

The Biblical View of Divorce

God's word is straightforward in addressing the issue of divorce. The following verses from both the old and new testaments speak clearly to the biblical viewpoint on divorce.

For the Lord, the God of Israel, says he hates divorce and cruel men. Therefore, control your passions—let there be no divorcing of your wives. Malachi 2:16 (TLB)

The law of Moses says, 'If anyone wants to be rid of his wife, he can divorce her merely by giving her a letter of dismissal.' But I say that a man who divorces his wife, except for fornication, causes her to commit adultery if she marries again. And he who marries her commits adultery. Matthew 5:31-32 (TLB)

Don't you understand yet, dear Jewish brothers in Christ, that when a person dies the law no longer holds him in its power? Let me illustrate: when a woman marries, the law binds her to her husband as long as he is alive. But if he dies, she is no longer bound to him; the laws of marriage no longer apply to her. Then she can marry someone else if she wants to. That would be wrong while he was alive, but it is perfectly all right after he dies. Romans 7:1-3 (TLB)

Now for those who are married I have a command, not just a suggestion. And it is not a command from me, for this is what the Lord Himself has said: A wife must not leave her husband. 1 Corinthians 7:10 (TLB)

But if she is separated from him, let her remain single or else go back to him. And the husband must not divorce his wife. 1 Corinthians 7:11 (TLB)

Here I want to add some suggestions of my own. These are not direct commands from the Lord, but they seem right to me: If a Christian has a wife who is not a Christian, but she wants to stay with him anyway, he must not leave her or divorce her. And if a Christian woman has a husband who isn't a Christian, and he wants her to stay with her, she must not leave him. For perhaps the husband who isn't a Christian may become a Christian with the help of his Christian wife. And the wife who isn't a Christian may become a Christian with the help of her Christian husband. Otherwise, if the family separates, the children might never come to know the Lord; whereas a united family may, in God's plan, result in the children's salvation. 1 Corinthians 7:12-14 (TLB)

But if the husband or wife who isn't a Christian is eager to leave, it is permitted. In such cases the husband or wife should not insist that the other stay, for God wants his children to live in peace and harmony. For after all, there is no assurance to you wives that your husbands will be converted if they stay; and the same may be said to you husbands concerning your wives. But be sure in deciding these matters that you are living as God intended, marrying or not marrying in accordance with God's direction and help, and accepting whatever situation God has put you into. This is my rule for all the churches. 1 Corinthians 7:15-17 (TLB)

Talking Points

No matter what may be going on in your marriage, there is a lot of wisdom to NOT make any major decisions in the HEAT of an argument or when you are over-stressed. If you are newly separated, its best to not make any major decision for a minimum of six months or more. A healthier approach is to work on your own personal issues and try to relax and try to begin to see where God is at work in the situation. During this time, seek input from God through prayer and through input from Christian leaders that God has put in your life at this time. Suggestions might be to go to couples counseling or individual counseling or join a men's support group or men's bible study where you have a safe place to vent and share what is going on.

Questions to ponder:

- 1) In the verses above what does God's word clearly say about divorce? _____

- 2) What local Christian-based church or counseling center could you go to and talk to someone and share what may or may not be going on in your marriage? Men and their families can get good advice from Christian-bible based organizations. Outside of that, you may get poor advice that is not biblically or soundly based. List below who you can call today. _____

Suggested Healthy Action Steps

So ...what practical actions steps could you implement, with the goal of improving your current situation? Often our lives are very busy and sometimes we end up wasting valuable time just being busy. A suggestion is to cut out some less-productive activities and then add a few healthy tools to begin growing in your marriage or current relationships. Begin today taking positive steps to start to change your tomorrow. Don't wait...write down some positive, practical steps that you can begin today.

Here are some positive practical suggestions to help improve your current situation:

- 1) Start attending a local Christian-based church each week.
- 2) Start personal / couples counseling bi-weekly (or both).
- 3) Join a men's support group in a local Christian-based church.
- 4) Join a men's/couple's bible study in a local Christian-based church.
- 5) Attend Christian-based marriage seminars.
- 6) Read several Christian-based books on marriage and relationships (see the MOTE website book list).
- 7) Read the bible 15-20 minutes per day in conjunction with a specific study.
- 8) Set a goal to memorize one bible verse per week.
- 9) Begin tithing, (learn this valuable habit to giving back to God each week).
- 10) Find 1-2 safe Godly men you can share openly with on a weekly basis.

Talking Points

List below a few practical actions steps you can begin today.

For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

Jeremiah 29:11 (NIV)

Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and shun evil. This will bring health to your body and nourishment to your bones.

Proverbs 3:5-8 (NIV)