

Divorce:

The Violent Dismemberment of the One-Flesh of Marriage



Divorce may be the furthest thing from your mind, or you may be in the middle of the drama of a split from your spouse. We all must be aware of the fact that divorce is rampant in our culture today and that none of us are immune to the possibility of divorce. I am convinced that Carmen and I will never divorce, but with that, I must do the work to continue to grow in my relationship with the Lord and with my wife. We must *work* on our relationship to keep it vibrant and alive.

The Message Bible paraphrases Malachi 2:16 as: “‘I hate divorce,’ says the God of Israel. God-of-the-Angel-Armies says, ‘I hate the violent dismembering of the ‘one flesh’ of marriage.’ So watch yourselves. Don’t let your guard down. Don’t cheat.” No matter “amicable” the divorce, it is a violent dismembering of a marriage and a family. There may not be physical violence between husband and wife, but the emotional pain of divorce is very real. God meant for couples to fulfill their vows and remain married for life, growing in the oneness of the marriage relationship. The cost of divorce is great; on the couple emotionally, physically, financially - in every way. The children pay the cost of divorce for the rest of their lives - the documentation of the problems children suffer is extensive.

Divorce happens; it is not the ‘unforgiveable sin,’ and people can and do survive and even go on to do much for the Kingdom of God. While we don’t want to put condemnation on those who have experienced divorce, we do want to challenge those folks to truly examine their lives and their walk with the Lord - what was *their* part in the divorce, even if they fought to keep the marriage together. Realize that the rate of divorce rises dramatically in second marriages, and even more in third. It is critical that one who has gone through divorce get the help they need to grow emotionally, physiologically, and in their walk with the Lord before thinking about entering into another marriage.

Any marriage can be saved; but both spouses must come to a point where they are willing to do the work necessary to make the marriage work. But also, we all need to do the work to protect our marriage to keep it from withering and dying. But also we need to be willing to stand up and tell the person considering divorce that there is another way - that there is a third option to living in a dysfunctional marriage or leaving. They can get help to build a healthy marriage beneficial to both husband and wife - it *is* what God would want.

Helpful Resources: *Fortified Marriages Resource page:* www.fortifiedmarriages.com

Articles to check out:

10 Hidden Consequences of Divorce (Especially if You Have Kids) by Sue Schlesman - www.crosswalk.com

The impact of family structure on the health of children: Effects of divorce by Jane Anderson - ncbi.gov

Book: *The Unexpected Legacy of Divorce: The 25 Year Landmark Study*

by Judith Wallerstein & Julia Lewis - Amazon.com