

# THE ISSUE OF DIVORCE, REMARRIAGE AND ADULTERY

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Despite everything I have written and explained over the years in my Bill's Bible Basics articles, and in my topical KJV Bible Verse Lists, it seems that some of my Christian friends are still confused regarding the issues of divorce, remarriage and adultery. Or, Lord forbid, perhaps some of them intentionally deceive themselves for whatever their reasons. Who knows.

Recently, one such friend commented on a meme I made where I explain that if a man divorces his wife and remarries while his wife is still alive, not only is he committing adultery, but he is causing his former wife to commit adultery as well if she remarries. Why are they guilty of adultery? Because the former mate is still alive. That is what the Mosaic Law teaches. However, in response to that meme, my friend then said "You can remarry if your spouse commits adultery on you though," and he referenced Matthew 19:9 which states the following:

"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 19:9, KJV

I then explained to my friend that if we really take the time to read everything that Jesus had to say regarding this issue, it becomes rather obvious that divorce is definitely NOT God's ideal solution. Jesus in fact plainly stated that the only reason why God gave Moses the law of divorce was due to the hardness of the people's hearts. Consider this group of Bible verses:

"When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour 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. And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man's wife. And if the latter husband hate her, and write her a bill of divorcement, and giveth it in her hand, and sendeth her out of his house; or if the latter husband die, which took her to be his wife; Her former husband, which sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after that she is defiled; for that is abomination before the LORD: and thou shalt not cause the land to sin, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance."

Deuteronomy 24:1-4, KJV

"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."

Matthew 19:7-8, KJV

So if we accept my friend's misguided conclusion that we are free to remarry if our spouse commits adultery, then it seems to me that we are really opening a very wide door for easy divorce and remarriage. Sadly, that is exactly what we are now seeing happening all across America, and in many other nations as well. Some people have remarried up to five times! The tragedy is that a lot of Christian churches are not only promoting this erroneous belief, but they are marrying and remarrying people -- just like people of the world -- thus

helping to create a nation of adulterers and adulteresses.

So let's try to sort this out properly. It's my understanding that in reality, what Jesus was actually trying to convey in the previous verses in the Gospels, is that rather than being so quick to divorce an individual when they engage in marital infidelity due to the hardness of your own heart, forgiveness and reconciliation are the better -- and in fact, the best -- option to follow. In short, the only reason why people go the divorce and remarriage route, is because they are simply unwilling to forgive their unfaithful spouse. That itself is a product of their own self-righteous pride. Well, perhaps they should remember something else which Jesus taught:

"For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

Matthew 6:14-15, KJV

"Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy."

Matthew 5:7, KJV

"And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. . ."

Luke 11:4, KJV

At this point in our conversation, my friend asked me "What if the unfaithful spouse never wants to come back?" He then quotes 1 Corinthians 7:15 as shown below:

"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."

1 Corinthians 7:15, KJV

As I then proceeded to explain to my friend, 1 Corinthians 7:15 does NOT negate anything I said to him in my previous comment. In other words, forgiveness and reconciliation still remain the best option, and not immediately pulling out the legalistic axe of divorce and mercilessly chopping off the unfaithful spouse. Of course, for this approach to even work, BOTH spouses need to be willing to give it a try.

I also suspect that my friend was misunderstanding what Paul meant by not being under bondage. In my view, all that the Apostle Paul is basically saying in 1 Corinthians 7:15 is

that if an individual's spouse is that determined to leave no matter what is said to try to get them to remain and work things out, well, there is not much that can be done about it. You can't force such a person to stay against their will. That would indeed be bondage. It would be literal slavery for the spouse who is forced to stay against their will.

If you doubt that this is exactly what the Apostle Paul means by "not under bondage", then please consider the fact that the original Koine Greek word which is used in that phrase is "doulou". Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon defines this word as "to make a slave of, reduce to bondage." That is why right after saying that, Paul adds "but God hath called us to peace." In other words, rather than trying to force that spouse to remain with you, it is better to just let them go in peace, so that you both have peace of mind. Or would you rather prefer something like this:

"It is better to dwell in a corner of the housetop, than with a brawling woman in a wide house."  
Proverbs 21:9, KJV

"It is better to dwell in the corner of the housetop, than with a brawling woman and in a wide house."  
Proverbs 25:24, KJV

Considering how many wives and concubines King Solomon had, I would venture to say that he had a lot of experience in this area. At any rate, to continue, I suspect that my dear friend is interpreting 1 Corinthians 7:15 in a substantially different way, as in, if a person's spouse leaves of their own accord, then the spouse who has been left single due to no fault of their own is thus free to marry again. However, personally, I am convinced that this is NOT what the Apostle Paul is saying whatsoever. Why do I say this? Well, because if that is what Paul is actually saying, then he has just contradicted himself. The following two verses explain why I say this:

"And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband: But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife."  
1 Corinthians 7:10-11, KJV

Do you see that, my friends? Paul is saying three important things in those two verses, and he is making it very clear

that what he is saying is NOT just his own personal thoughts and opinion regarding the matter. It is coming directly from the Lord. Consider the following points:

1. A spouse should NOT leave their mate.
2. If a spouse leaves their mate, they should remain SINGLE or be RECONCILED to their mate, exactly as I explained in the previous paragraphs. Please notice that there is no talk there of remarrying, is there? Paul says "let her remain unmarried."
3. A spouse should NOT put away -- divorce -- their mate.

So the question we need to ask ourselves is why Paul is saying those things. The answer seems rather obvious to me. It is because Paul knows that is exactly what Jesus taught as well in the Gospels. In short, a spouse that leaves does NOT give the remaining spouse the right to remarry. Why not? Because if either spouse remarries while the original spouse is still alive, they are committing adultery. Jesus taught the very same thing, as we see by the following group of verses:

"And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery."

Mark 10:11-12, KJV

"Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery."

Luke 16:18, KJV

"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."

Matthew 5:32, KJV

Please notice very carefully what Jesus is saying there, my friends. If it is not clear to you, it is basically this: If a person is so hardhearted that they send away their spouse -- meaning choose divorce -- for any other reason than that they were guilty of marital infidelity, the person who sent them away is causing not only their former spouse, but also

the person who the former spouse marries, to commit adultery. Why is this my friends? Quite simply, because the spouse who sent away their mate is still alive. As long as the original spouse is still alive, marrying someone else is off limits. That is what the Old Testament teaches, and that is what Jesus taught as well.

Please notice something else, my friends. Nowhere in any of His words in any of the four Gospels does Jesus say that if a person divorces their spouse, that they are free to marry again. Nowhere. In other words, the understanding I have is that if an individual divorces, they must thereafter remain single. Isn't that exactly what the Apostle Paul wrote as well? Again, he said "let her remain unmarried". So as we can see, that is precisely why Paul said that the things he was writing were of the Lord, because they were. Jesus and Paul taught the very same things. Paul never contradicted Jesus anywhere regarding this issue.

Clearly then, my friends, contrary to what some misguided Christians today say and teach -- which includes many of the modern churches -- there are no loopholes. According to the Scriptures, and according to Jesus, the only time that it is permissible for one to remarry is when the original spouse is deceased. Period. And even in that case, many widows and widowers prefer to stay single for the rest of their lives out of respect for their deceased partner. That is my take regarding this issue, and I believe that it is Scripturally sound.

Before concluding this article, I would like to address one more issue, and that is the following. Exactly why is it that the Lord is so firm when it comes to the issues of marriage, divorce and marital infidelity, meaning, of course, adultery? As I amply explain in a number of other Bill's Bible Basics articles such as "Who Is Babylon the Great?", it is simply because the human marriage relationship is a clear reflection of the type of relationship which God truly desires to have with us, His children, who are His spiritual bride. The Lord requires faithfulness from His chosen, and not someone who goes from one spouse to another, as we see happening in our modern, sinful world. Think about that.

With these thoughts, I will bring this article to a close. It is my hope that you've found it informative and enlightening, and I pray that it has been a blessing in your life as well. If you have an account with Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr or with

any other social network, I would really appreciate if you'd take the time to click or tap on the corresponding link that is found on this page. Thanks so much, and may God bless you abundantly!

For additional information and further study, you may want to refer to the list of reading resources below which were either mentioned in this article, or which contain topics which are related to this article. All of these articles are likewise located on the Bill's Bible Basics web server. To read these articles, simply click or tap on any link you see below.

Abortion: The Slaughter of the Innocent  
Age of Accountability and Parental and Divine Discipline  
Biblical Marriage Ceremonies  
Forgiving and Forgetting: It Can Be So Hard!  
Future of Same-Sex Marriage  
Love, Mercy, Forgiveness and Chastisement  
Murdering Millions by Mail: The Abortion Controversy  
The Fruit of the Womb  
The Marriage of the Lamb  
The Royal Law: Thou Shalt Love  
The Thorny Issues of Marriage, Adultery and Divorce  
Unrepentant Abortionist  
Who Is Babylon the Great?

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