

# Words of Truth

## Divorce And Remarriage

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There is not one sin that is greater than any other (Romans 6:23 and James 2:10-12). Therefore, there is not any one false doctrine that is worse than any other (II John 9). That being said, we all realize that there are some false doctrines and some sins that we see more often than others. One website says that the United States leads the world with a rate of 4.95 divorces per one thousand people ([http://www.nationmaster.com/graph/peo\\_div\\_rat-people-divorce-rate](http://www.nationmaster.com/graph/peo_div_rat-people-divorce-rate)). In 2007 there were 856,000 marriages ended by divorce or annulment (that statistic excludes data for California, Georgia, Hawaii, Indiana, Louisiana, and Minnesota; [http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/marriage\\_divorce\\_tables.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/marriage_divorce_tables.htm)).

Among the many questions I get in email I would have to say questions about divorce and remarriage are among the most commonly asked. There are many false doctrines taught on the subject. There are doctrines that deny Jesus' teaching on the subject saying the words of Christ were Old Testament teachings. There are some who teach that the teachings of Christ about divorce and remarriage only apply to Christians. There are those who teach you can divorce and remarry if you are abused mentally or physically. There are those who teach that you can divorce and remarry because God wants us to be happy with our mates. All of these, and many others, are FALSE doctrines. In this article we will see that the subject of divorce and remarriage is really simple. We'll begin with the start of the problem.

### Godly Marriages Will End The Divorce And Remarriage Problem

Marriage is honorable (Hebrews 13:4). The word of God says: "*Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the LORD*" (Proverbs 18:22). Marriage is in place to satisfy the sexual desires of both a man and a woman so that fornication can be avoided (I Corinthians 7:1-5). The Bible shows us the pattern of a godly marital arrangement (Ephesians 5:22-33). Most importantly, as far as our subject in this article is concerned, the Bible shows us that marriages are not supposed to end (Romans 7:1-3). God did not design marriages with an escape hatch or a backdoor (Genesis 2:18-24). Thus, marriages need to be planned so that both parties understand they're going to spend the rest of their earthly lives together.

Choosing the wrong mate can have horrible results (I Kings 11:4-8, I Kings 16:31; cf. I Kings 21:25, Proverbs 21:19, and Acts 5:1-10). Thus, we have to choose our mates wisely. A moral woman is a crown to her husband while the wrong wife causes him big problems (Proverbs 12:4). Some are lost to what a moral woman is. All we have to do is look to the Scriptures for the biblical definition of a moral woman (Proverbs 31:10-31). One could learn a lot about a virtuous woman by studying the Book of Ruth (Ruth 3:11). Likewise, the Scriptures show us what a godly man is. First and foremost, a godly man is one who will care for the spiritual needs of his family (Joshua 24:15 and Ephesians 6:4) and their physical needs as

well (I Timothy 5:8). One could then study through the Scriptures and look for the man who patterns his life after God's standards (Titus 2:7-8).

A person errs in choosing the wrong mate. Sometimes, that situation ends up in a divorce. This is a reality, even though the Lord is not pleased with that reality (Malachi 2:16 and I Corinthians 7:10-15). What then? Now is when many get into false doctrines. Let's examine what the Scriptures say about who can divorce and remarry.

### **Who May Divorce And Remarry?**

First, I want to explain why I subtitled this section of our study as, "Who May Divorce And Remarry?" The word "may" is the key as to why I titled this part of the article this way. Marriage is a liberty (Matthew 19:10-12). If you have a scriptural right to marry, you may choose to marry or choose not to marry (I Corinthians 7:6-9). Some people approach "divorce and remarriage" as though marriage is a command everyone must accomplish to be saved. Some get divorced, but are not permitted to marry another (Mark 10:11-12).

The Bible gives the exception, not the rule, for who may divorce and remarry. Please notice these Scriptures: *"It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement. But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery... The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away? He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so. And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery"* (Matthew 5:31-32 and Matthew 19:3-9).

If you read the Scriptures above, there is nothing difficult to understand. People start this "what if" game of scenarios, but the Scriptures above do not change with any scenario. If one has not put away their mate for the cause of fornication there is no right for remarriage. Even if one has put away their mate for the cause of fornication, God is not pleased. God's plan for marriage has been ignored any time a divorce occurs.

### **Conclusion**

On occasion it is necessary to teach about divorce and remarriage. Sadly, this is only a response to the failures of generations in our society past and present to teach properly about marriage. Furthermore, breakdowns in marriages also mean there will be breakdowns in one's relationship with God. If we cannot love those whom we're close to in the flesh, how can one proclaim to love and be committed to God whom they've not seen (I John 4:20)? In addition, when so-called "brethren" are always trying to find loopholes in the physical relationship between a husband and a wife, what do you think they're going to be doing in teaching about one's relationship with God? Truly, the failures we have seen in the home are being duplicated in the church. Let's stand up against these failures!