

The Biblical View of Divorce

God's word is straightforward in addressing the issue of divorce. The following verses from both the old and new testaments speak clearly to the biblical viewpoint on divorce.

“For the Lord, the God of Israel, says he hates divorce and cruel men. Therefore, control your passions—let there be no divorcing of your wives.” (Malachi 2:16 TLB)

“The law of Moses says, ‘If anyone wants to be rid of his wife, he can divorce her merely by giving her a letter of dismissal.’ But I say that a man who divorces his wife, except for fornication, causes her to commit adultery if she marries again. And he who marries her commits adultery.” (Matthew 5:31-32 TLB)

“Don't you understand yet, dear Jewish brothers in Christ, that when a person dies the law no longer holds him in it's power? Let me illustrate: when a woman marries, the law binds her to her husband as long as he is alive. But if he dies, she is no longer bound to him; the laws of marriage no longer apply to her. Then she can marry someone else if she wants to. That would be wrong while he was alive, but it is perfectly all right after he dies.” (Romans 7:1-3 TLB)

“Now for those who are married I have a command, not just a suggestion. And it is not a command from me, for this is what the Lord Himself has said: A wife must not leave her husband.” (1 Corinthians 7:10 TLB)

“But if she is separated from him, let her remain single or else go back to him. And the husband must not divorce his wife.” (1 Corinthians 7:11 TLB)

“Here I want to add some suggestions of my own. These are not direct commands from the Lord, but they seem right to me: If a Christian has a wife who is not a Christian, but she wants to stay with him anyway, he must not leave her or divorce her. And if a Christian woman has a husband who isn't a Christian, and he wants her to stay with him, she must not leave him. For perhaps the husband who isn't a Christian may become a Christian with the help of his Christian wife. And the wife who isn't a Christian may become a Christian with the help of her Christian husband. Otherwise, if the family separates, the children might never come to know the Lord; whereas a united family may, in God's plan, result in the children's salvation.” (1 Corinthians 7:12-14 TLB)

“But if the husband or wife who isn't a Christian is eager to leave, it is permitted. In such cases the husband or wife should not insist that the other stay, for God wants his children to live in peace and harmony. For after all, there is no assurance to you wives that your husbands will be converted if they stay; and the same may be said to you husbands concerning your wives. But be sure in deciding these matters that you are living as God intended, marrying or not marrying in accordance with God's direction and help, and accepting whatever situation God has put you into. This is my rule for all the churches.” (1 Corinthians 7:15-17 TLB)