

God Hates Divorce

"I'm getting a divorce, but I don't plan to marry again" These words are being heard with increasing frequency. Usually the spokesman is thinking that God allows the right to divorce, but would disapprove remarriage. The truth is, however; Divorce itself is sinful unless it is for the cause of fornication.

a.. Consider Matthew 19:3-6. The question originally asked Jesus by the Pharisees was not concerning remarriage, but concerning divorce: Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?" Jesus' reply to that question: "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." It was only after further questioning that Jesus discussed the problem of remarriage and adultery.

b.. Consider Malachi 2:16. "For the Lord, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away." Even under the old covenant God did not approve of indiscriminate divorce. It is likely that the "tears" of verse 12 which "covered the altar" and caused the Lord to refuse their offering, were the tears of those who had been wrongfully put away.

c.. Consider Matthew 5:32. "Whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery." Observe the words, "causeth her" or maketh her" (ASV). This writer understands this verse to say that if one divorces his wife he places her in a position of temptation to commit adultery, and shares the guilt when she does commit adultery. On the other hand, if he puts her away for the cause of fornication, he has put her away legitimately, and shares no guilt in whatever adultery she may subsequently commit.

d.. Consider 1 Corinthians 7:16: "And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband." Observe the word "command" or "charge" (ASV). The following verse (verse 11) does not negate or nullify this command, but simply recognizes that one might disobey the Lord's command (in which case he sins - 1 John 3:4), and states his options if he has disobeyed. Not only does the Lord command husband and wife to live together, but he commands them to meet one another's physical needs (1 Corinthians 7:3-5) and to love one another (Ephesians 5:25; Titus 2:4-5)

If one companion in a marriage fails along these lines, the other must still be obedient to God, seeking to be what He would have him or her to be in the marriage relationship. Never should the thought of divorce or separation ever enter the mind unless fornication occurs. We are not suggesting that divorce itself is "adultery," but we are saying that divorce for any cause other than fornication is sin. Christians must not be influenced by the loose standards that prevail in the world in which they live.

- by Bill Hall

The Sin of Adultery

Jesus gave only ONE allowed condition for divorce and remarriage. He teaches that if one of the marriage partners commits fornication the INNOCENT party has a right to divorce the GUILTY party and remarry (Matthew 19:3-9). If one divorces the companion for any OTHER cause and remarries, that one is committing the sin of adultery, and the person married to such a divorced person is likewise guilty of adultery. And whosoever marries the one put away also commits adultery with that one.

This is the law of God. It cannot be changed or set aside to suit the desires of the people. Adulterers cannot enter heaven. (1 Cor. 6:9,10). If they would be saved they must cease living in adultery, which means separation. "The way of transgressors is hard" (Prov. 13:15). Sometimes children are involved and thus the innocent suffer for the sins of the guilty. In such a separation the father has a responsibility to properly care for mother and children.

While some rebel at the thought of such a separation in order to be a Christian, they thought little or nothing about the FIRST separation and divorce, which also may have involved children. If one can leave his wife, and children the FIRST time to commit adultery with a second wife which DISPLEASES God, can he not leave the SECOND ADULTEROUS marriage to obey God?

While it is true that all sins are washed away when one obeys the gospel of Christ, RELATIONSHIPS are not. The person must CEASE the relationship. Thus one who is a partner in a liquor business must sever that relationship when he obeys God, otherwise he has never

truly repented. Likewise, repentance will demand that those living in adultery cease doing so. There is no other way of salvation for them. Those living in adultery must choose whether they will separate and obey God and be saved, or live with their companion in adultery and be lost in eternity.

- by **Earl Fly**

Problem Solvers vs. Fault Finders

Let me state some realities for you. I believe these things could be said about any local congregation, anywhere in the world:

- 1) The church is not as evangelistic as it ought to be.
- 2) We don't do enough to support the weak and to encourage those who are struggling with hardships in their lives.
- 3) The church isn't as friendly as it could be. There isn't as much close association among the members as there ought to be.
- 4) The Bible classes could be improved. The subject matter is sometimes lacking, and the teacher's are sometimes unprepared.
- 5) We aren't doing enough benevolence. We are too slow to step forward when legitimate needs are put before us.

This is just a sampling. You can, no doubt, think of other things to expand this list. Our point, however, is this: What are YOU doing about these deficiencies? There are two types of members in the church, and they have opposite reactions to the kind of problems we have listed here. There are some that are dedicated to serving in the kingdom. When they see areas that need attention, they jump to work. When there are lost people that need to be taught, weak brethren to encourage, sick people to visit, these folks don't wait to be told -- they are busy working to address such needs. For example, instead of complaining that the church is unfriendly, they are doing their best to change that reputation by inviting people into their homes and by actively showing their love and concern for others. They get involved in bringing about needed changes. In short, these are those ones who love the church want to see it grow.

Sadly, there are others who only intend to complain. They are never happy and are constantly finding fault. Such members see none of the good in the congregation. They gripe and grouse and do nothing positive. Their contribution to the church is to tear it down, not build it up.

Which of these descriptions fits YOU? Think!

- by **Greg Gwin**