

BIBLE GOD FORBIDS DIVORCE

Divorce is permissible and is a human right. Marriage is only a human institution, a social construct, an agreement, and so it can be dissolved. While it is true that it is to be hoped that marriage will last for life, it does not follow that the couple should be forced or obligated to stay in a dead marriage. It is compelling them to believe they are joined together when they are not. If abuse has taken place giving that message is further abuse. When the relationship breaks down the marriage is over and divorce must not be the dissolution of marriage but the recognition that the marriage is no more.

In Mark 10, Jesus forbids all divorce. Jews come along and ask Jesus if Jews may divorce their wives for any reason. Jesus says no for God meant man and woman to be one in marriage until death. Then he repeated his revelation, "What therefore God has united (joined together as in sex for male body is designed for female body), let not man separate or divide" (Mark 10:9). Then he told his disciples in private that anybody who divorces their wife or husband and marries another commits adultery against his first wife for she is still the only real wife and he cannot divorce her before God. He did not say some but anybody meaning all.

Some theologians say that Mark's Jesus is not being that strict but is reminding all that life-long marriage is the ideal which does not mean that divorce is wrong. Jesus was answering Jews who asked him if divorce was ever lawful. He didn't say that some divorcees who remarry are committing adultery but that all are. If it had been an ideal he would have said, "Try to keep married until death but if you fail and things cannot be mended then it is not adultery when you divorce and remarry." He did give an iron law when his words can be taken that way. He said that a man must leave his father and mother and be one flesh with his wife meaning that a man must consider her to be closer to him than his parents bodily and spiritually even though he was made of his parents. You can't really make your mother not your mother so how can you make your wife no longer your wife?

Perhaps Jesus took it for granted that since we knew his main law was love we would know to allow divorce when it is the lesser evil?

The love argument is just a distortion and it overlooks the fact that what Jesus called love is sometimes evil at least to our mind. Jesus preached rules that were hard or impossible to rationally defend. He would have said they are rational but since our minds have been knocked off balance like Adam and Eve's were when they believed that the crime of eating the forbidden fruit was the lesser evil and we inherited their irrational state.

In Luke, we read that everybody who gets a divorce and gets married again to somebody else is committing adultery (16:18). There is no context that affects the meaning so Luke can only be taken literally. Yet some say his Jesus meant divorce only for insufficient causes. But that is twisting the text.

Paul deals with divorce in 1 Corinthians 7. He told the married not to get a divorce. If the wife leaves her husband she must remain single or go back to him. The context says nothing about conditions so there are none. Jesus may have made sweeping condemnations of things that some think were not meant to be taken too rigidly. For example, he said not to swear at all and if you want to be holy let the man that steals your coat steal your cloak as well. But Paul's teachings cannot be softened that way for he spoke plainly. And besides Jesus could have meant the two rules literally. Just because we don't like them or consider them dangerous doesn't mean Jesus didn't mean to be taken too literally.

And there is no doubt that when Jesus was confronted by his disciples for his teaching on divorce and when they said it was too strict he didn't back down or soften what he said at all. In Matthew he responded by referring to eunuchs made by men or those who made themselves eunuchs. He means single people. Does he mean castrated people? What about the women? Isaiah 56:3-5 talks about eunuchs as in chaste celibates rather than castrated people. He praises them as celibates for the sake of the kingdom of Heaven.

The eunuch is castrated and should have no sexual desires so Jesus is commanding that those men whose marriages break down must eradicate sexual desire. This reminds us of Paul's teaching that marriage is only to be encouraged to those who burn with sexual desire (1 Corinthians 7:8, 9). Logically then if it breaks down the sexual drive must be destroyed by staying away from women and by being devoted to prayer. The loss of sexual desire makes you a eunuch and you read of eunuchs who were devoted to service and who were single people rather than really castrated.

Paul permitted a couple to part by mutual consent if they were married as pagans and one or both of them converted to Jesus. He said nothing about them having the right to remarry.

So that is the teaching. In Matthew some seek a loophole. There they claim that Jesus allowed divorce if adultery has taken place.

He said that marriage cannot be broken but pornea is a separate case. In other words, its not relevant to how marriage cannot be broken.

If Jesus did allow divorce for adultery that amounts to encouraging it. Men divorced women did not so this meant the man could be free from a marriage if he had sex with somebody who was not his wife.

Regardless, not a word of the Bible allows remarriage after divorce. It is said that Paul allows you to divorce your pagan spouse if you become a Christian. He says you are not enslaved. The context is not about remarriage but about being single. So there is nothing at all that permits a married person to get wed again if the spouse is still alive.

The Bible is against divorce for remarriage under all circumstances for it holds that once a valid marriage takes place it can only be dissolved by death. The truth about marriage is that it is about having sex with nobody else until death they do part. It is not about love for it doesn't countenance parting when love ceases. The living together is not even important. A married man and his wife are still considered married if they live apart. For the marriage to be "real" it is enough to have sex once. Marriage is not about love but about sex which is why it cannot be holy or sensible. When it is about sex that might not be very good then logically divorce is wrong for divorcing is done for the sake of happiness and marriage treats happiness with indifference.

The Church says that sexual activity outside of marriage even masturbation and sexual fantasy is immoral. Jesus said that if a man looks at a woman lustfully he has already committed adultery with her in his heart which supports the Church's prudishness. Today we know that if we don't masturbate or let ourselves enjoy sexual daydreams we will never get far with enjoying our sexuality and our performance in bed will be dreadful. We need to know our own bodies and minds to enjoy our sexuality. We all like different kinds of sex and pre-marital sex is important and necessary. To say that sex outside marriage is wrong is to say that marriage is good and holy.

The Church says that to have sex outside marriage means you are telling the person you are having sex with, "I am giving you my whole self now. This means I am giving you myself for life." They argue that sex is only suitable for marriage, where a man takes a woman for life as his sexual partner, for outside of marriage it is simply a lie. Sex in marriage then means that the husband is telling his wife that he belongs to nobody but her for life and vice versa.

If sex means you give your whole self then why say that it means you give yourself to your partner for life? Why not eternity? Why should it just be for this life? If you really give your whole self then you give yourself forever. Even the Mormons reject this principle for they hold that giving the body does not make marriage eternal, a ceremony in the Temple does.

If sex is giving your whole self to another person then how can it be right to look for a new partner or wife or husband if that person dies? To say I give myself to you until divorce if it happens is putting a condition on it as much as saying I give myself to you until you die is. It is not giving your whole self. If you give your whole self to a person you will be like the person who having lost their beloved wife or husband refuses to even think about a new partner for they loved the old partner so much.

Sex isn't the only way you give yourself to another person. You give yourself to your child when you get pregnant. That doesn't mean you shouldn't have any more babies or that the child should stay with you instead of getting married and going away. When you tell your sweetheart that you love her or him and nobody else and swear undying love are you not giving yourself in a deeper way that sex could ever signify? The closeness of that moment could be closer than sex. Don't you see then the absurdity of the Christian doctrine that sex means you are giving yourself not just now but for life?

When you work you are giving your precious time to your employer and yourself. You could be dead next week and better off having a party instead of working and yet you work. You put the job before the thought that you could be dead and should be living it up in the meantime. Does this giving yourself mean you should work to this person until death?

You could intend a great commitment to a person through sex outside marriage and then when you get married you may feel less committed. Marriage can change relationships. To say that unenthusiastic and unloving sex in marriage is good for it promises and signifies lifelong commitment and that sex between two unmarried people who are really into each other and are soul mates should but does not just because they are not married and so is a lie, is just bigoted cruel insulting nonsense. It is really just saying that there is no honest commitment without a simple ceremony. Did you know that you are insincere when you take out a loan wearing white shoes?

If sex outside marriage is lying to the sexual partner that he or she is the one for life as the Church says then sex within

marriage when one of you believe in divorce is also lying. Why? For the marriage could end in divorce and the sex is not saying, "I take you for life no matter how bad things get", but, "I take you for life but if things get too bad we will get divorced".

How far must a man and woman go before their sex is saying, "I take you for life"? Does oral sex say that? Anal sex? Heavy petting? Foreplay? Masturbation? Is ejaculation necessary? Can you see how saying sex says that confines people to a silly biological morality in which it is physics that count more than feelings and intentions?

Nobody ever gives their whole selves to anybody. You might give your body and your time in sex but that is all. Are husbands who don't feel much for their wives giving their whole selves? They are holding back and yet the Church permits their sex. As long as separation or divorce is allowed by having sex you are saying that you are giving yourself only as long as the other person doesn't do something that entitles you to look for a separation or divorce! That is not giving your whole self.

The marriage is indissoluble for the estranged husband and wife still have the right to have sex but in a divorce as Jesus means it the other rights to be close to one another and share everything and the property are gone so the marriage is partly dissolved. It follows from Jesus' ban on divorce that a wife should take abuse and beatings and cheating from her husband. If she needs to do something to protect herself walking out is not an option. I repeat, logic says that if remarriage is wrong then marriage cannot be dissolved. If marriage cannot be dissolved it means even an estranged husband and wife still have the right to have sex with one another and no right to have sex with anybody else. People in the Christian context have no right to have sex unless they are prepared to support and help one another as much they humanly can so it follows that separation is always wrong. The right to have sex implies that the husband owns the wife's body and personhood which her body is part of. When he owns her physically and emotionally it follows that this right takes pre-eminence to her welfare. For example, a wife who leaves her husband because he beats her up has no right to when he owns her for sex.

Even if the wife cannot live with the husband and he cheats on her and beats her up, because sex expresses marriage and makes it real, it follows that she should have conditions set up so that they can continue to have sex. This is a purely misogynistic teaching.

Conclusion

The Bible forbids divorce. Many people don't care and still call themselves Christians!

PUTTING AWAY

The Jewish scholars asked Jesus about a certificate of divorce and he said God's plan is for marriage to last forever until death. It could not be clearer. Even the apostles told him his teaching is too strict and puts them off marriage. But some scholars in the Baptist faith have tried to make out Jesus only condemned illegal or non-legal (the two are not the same!) divorce not divorce. They try to make out that putting away does not mean legitimate divorce. The idea is that if you give your spouse a fake divorce you make them commit adultery. Jesus did not even discuss certificates or use the word but just slammed divorce which means he does not care if it is legal or not. God does not separate man from wife he said. This is saying certificates or not, do not matter.

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