:4; 21:27) (Lev. 18; Deut 24:1-4) the divorce was because of fornication,</p> <p>and He that shall marry her that has been divorced (Perfect tense) for any reason commits adultery.</p>	<p>8. Divorce is not commanded.</p> <p>9. Divorce is caused by stubbornness and sin.</p> <p>10. Divorce was never intended by God.</p> <p>11. The stand on divorce is on the authority of Christ Himself.</p> <p>12. Remarriage for any unbiblical divorce is adultery.</p> <p>13. Remarriage of the innocent party is not committing adultery.</p> <p>14. Marrying the divorced (not innocent) is adultery.</p>

I Corinthians 7:10-15, 25-28, 39

One must remember that the Apostle Paul was **not contradicting Jesus Christ** in His dictates on divorce, and Paul was **not adding to the dictates of Christ** something Jesus did not include. The *ei me* [except, unless] clause was extremely confining concerning what Christ (God) allowed with remarriage in the case of divorce. First Corinthians **7 must be interpreted in light of Christ’s statement, and only allowed to say what Christ allowed**. The issue of I Corinthians 7:15 does not allow remarriage of the abandoned believer until the “unbelieving” spouse (I John 2:4; 3:6-10) has indulged in “fornication” (promiscuity, homosexuality, or bestiality) or has married another, which is considered “adultery” by God.

I Corinthians 7:10-15

<u>The Scripture:</u>	<u>The Principle:</u>
<p>But those having married... a woman (is) not to be separated from her husband.</p> <p>But if she is she is indeed separated, let her remain unmarried,</p> <p>or let her be reconciled to her husband.</p>	<p>Marriage is to be permanent.</p> <p>Divorced couples to remain single.</p> <p>Reconciliation is the goal.</p>

I Corinthians 7:10-15 (con't)

<u>The Scripture:</u>	<u>The Principle:</u>
And a husband is not to leave his wife... If any brother has a wife unbelieving , and she consents to live with him let him not leave her. And a woman who has a husband unbelieving and he consents to live with her, let her not leave him. For the unbelieving husband has been sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife has been sanctified by the husband. Otherwise your children are unclean, but now you are holy. But if the unbeliever separates let him/her separate. A brother or a sister has never been in bondage (Perfect tense) in such matters.	God commands loyalty to your spouse. Do not abandon unbelieving spouses. Marriage is legitimized regardless of belief. Allow unbelievers to divorce (do not compromise to keep them). Assuming Lev. 18; Matt. 19:9, the innocent party (fornication) has never been in bondage. Remarriage is allowed for the innocent party.

I Corinthians 7:25-28

<u>The Scripture:</u>	<u>The Principle:</u>
Concerning virgins... I judge it is good to remain (single) because of the present necessity. Have you been bound to a woman, do not seek to be freed. Have you been loosed from a woman, do not seek a woman. But if you marry, you do not sin. And if the virgin marries, she has not sinned.	Singleness is good under certain circumstances. Divorce is not to be sought. Those loosed should not seek remarriage. Remarriage under Biblical conditions (Matt: 19:9, et al) is not sin. Proper marriage is not sin (Heb. 13:4).

I Corinthians 7:39

<u>The Scripture:</u>	<u>The Principle:</u>
A wife has been bound by law to her husband as long as he lives. But if her husband is dead, she is free to be married to whomever she wishes, only in the Lord.	Death of a spouse frees the living for remarriage. Marriage is only to be with other believers.

SUMMARY:

- Our stand on divorce is based on the authority of Jesus Christ Himself and on the Scripture (Matt. 19:9).
- Marriage is for life, as long as you both shall live (Rom. 7:39; Matt. 19:6; I Cor. 7:10).
- Marriage is only to be with other believers (I Cor. 7:39; II Cor. 6:14).
- God commands loyalty to your spouse (I Cor. 7:11).
- Do not abandon unbelieving spouses (I Cor. 7:12, 13).
- Marriage is legitimized regardless of belief (I Cor. 7:14).
- Double marriage is adultery (Rom. 7:3).
- The death of either spouse dissolves the marriage (Rom. 7:3; I Cor. 7:39).
- Remarriage is allowed after the death of a spouse (Rom. 7:3).
- Divorce is not the answer to domestic strife (Matt. 19:3).
- Marriage is the separation from the control of parents, and the newly married couple becomes a separate family unit (Matt 19:5).
- Marriage is the uniting of husband and wife by God Himself, and is not to be broken (Matt. 19:5, 6).
- Interrupting marriage through immorality brings God's Judgment (Matt. 19:6; Heb. 13:4).
- Divorce is not commanded by God (Matt. 19:8; Deut. 24:1-4).
- Divorce is caused by stubbornness and sin (Matt. 19:8).
- Divorce was never intended by God (Matt. 19:8).
- If the unbelieving spouse insists on a divorce you should never compromise to keep him/her (I Cor. 7:15).
- Remarriage of the "believing" spouse is approved on the basis of innocence of sexual sin, where the "unbelieving" spouse has committed "fornication" (Matt. 19:9; I Cor. 7:15).
- Divorced couples are to remain unmarried or to seek reconciliation (I Cor. 7:11).
- Remarriage, other than to the original spouse after any unbiblical divorce is adultery (Matt. 19:9).
- Remarriage of the innocent party (not guilty of sexual sin) is not committing adultery (Matt. 19:9).
- Marrying the divorced (Perfect Tense in the Greek) who is the party guilty of sexual sin that destroyed the marriage is committing adultery (Matt. 19:9).
- Marrying a person who has been divorced and the divorce was not on the grounds of fornication is committing adultery (Matt. 19:9).
- Remaining single is good under certain circumstances (I Cor. 7:26).
- Divorce is not to be sought (I Cor. 7:27).
- Those loosed should not seek a new marriage (I Cor. 7:27).
- Those remarrying under Christ's restrictions are not sinning (I Cor. 7:28).
- Biblical Christian marriage is not a sin (Matt. 19:9; I Cor. 7:28; Heb. 13:4).

If you are getting married, seek first to become the person that God wants you to be so you will be a blessing to your spouse. Seek to become the best person that you can be in Christ and to serve Him with your whole life. Then seek someone who is a believer in Christ, who is committed to Christ above all, and is serving Him with his/her whole life. Then unite to serve Christ together.

If you have fallen in the trap of sexual sins, and you are divorced, obey Christ. If you have not remarried, seek reconciliation with your husband or wife if possible. If you are the

guilty party and cannot reconcile then remain single and serve Christ in purity. If you are remarried to another, stay married and make your new home a Christ centered home where Christ is honored and obeyed.

If you have never been caught in up sexual sins that defile the individual and ruin the harmony of the home then avoid having your marriage ruined by only honoring Jesus Christ in all that you do (Col. 3:17, 23, 24). It is easier to remain innocent and avoid the problems and guilt of sin than it is to try to mend your marriage after guilt has been brought into your life.

If you have been an innocent victim of the sexual sin of others within your marriage and you have been divorced by a spouse who is unrepentant and refuses to reconcile with you, give yourself time to heal in Christ, and then allow the Lord to direct you into a marriage that will honor Christ and give you the happiness for which you are seeking. In this issue of divorce and remarriage, the spouse who is innocent of sexual sin within the marriage has the prerogative of choice according to Christ Himself, and can remarry without sin, but only with another believer in Christ (Matt. 19:9; I Cor. 7:9; II Cor. 6:14.)

In whatever you do, glorify Jesus Christ with your whole life in all you do (I Cor. 10:31; Col. 3:17, 23-24; Rom. 15:6).