



NewsLetter

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Clarity and Understanding of Marriage, Divorce and Remarriage Part.2

Marriage is something sacred in the union of man and woman, God is truly present. In each relationship, he has continued his creative work and recorded his jubilation in the body. "We must not separate what God has united.

Deep intimacy is very rare. Studies show that only 10% of couples experience true intimacy in their relationship. The rest stay together for the sake of the children or a sense of duty. But they never achieve the noble goal of a true relationship.

Today, people have a different view of marriage. However, marriage is beneficial to human. There are many blessings for a couple that loves each other than a couple that destroys each other. The entire universe is governed by very real physical, moral and spiritual laws, which affect every area of life. Marriage is no exception. A special relationship between two people who love each other is at the heart of the plan of God, the designer and manager of all things. A couple that ignores this will be as vulnerable as a rudderless boat in the middle of the ocean.

For many years, there has been a lot of misunderstanding in the Church about marriage, divorce, and remarriage. As a result, people have been hurt, condemned, and confused. Many suffered in silence, thinking that God was angry with them or that God was displeased because of mistakes they had made in the past.

There are two biblical grounds for divorce

1. **Adultery.** The Greek word for adultery is (porneia) which is a sin that includes a wide range of illicit sexual intercourse or sexual activity. It could be any sexual immorality (adultery, incest, homosexuality, bestiality, etc.).

The word porneia is translated differently in different Bibles. For example, in the New American Standard Bible (NASB) the word porneia is translated as "unchastity."

The King James Version translates the word porneia as "fornication." The New International Version (NIV), NET Bible and English Standard Bible (ESV) translate porneia as "immorality." The New Living Translation (NLT) translates the word as "unfaithful" and, unfortunately, misses the meaning of porneia. "It has been said, anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce." But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, makes her the victim of adultery, and anyone who marries a divorced woman commits adultery. (Mathieu. 5:31-32)

2. Abandonment by a non-believing spouse

"For the unbelieving husband has been sanctified through his wife, and the unbelieving wife has been sanctified through her believing husband. Otherwise, your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy.

But if the unbeliever leaves, let it be so. The brother or the sister is not bound in such circumstances; God has called us to live in peace." (1 Corinthians 7:14-15)

Light on the original divorce document

The divorce document mentioned in the Bible was originally a legal certificate to free a woman from the stigma of adultery and protect her position in society.

The certificate was given to protect the innocent, most often the wife sent away by her husband for a reason other than adultery. The divorce certificate gave the wife permission to remarry. Jesus clearly stated that divorce was given only to regularize the result of sin, it was because of the hardness of their hearts. It is clear to understand that Jesus did not advise divorce. He did, however, permit it.

Despite the biblical permission for divorce, it would always be better to seek reconciliation. Often, however, it is humanly impossible.

Ellen White's view on divorce

"There is only one sin, which is adultery, that can place either husband or wife in a position where they can be free of the marriage vow in God's sight. Although the laws of the earth may grant a divorce, yet they are the husband and wife always in the light of the Bible, according to the laws of God." {Adventist Home 344.2}

The Church's position on divorce and remarriage

"A separation or divorce in which infidelity or abandonment by an unbelieving spouse to the marriage vows is not the cause does not give either spouse the right to remarry unless, in the meantime, the other spouse has remarried, committed adultery/fornication, or died." Church manual p.196.

In a world where Christian homes are threatened by the winds of divorce, pastoral support is important and essential in the areas of instruction and guidance in the case of marriage, and healing and restoration in the case of divorce.

Church members are called to forgive and accept those who have fallen, since God has forgiven them too.