

## God hates Divorce

**Mal 2:14-16** *Yet ye say, Wherefore? Because the LORD hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant. 15 And did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth. 16 For the LORD, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away: for one covereth violence with his garment, saith the LORD of hosts: therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously.*

**Marriage is permanent until death does separate the two.** Individually each one decides to marry, but once married, God is who unites them (ratifies their decision), and nobody can separate them (**Mat 19:6** *“What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder”*) God sees all divorce (or unfaithfulness, e.g. breaking the marriage vows) between couples as an abomination. Divorce is unfaithfulness within the relationship, renouncing your vows that were given at the wedding, at a civil authority, and before God. The two make the marriage, but God ratifies it.<sup>1</sup>

**Ecc1 5:4** *When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. 5 Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay. Num. 30:2; Dt 23:21-23.* For the Christian, divorce is simply not a consideration. It is no solution; it is not something that one would accept if one is truly obedient to God. The Christian refuses absolutely to enter the road of divorce. In Romans 7:1-3, Paul uses the example of marriage between a man and a woman as something that cannot be dissolved except by death. This is the idea or standard that God has given us in the concept of marriage. In **Mat 19:3-12** Jesus was presented the problem of divorce. The Jews of the time divorced for any reason,

even something unimportant. But Jesus argued that the case of a man and women that marry, they marry for life, until death do they part, (*“let no man separate them” 19:6*). The will of God is that nobody gets a divorce, but that they act resolve their conflicts in peace. Divorce was permitted because of stubbornness to God’s will, but was not allowed without involving sin. **Luke 16:18** *“Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery.”* . If the other party (the unsaved party) abandons the Christian, then the Christian does not sin in God’s eyes, and the Christian resolves himself/herself in this, but they cannot remarry while their first mate still lives (**Romans 7:3**).

### Unsaved spouse with a Believing Wife

In **1Cor 7:10-17**, Paul instructs us about situations between couples problems. Yes, God does speak of a situation where one in the couple is saved, and the other is not. In these cases, it is acceptable if the unbelieving abandons the believer, but God does not give His permission for the believing part to abandon the marriage (**7:15**). The unsaved doesn’t worry about God’s will anyway, and he/she will depart. Our obligation and goal in such cases is the conversion of the unbelieving to Christ, which will solve the majority of the problems. It is by a brilliant, daily, Christian life that the unbelieving will be converted in the end (**1Pet 3:1-2**). The person that accepts divorce as a possible solution to his problems simply will not work 100% to resolve these problems.

### Resolving Problems

**The husband** – We should realize that the problem in many marriages is one of two things, either one of the two are confused as to their roles in the marriage, or they are confused as to the role their spouse should have. God gave the man the responsibility of being the leader (**1Cor 11:3**) and condemned Adam for submitting to his wife instead of guiding her (**Gen 3:17**). Also the

husband should not use his authority to irritate his wife (**1Cor 13:4-6**), making her get upset, or making life bitter for his wife (**Col. 3:19**). The way he treats his wife is always gently, giving her double honor and treating her as something very valuable and fragile, something where we do not use brutality or hardness and which we don’t stress to the point of breaking. God chastises the man by not listening to his prayers if he mistreats his wife (**1Pet 3:7**). After all things are considered, the principle treatment of the wife is with love (**Col 3:19; Eph 5:22-33; 1Cor 13:4-6**). Examples of good husbands are Abraham, *“For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment;”* (**Genesis 18:19**), and Joshua *“but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord”* **Joshua 24:15**.

**The Wife** – God commanded the woman to be subject to her husband, or under his leadership and best judgment (**Gen 3:16; Eph 5:22-24; 1Pet 3:1-6**). This is the principle form in which she will bring blessing to both of their lives, their marriage, and their home. Even though we construct many alternatives to what God has commanded, and we fight to defend these alternatives, none of them will bring the blessing of God except that which God has established. The man must lead; the woman must follow. God put forth the purpose of the woman when she entered the world, that she would be an ideal helpmate for him (**Gen 2:18; Psa 128:3**) that is to supply and surround the family and her husband with good. The woman should adorn herself with good works and spiritual attributes (**1Pet 3:1-6; Prov 31:13-27**). Her beauty is seen spiritually, not physically. **Mark 10:7** *“For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife”* (**Gen 2:24**). There should be a separation from the lives of the parents on both sides, and there should be a union of the husband and wife. The idea is that they should stick to each other like chewing gum. Nothing will separate them.

<sup>1</sup> Makes it legal, permanent, and obligatory.

**They should religiously keep the principle of one flesh.** God declares that when two people marry, God unites them so that they are one flesh (**Mat 19:6**). Simply put, one should protect their own body. You do not allow anyone or anything to do harm to your body. This is how you should treat your spouse. **Eph 5:29** "For no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but *nourisheth and cherisheth it*". Couples contemplating divorce do not understand their spiritual union before God. To divorce (or live apart) is just like cutting a person in two, or to kick one leg with the other. No matter how you reason it, you lose. It is against the way things should be, and really it is against nature. Fighting within the marriage never results in anything good. Both parties lose, and harm each other, themselves, and the kids.

**Sex is the secret** – Sex is prohibited for Christians with people outside of their own marriage relationship (**1Cor 6:15-16**) because the principle is that sex unites the two people. God has created sex as a form for uniting a couple spiritually, socially, in love, and physically. Good things will come from this beautiful union. God established your body to belong to your spouse, in order that the couple enjoys each other sexually when either one so desires (**1Cor 7:2-5; Eccl 9:9; Pro 5:18; 18:22; 19:14**). Fornication results when one of the couple is denying the other (**1Cor 7:5**). The correct thing to do is to fulfill each other sexually in order to avoid fornication or the temptation to fornication (**1Cor 7:2; 6:18**). The will of God is that each one keeps himself from fornication by having their own spouse (**1Thess 4:3-4**). **Heb 13:4** "Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed (the sexual act) *undefiled*."

**Maturity is obligatory** – The biblical concept of perfection is actually to be a mature adult, reproducing and acting like an adult. **Mat 5:48** "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Probably the primary and first cause of all divorce is immaturity on the part of both parties. Patience is what makes us mature (**James 1:4**), and **James 3:2**

says "For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body." **James 1:26** clarifies that the person who lacks control of his mouth has a vain (worthless) religion. So then we should meticulously seek to avoid offending, and this is especially true in the marriage. **Rom. 12:17** "Recompense to no man evil for evil. **19** Avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay saith the Lord." **Eph 4:31** "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour (verbal loud complaining), and evil speaking be put away from you with all malice. **32** And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

**Forgiving is obligatory.** We have to forgive and demonstrate mercy as God has done to us (**Luke 6:36-37**). God treats us with the same measuring cup of mercy and pardon as we use with others (**2Sam 22:26; Mat 18:23-35 Mark 11:25-26; Mat 6:12-15** "if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" and God will horribly punish the person who refuses to forgive (**James 2:13**).

**Money, covetousness, and contentment.** Couples fight over money matters and material things, when they should seek contentment with what they have, and not covet the material. God clarifies that "a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." (**Luke 12:15; Mat 19:21-24**), and strongly condemns greed (**1Cor 6:10; Eph 5:3, 5**). God commands us to "mortify therefore the earthly in you... covetousness which is idolatry" **Col 3:5**. When a person begins to put a lot of importance on the economic, he or she is leaving the path of God **1Tim 6:10; Mat 6:28-33**. The treasuring of riches is often harmful (**Ecc 5:13**) and God conditions the salvation in our giving up these idols (**Luke 14:33 with 1Tim 6.6-11**). "Having food and raiment let us be therewith content." **1Tim 6:8**.

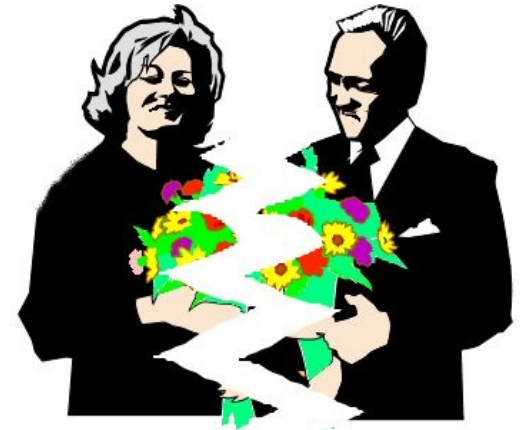
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# Resolving without Divorce

By David Cox

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also see my tract "*Principles of a Biblical Marriage*"  
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It is sad when two people marry and later divorce. But it is worse when there are children involved in these matters. Every Christian should purpose in his heart that divorce is not something that is inevitable. Divorce results when the people involved do not want to obey God. The divorce rate is very high among divorced people (they repeat their divorces over and over again because of the same problems they themselves bring to each new marriage). Wherever they go they will carry their problems with them, and divorce never really solves these problems but is a running away from them which never works. Divorce just complicates their lives.

**Divorce is a failure of the marriage** – We should clarify, that in these matters, it is popular to "assign guilt" to one party and innocence to the other, but after all, divorce is a failure by both because both have to make the marriage work, and both are responsible before God when it fails.