FIRST BAPTIST INSTITUTE

ANTHROPOLOGY & HAMARTIOLOGY: MAN & SIN
MARRIAGE, DIVORCE, AND REMARRIAGE | OCTOBER 25, 2026

DEFINITIONS

Marriage: A lifelong covenantal _____ between one man and one woman, established by God for companionship, one-flesh intimacy, family, and His glory

Divorce: The formal _____ of the marriage covenant

Remarriage: Entering a new marriage covenant after a previous marriage has _____ through death or divorce

GOD DESIGNED MARRIAGE TO BE A LIFELONG COVENANT

God established _____ at creation as the lifelong one-flesh union of one man and one woman, joined together by Him (Gen. 2:18–24; Mal. 2:14; Matt. 19:3–6).

The first question in a troubled marriage should not be, "Do I have grounds for divorce?" but, "How can this marriage be preserved and restored in _____ to God?"

DIVORCE IS A CONCESSION TO HUMAN SIN, NOT PART OF GOD'S DESIGN

Because of the hardness of sinful hearts, Scripture recognizes and _____ divorce without presenting it as God's original intention. Every divorce results from sin, though obtaining a divorce is not always itself sinful (Deut. 24:1–4; Matt. 19:7–9).

Ordinary _____, disappointment, incompatibility, loss of affection, or the unbelief of a spouse who is willing to remain married are not biblical grounds for divorce (Matt. 19:6; 1 Cor. 7:12–14).

SCRIPTURE PERMITS DIVORCE FOR SEXUAL IMMORALITY

Jesus teaches that sexual immorality may so _____ the marriage covenant that the innocent spouse is permitted to divorce. The term *porneia* refers broadly to sexual immorality and may include egregious sexual sin beyond intercourse (Matt. 19:8–9).

Divorce in such a case is _____, not required. Repentance, forgiveness, and reconciliation should be earnestly pursued whenever possible. Yet genuine repentance by the guilty spouse does not necessarily erase the innocent spouse's biblical freedom to divorce (Matt. 19:9; Eph. 4:32).

Sources: What the New Testament Teaches About Divorce and Remarriage (Andrew David Naselli); Christian Ethics (Wayne Grudem); Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage in the Bible (Jay E. Adams); Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage: Critical Questions and Answers (Jim Newheiser)

SCRIPTURE PERMITS DIVORCE WHEN A SPOUSE ABANDONS THE MARRIAGE

A believer must remain _____ to an unbelieving spouse who is willing to remain married, but if the unbelieving spouse abandons the marriage, the believer is "not enslaved" and is free to accept or formalize the divorce and to remarry (1 Cor. 7:12–15).

If a professing Christian abandons a spouse, the church should pursue repentance through biblical church _____. If that person persistently refuses to repent, the church may eventually have to regard them as an unbeliever (Matt. 18:15–17; 1 Cor. 7:15).

EXTREME COVENANT-BREAKING MAY ALSO PERMIT DIVORCE

The marriage covenant includes fundamental obligations of faithfulness, provision, _____, companionship, and marital intimacy (Gen. 2:18; Ex. 21:10–11; 1 Cor. 7:3–5; Eph. 5:25–29).

Extreme or persistent covenant-breaking may so repudiate the marriage covenant that divorce becomes permissible even without physical departure (Ex. 21:10–11; 1 Cor. 7:15). Severe _____ is one clear example, though such cases require careful biblical judgment.

A spouse or children should never be required to remain in physical _____ while the question of divorce is being considered (Prov. 22:3).

A LEGITIMATE DIVORCE FREES THE INNOCENT SPOUSE TO REMARRY

A legitimate divorce genuinely _____ the marriage covenant and frees the innocent spouse to remarry (Matt. 19:9; 1 Cor. 7:15). Any remarriage should be to another believer (1 Cor. 7:39).

Freedom to remarry does not necessarily mean that immediate remarriage is _____. Time may be needed for grief, spiritual growth, care for children, and wise counsel.

AN ILLEGITIMATE DIVORCE DOES NOT GIVE FREEDOM TO REMARRY

A believer who divorces without biblical grounds should remain unmarried or pursue reconciliation. Remarriage after an illegitimate divorce ordinarily constitutes _____ (Mark 10:11–12; 1 Cor. 7:10–11).

Although a wrongful divorce really ends the marriage, moral obligations arising from that former marriage may remain. Where reconciliation is still possible, it should be _____.

RESPONDING BIBLICALLY TO PAST MARITAL SIN

Divorce and wrongful remarriage are serious but _____ sins. The gospel offers real cleansing and restoration to repentant sinners (1 Cor. 6:9–11).

If someone has already entered a _____ marriage after a sinful divorce, repentance does not ordinarily mean dissolving that marriage (Deut. 24:1–4). The present marriage should be honored faithfully, while forgiveness and restitution are sought wherever possible.

The church should neither _____ sinful divorce nor permanently stigmatize those who have been divorced or remarried.