

Scenarios Part III.

1. A husband and wife have an argument and it's one of the worst they've ever had. The wife is so angry that she grabs a vase and throws it at her husband and it shatters over his arm and head as he looks to shield himself. What course of action would you recommend to resolve this issue? Are there grounds for divorce here?
2. A husband and wife have been having difficulties throughout their marriage for years now and this has affected their intimacy. Overwhelmed with passion, the husband basically forces his wife to become intimate. Who is to blame? What course of action would you recommend to resolve this issue? Are there grounds for divorce here?
3. A couple typically uses crass language and verbally insult each other without much pause for choosing appropriate language over inappropriate. One goes too far in degrading the other in the heat of the moment. What course of action would you recommend to resolve this issue? Are there grounds for divorce here?
4. The wife has continually given her husband the cold shoulder over something he has done which he regrets. And it's not just one thing but it's a number of things that have happened between the two. Yet there has been nothing that Scripturally would allow for divorce. Whatever the case, she will hardly even talk to her husband anymore and has seemed to pretty much have abandoned the marriage altogether. Are there grounds for divorce here?

Reasons 3 & 4 for Divorce – “Abandonment and Abuse”

I. Read the following and consider the next questions: *Matthew 19:4-8, “Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate.... I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, and marries another woman commits adultery...” Romans 7:2, “A married woman is bound to her husband as long as he is alive...” 1 Corinthians 7:15 “But if the unbeliever leaves, let him do so. A believing man or woman is not bound in such circumstances; God has called us to live in peace.”*

Question: What does the Lord, risen from the dead, say are the only Scriptural reasons for divorce?

Question: Even, then, when there are Scriptural reasons for a divorce – is sin still present?

Question: What does abandonment and abuse in any form in a marriage say about the commitment made between husband and wife and even about their own spiritual well being?

II. Read the following illustration of a perfect marriage and consider the following questions:

- Ephesians 5:22-31:

A. What is the example of a perfect marriage?

B. If a man in a marriage lives like Jesus all the time, as he is commanded, and the woman treats her husband like the Holy Church treats Christ, will there ever be instances of abuse or abandonment?

C. If the husband abuses his wife or abandons her, what are we as Christians (starting with the spouse first) obligated to say? (Ephesians 5:29; 1 John 4:20)

IV. To keep that marriage promise and avoid abandonment and abuse...

A. Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things through him who gives me strength."

B. Judges 16:24, "O Sovereign Lord, remember me. O God, please strengthen me."

1. Who will help you and how will he provide you with help?

2. Are you letting God help you now?

V. Practical Planning

A. Set a goal for spiritual growth (church attendance, daily Bible readings, prayer)

B. Write down 5 ways that you can show your commitment to each other.

C. Write down 5 ways that you believe your spouse can show their commitment to you. (The purpose is not to condemn each other for what is not being done. The purpose is to remind each other of what you would like your spouse to do for you to show commitment.)

***FYI:** What about a prenuptial agreement? Today, the idea of getting a prenuptial agreement is becoming more and more prevalent. (The reason is probably because 1 out of every 2 marriages ends in divorce.) But is a prenuptial agreement God pleasing? It would appear not to be for the fact that it automatically assumes that there's a chance the marriage will be abandoned by one or the other? That simply cannot be the mindset of a couple about ready to marry. It will doom the marriage before it starts. Divorce simply cannot be an option in the minds of Christians about to marry. Someone might ask, "But what if someone has been deceptive and simply marries for money and after a time files for divorce? Better to be safe than sorry!" Two Scriptural passages can apply to this situation: 1 Corinthians 7:15 says, "But if the unbeliever leaves, let him do so. (Notice that someone who just marries for money and divorces to get it would be an unbeliever.) A believing man or woman is not bound in such circumstances; God has called us to live in peace." And "But I tell you, Do not resist an evil person. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if someone wants to sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. If someone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles..." (Matthew 5:38-41). ...If there is still a desire for a prenuptial after reading this, it would appear that the marriage should be put on hold until the issue is resolved through God's Word and prayer.*