

God's Law For Remarriage

Introduction. A research report by Taylor Nelson Sofres shows that men and women are pretty consistent about the factors they feel are the most important in a successful marriage: 1) Mutual respect and trust: men, 90%; women, 95%; 2) open, regular communication: men, 82%; women, 92%; and, 3) marital fidelity: men, 74%; women, 85%.

Marriage was instituted by God from the very beginning. It is a life-long contract between a man and a woman, no matter what the world says. It is designed to satisfy and fulfill the physical, emotional, and sexual needs and desires of each partner.

America's first no fault divorce law was signed into law in California in 1969 by Ronald Reagan, and it swept the country in the early 1970s, pushing up the number of divorces from 639,000 in 1969 to 1,036,000 in 1975. President Reagan told his son Michael that his signing of the law was his "greatest regret" in public life. Although the divorce rate hovers around 50%, marriage can be terminated for one reason, and one reason only, as far as God is concerned.

I. **Divorce**

- A. The Bible's position is that divorce should not occur (Malachi 2:16; Romans 7:2-3; 1 Corinthians 7:10-11). When fornication occurs you may put away the guilty spouse, but you need to examine yourself to see if you have been guilty of anything that would have caused or been a contributing factor in the unfaithful spouse's action.
- B. You might even consider reconciliation with the sinning spouse. It will not be easy, but it can be done if both parties are willing to work hard to overcome the unfaithfulness. Trust in each other must be true, sure, and consistent for a relationship to survive the problems.
- C. If it can be determined that the unfaithful partner will not commit to full and open scrutiny and show by example and word that fornication will never happen again, then divorce may be the only answer.
- D. Once divorce has occurred, especially in young people, there is the desire to take a new mate to combat loneliness with companionship.

II. **Who Can Remarry?**

- A. The world says that one can divorce for any reason and get as many mates as you can in a lifetime. The world throws marriage around like a ball, if you do not like it anymore, you get a new one. A lot of major cities in this country are a quagmire of mate after mate.
- B. Under the Old Testament, the adulterer and adulteress were put to death (Leviticus 20:10). That would certainly put an end to most of the fornication which is taking place today. But the New Testament

taught a different response (Matthew 5:32; 19:9; Mark 10:11-12; Luke 16:18).

III. ***Man's Teaching On God's Word***

- A. There are a lot of doctrines by brethren which ignore this plain rule.
 - 1. The put-away fornicator can marry a new mate.
 - 2. If an unbeliever divorces a believer, and there is no fornication, the believer can get a new mate.
 - 3. Matthew 19:9 is "kingdom law" and applies only to the marriages of Christians and does not apply to the world.
 - 4. Baptism sanctifies an adulterous marriage.
 - 5. Adultery is redefined as non-sexual covenant breaking, which means the adultery occurs in the process of the divorce procedure, the new marriage ceremony, or both, but does not involve the sexual relationship.
 - 6. God is a loving God who does not want spouses to remain in a verbally or physically abusive relationship. If they get a divorce from that relationship God does not expect them to remain single or reunite with the original mate.
 - 7. Only the innocent party has the right to sunder the union or leave for the cause of fornication.
 - a) The divorce allowance found in Matthew 19:9 and other passages was put in place by God long before the divorce courts of America were set up.
 - b) It does not matter who makes it to the court first, the guilty party still cannot marry another, but the innocent party can.
- B. Each of these teachings are "theories" of men and not facts as taught within the pages of the Bible. The men who teach such are apparently looking for ways to justify ideals, wishes, and wants for themselves, family members, or friends which have the problem they are defending. All men are bound by and will be judged by the word of God; innocent or guilty, fornicator or not (John 12:48; 2 Corinthians 5:10).
- C. Clearly the verses previously studied teach that the divorced person (the one who has committed fornication) cannot remarry another. If the fornicator remarries he/she commits adultery and causes the one who marries them to commit adultery.
- D. God has designed the marriage relationship for two people, male and female, coming together in a union of lives and living. When they are married, they are married for life, but sometimes that is not possible. In the case of fornication, God allows the one innocent of fornication to marry again.

Conclusion. Marriage is not to be taken lightly. No matter what the world may say, we just cannot divorce and remarry at a whim or drop of the hat, because we just do not like our current spouse. The laws of God are specific as to who can and cannot marry and remarry. Divorce is allowable for one reason and one reason only -- fornication. God made it so plain through Jesus' teaching in the passages we have cited that only those who wish to seek some unlawful justification can misunderstand it. Many will continue to question what has been said, but the fact remains that God has spoken. Where God has spoken man has no right to pervert, change, or ignore what has been spoken.