

Divorce-How Does God Feel About It?

1. Divorce is a very popular activity in the world in which we live today. Even though it is not an activity which God is pleased with, we still have a very high rate of divorce on the earth today. We probably have a record of just about as many divorces taking place as we do marriages. What a horrible shame! When a man and a woman decide to be joined together in holy matrimony, or in marriage, they are no longer as two separate beings, but God sees them from that time on as one being. We read in Gen. 2:21-24: "And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof. And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made He a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." Hebrew-dabaq (daw-bak): to cling to, abide with, be joined together, hold on to, or to become as one being in the eyes of God. Of course when a man and a woman become married, they are still two separate physical beings; but in the eyes of God, they are as one spiritual being. Marriage is a very serious matter in God's eyes, and He expects us to take it as a very serious matter also. Sadly to say, many times partners in marriage take the matter very lightly. They do not take the oaths of marriage which they make before God seriously at all. And in many marriages, the partners face many unnecessary problems, because there will be one partner attempting to live their life according to the Word of God, and the other partner living their life filled with every kind of sin and shame. This is very saddening to the heart of God; and it makes it almost impossible for Him to be able to bless them as He desires to do. For it is like a person trying to drive a car in two different directions at the same time. They can get nowhere.

2. When two people get married, they are entering a permanent relationship, which is supposed to be ended by nothing short of death. They are to be companions for their entire lifetime. They promise to love, honor, trust, and serve one another through sickness and in health. They promise to be true and loyal to one another for as long as they both shall live upon the earth. They take an oath before God Almighty to do just as we have mentioned. This is an oath or a promise which God does not at all take lightly. Yet many people have no guilt whatsoever, about stepping out on their marriage partner, and committing adultery every chance they get. They see nothing at all wrong with fooling around with other women (or men), and never feel as

though they have done anything wrong. If you just step back and watch many of the men and women in our society today, you would never have any idea that they were married to anyone. And there are many who treat their marriage partner as though they have no feelings at all; talking to them with no respect whatsoever, never have a second thought about lying to them about every matter which comes up before them, and they will still stand and claim to be living a Christian life; and claim to be a faithful servant of God. May God have mercy upon them! The only thing that I can say about such an individual, is that they have been badly deceived by the devil.

3. Let us now go to Matt. 5:31-32, where Jesus told us: **“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 shalt 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.”** Back in the Old Testament times, and even in to the New Testament; especially among the Pharisees; people took the laws concerning marriage and divorce far too lightly. Let us read in Deut. 24:1: **“When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favor in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her: then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house.”** Back in the days of Moses, a man was allowed to divorce his wife for almost any reason. Even though this was not the way that God wanted it to be, nevertheless it took place often. The word **“uncleanness”** in this verse of scripture, covered a lot of different things. For instance, a man could divorce his wife for just going out of the house with her head uncovered. As foolish as this may sound, it was still in the Old Testament laws. The word **uncleanness** comes from the Hebrew word **ervah** (**ervaw**); which means **nudity, nakedness, shame, or disgrace**. We are not sure how the Old Testament laws worked as far as the women’s rights concerning their husbands; whether they had any rights to divorce or not.

4. We have just spoken a little bit about what the Old Testament laws had to say about marriage and divorce. But let us get serious about these matters, and see what Jesus had to say about these important issues. We read in Matt. 19:1-9: **“And it came to pass, that when Jesus had finished these sayings, He departed from Galilee, and came into the coasts of Judea beyond Jordan. And great multitudes followed Him; and He healed them there. 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 said 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 (or husband), except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.” Just as we mentioned earlier, a husband and a wife are as one person in the eyes of God, once they are married. And according to what Jesus told us in his Holy Word, as we have just read, God gives us no excuse whatsoever for divorce, except for a husband or a wife committing adultery. God is very strict when it comes to the matter of marriage. And He takes very seriously, the matter of committing adultery against one’s spouse. A husband (or a wife) who even has the desire in their heart to commit adultery with anyone other than their own spouse; even though they may not have actually participated in any sexual activity with them; is also guilty of adultery in the eyes of God.

For Jesus told us in Matt. 5:28: **“But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.”** When a woman and a man enter into holy matrimony, they are not playing a game, but are making serious and holy vows before God, and making what is to be a permanent relationship. We have marriages which are in serious trouble, because of husbands and wives being dishonest with one another about different things; lying to one another and doing one another wrong in different ways. But God still gives us no right for divorce except in the case of adultery. If you have made marriage vows to a man or to a woman, and you are not satisfied with the performance of your husband or your wife, due to any cause less than adultery, then the only right which you have before God, is the right to pray for your spouse, and trust God to change their heart. Regardless of how impossible it may seem, God can change the heart of anyone, if we will just trust Him; and give him the time to do the work which He knows that He must do. If we will just do so, He will help us and protect us, regardless of how bad the situation may look. Many of us have gotten ourselves into very bad and disturbing relationships, because of not taking seriously the matter of holy matrimony. I was once told by a person, that they knew that they did not love the person whom they were planning to marry, even before they were married; but they just went

ahead and married them because the other person involved continued to beg them to do so. What a horrible and foolish thing to do! They were having serious trouble with their spouse, and were very unhappy. The only thing that I know to tell a person in such a situation, is that they must ask for God's forgiveness, and pray for Him to help them to love their spouse. They must choose to love them, and trust God to bring it to pass. I cannot tell anyone in such a position, that it is alright for them to get a divorce. For God's Word has made it very clear to us that there is no excusable reason for divorce, except adultery. A person should never make such serious vows before God, and know in their heart that they do not mean them. They are not only lying to the one which they are marrying, but they are also lying to God. What a serious sin to commit! Now they have become a part of probably the most holy connection in the eyes of God, with no way out. All that they can do is ask for God's help, and try to live their lives one day at a time. I'm certain that it must be an awfully hard road to have to travel. But if they are going to stay in right relationship with God, all that they can do is just to pray for God to heal the relationship, and to put that love there which should of been there from the beginning; and lean upon Him continually. There are several ways in which a husband or a wife can fail to be the husband or wife which God intended for them to be. One way in which a husband can fail is by refusing to provide for his own family. A wife should not have to continuously worry, because a husband will not find a job and work, and help provide the necessities of the household. God told us in 1 Tim. 5:8: "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." Greek-apistos (ap-is-tos): one who is an unbeliever, or who is without faith in God, or one who is untrustworthy. This is speaking of a person who has never had any real knowledge of God at all. Any person who has a close relationship with God, will also have the love of God in their heart; and will always have a desire to faithfully provide for those whom they truly love. A person who does not care enough about their own family to work and provide for them, does not find good favor with God at all. But yet even in situations like this, as awful as it may be, God does not give us the right to divorce.

Also, neither a husband nor a wife should ever be ashamed of one another; but should always show great love and respect one for another. Proverbs 5:18 tells us: "Let thy fountain be blessed: and rejoice with the wife of thy youth." Hebrew-samach (saw-makh): to brighten up, cheer up, make glad, be joyful, or to encourage. A husband and a wife should always be an encouragement to one another; not a disappointment. They should stand up for one another, and make one another feel loved and respected. And

Proverbs 19:14 tells us that a prudent wife is from the Lord. Hebrew-sakal (saw-kal): to be intelligent, knowledgeable, wise, skillful, successful, or to have understanding. If a man has a wife as was just described, he should continually be thankful for her. Many women cause their marriages to fail to be what God would have it to be, because they do not pray and support their husbands in a spiritual manner, as God would have them to do. If men and women would attempt to walk closer to God, and put forth the effort to be the kind of husband or wife which God desires for them to be, there would be a far less number of marriages ending in divorce. We should also be teaching our children the Godly principals concerning marriage, and what the Word of God has to say about marriage and divorce. Girls are being raised in our society today, who do not know a thing about how a home is to be ran, as far as the duties which a wife is expected to fulfill. Many of them are taught nothing at home, as far as having any responsibility at all. Many of them could not fry a piece of bacon, or toast a piece of bread. And many boys are being raised in the same manner. They could no more be the provider for a household, than a puppy dog could be. If we have a wife or a husband that is responsible in fulfilling their duties, let us always be thankful to God for them. As was mentioned before, the law which we first referred to in the Old Testament, from the Book of Deuteronomy, was established mainly because of those who wanted to get a divorce for every reason that they could come up with. But many of the people just took the law for granted, and wanted a divorce for many wrong reasons. So many times they would hold a grudge against their spouse for one thing or another; rather than forgiving one another as God expected them to do. According to the Old Testament law, a man (or woman) did not necessarily have to divorce their spouse in the case of adultery, but only if they chose to. If their marriage partner repented of their sin, and truly changed their lifestyle, they could forgive them, and their marriage be reconciled. But so many of the people just wanted a divorce for reasons that were not justified. I believe that a husband and a wife should do everything within their power to try and make a marriage successful. If a marriage partner simply refuses to cooperate; and chooses to cause their husband or wife to have to continually live in torment and heartbreak, we still find no excusable reason in the Bible for divorce. But as I said before, every possible attempt to make the marriage a success, should be tried. I do believe that God will do what may seem impossible to us, when we put our faith completely in Him, and we attempt to faithfully serve the Lord God as He would have us to do. We serve a loving, forgiving, and merciful God; and He understands when a person is placed under what seems to be unbearable circumstances. If a husband (or a wife) does not love their spouse enough to

publicly show respect for them, to be one-hundred percent faithful unto them in every way, and to always be willing to do their part in every area of the marriage, then they must be left in the hands of God Almighty; for only He can do the work which must be done. But we must not consider divorce. For as we have learned from the Word of God, divorce is positively not the will of God.

This is why it is so vitally important, that a person pray to God as sincerely as possible, and know without a doubt that it is the perfect will of God, before choosing to be joined together in marriage with anyone. A husband and a wife should love one another to the point of giving up their life one for another, if it should ever be necessary. There is no measuring stick in the area of love. It has no dimensions. Divorce should never be considered as a resort in solving the problems in any marriage. And when we find ourselves facing horrible circumstances in our marriage, which it seems that there is no answer to, let us always pray and seek the face of God; and allow Him to guide us in our steps which we take. For as we have mentioned earlier, many times God can make a way, when it seems as though there is no way. He can change the hearts of people, whom we may of thought there was no possibility of ever being changed. If it be a case of a lost husband or wife, God will never force a person to believe in Him. But He can certainly do the work in a person's life, that will cause them to want to turn to Him. We are told in 1 Cor. 7:15: "But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace." God knows that sometimes we cannot do anything to prevent separation from taking place, if a spouse simply refuses to do as the Word of God commands them to do. But He is able to do the work which will cause them to return. And when such situations take place, we must always have a heart of forgiveness, and never allow Satan to harden our heart; causing us to forbid God from doing the work which He knows must be done. Divorce is a horrible thing; and as we have shown many times throughout this lesson from the Word of God, it is completely in contradiction to the will of God. But many times it happens, even when we make every attempt that we know how to make, to prevent it.

5. Now we come to the question, if a marriage does end up in divorce, even for the only excusable reason; which is adultery; does a person have a right to remarry after getting a divorce? The Word of God is plain and simple to understand, in what it says regarding this matter. When the Pharisees brought the matter up before Jesus, in Matt. 5:31-32, as we said before, He told them that whosoever shall marry her (or him) that is divorced, that they are guilty of committing adultery. And as we refer back to Matt. 19:9, we

read: "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." It sounds to me as though the Word of God is giving a person permission to be remarried, if the reason for their divorce is because their previous spouse was truly guilty of the act of adultery. But it also sounds as though anyone who marries one who is divorced because they were actually guilty of the act of adultery, also brings the penalty of adultery upon themselves. Adultery is the only means of release that a person has from a marriage. And also the only act which allows a couple to be single once again, in the eyes of God. When two individuals come together in marriage, and then they later decide to get a divorce; for any reason other than for the committing of adultery; then they are both guilty of a horrible sin, in the eyes of God. Now this is God's Words, not my words. Let us also remember what Paul told us in Romans 6:14-15: "But sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. What then? Shall we sin, because we are not under the law, God forbid."

Paul is reminding us that even though we are no longer under the Old Testament law, but under the grace of God, we are not to commit sin simply because we have the grace of God to cover us. Even though God has made a way for us to receive his eternal forgiveness from sin, through the blood of Jesus, we are not to intentionally commit sin of any kind; not divorce, or any other wrong doing. He made the arrangements for Jesus to go to the cross, and to shed his precious blood, and to cleanse us from all of our sins. Yet Paul is also reminding us that we are not to just walk in sin, simply because we know that the grace of God and his marvelous mercy will bring forgiveness to us.

Conclusion:

I believe we have discussed many important issues which relate to a husband and a wife being happily joined together in marriage. But sadly to have to say, there are many men and women who are joined together in marriage, who can find no happiness in their marriage at all. This comes about because of many different reasons. Many times the husband or the wife become untrue to their marriage partner. They act as if they are ashamed of them in public places. Many times the husband will fail to provide for his family as he should do. And many times he shows no respect for his wife, by the words which he allows to come forth out of his mouth. These things ought not to be! This is very displeasing to the heart of God. Many husbands (or wives) are taking advantage of their spouse in one way or another; rather than truly loving them as they should do. God tells us in his Word to pray for them, and trust

God to change their wicked hearts; regardless of how impossible it may seem to be. Let us always remember, that with God, all things are possible. He can make a way, when there seems to be no way. Many men (or women) get stuck in a situation where they feel as though they will never be forgiven by God, if they should ever even think about divorce as a way out. Without a doubt, divorce is a sin, and should not take place except in the case of adultery. But let us also remember, that we serve a God who can do what may seem to be impossible to us. We serve a loving and a merciful God, and He is very much concerned about the welfare of his children. All that we can do, is to try and use Godly wisdom, and ask Him to forgive us for the mistakes which we make. God knew that we were not going to be perfect creatures when He created us. But many times we have to bear the consequences for some of the mistakes which we make; especially when we know ahead that we are doing wrong. As we said before, this was the purpose for the blood of Jesus; so that we could receive forgiveness when we make mistakes and do wrong. So if you ever find yourself in a situation in which there seems to be no means of escape; including a marriage; even after you have prayed and done all that you know to do; then all that you can do is to keep trusting in God, and allow Him to do what He knows must be done. God is understanding. He loves you, and He always wants what is best for you. And if you will give Him the time, He can, and He will, change the heart of your spouse. And He will give you the power to make it from day to day, even when it may seem as if there is no way to make it. Remember, with God all things are possible!

□

Calvin Smith