

## God's Law On Divorce And Remarriage

Today, men and women divorce for just about any reason imaginable, and our states allow no-fault divorce.

There are not many times where you find that God says that He hates something (Malachi 2:16). He is completely opposed to divorce because it is not what has been from the beginning, because it can disrupt one's holy calling as a Christian, and because of the destructiveness and pain that results when divorce occurs.

Even though God does hate this deplorable act, He does give one and one Scriptural reason for divorce and it's found in the following verses:

Matthew 19:7-9; 5:32 — The only reason that Christ gives for divorce (we will speak on remarriage in just a minute) is for sexual immorality. Period. If there were any other reasons that we could Scripturally do, Jesus would have given them to us. The Lord allows the party innocent of fornication to put away their fornicating mate. To get a divorce for any other reason other than fornication is to get an unscriptural divorce. If you know of any other reason for divorce, where is the passage of Scripture allowing such?

Finally, let's talk about God's law concerning remarriage. The Scripture only shows two groups of people who have the right to take another mate: (1) Those whose mate is dead (Romans 7:2-3) and (2) those who put away a mate for fornication (Matthew 19:9). For anyone else to marry another mate is to live in adultery. One can live in such a sin (Colossians 3:5-7).

There is a belief called "mental divorce" that quite a few people cling to, so I feel like we need to discuss this subject. It says (contrary to God's Word) that a put away woman may remarry if her original husband commits fornication. It would allow that remarriage regardless of when the fornication took place. Even if the man commits fornication after he legally divorces his wife unscripturally, this position says that she may remarry.

Luke 16:18 — This verse envisions a man Fred, who puts away his wife Lisa, unlawfully (not for fornication), and then marries Jessica. The verse goes on to say that it is adultery if someone marries Lisa at this point, after Fred has put her away, and even after Fred has remarried and committed adultery against Lisa.

Matthew 19:9 — With this verse, for a man to be able to remarry (after divorce) without committing adultery, three things must be true: (1) His first wife must have committed fornication; (2) he must have put away his wife; and, (3) fornication must have been the reason he divorced his wife. I've heard people correctly break down this verse into four categories of people:

1. The one who puts away their spouse for fornication does not commit adultery when they remarry.

2. The one who puts away their spouse for a reason other than fornication commits adultery when they remarry.
3. The one who is put away by their spouse for fornication commits adultery when they remarry.
4. The one who is put away by their spouse for a reason other than fornication commits adultery when they remarry.

### ***Fornication Alone Does Not Break The Bond***

We all agree that if a man commits fornication against his wife the marriage bond does not terminate at the point of the fornication. No, the wife has the option of divorcing her husband for fornication (Matthew 5:32). But she may decide to stay with her husband; in that case, the marriage bond would then remain intact. So we all agree that it is not fornication by itself that breaks the marriage bond; it is divorce for the cause of fornication that breaks the bond. But the mental divorce position says that a woman's bond with her previous husband is broken simply based on the fact that her previous husband has committed fornication, even though she didn't divorce him for that (instead, he divorced her).

If you know of anyone else who has the right to take another mate, where is the Scripture? It's just not there, which brings up this issue. Maybe this is the first time you are learning this and you realize that you are in an unscriptural marriage? You need to get out of it if you are to be a child of God. You know the truth now and James 4:17 tells us to continue to do something you know is wrong, it is sin and Romans 6:23 tells us that the "wages of sin is death".

I understand that the picture presented here is far different from the one described around the water cooler at work or in the locker room at the gym. Modern culture praises and pursues happiness, pleasure, rights, and fulfillment. We, however, are to be different from the world regarding our entire lives, including marriage (Romans 12:2). We must praise and pursue holiness, our promises, our responsibilities and keeping our commitment. This is the kind of marriage God instituted. As was written all the way back in Genesis 2:24, "For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh." God instituted marriage and we must pursue it God's way.

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