

The Damage of Divorce

1 Corinthians 7:10-16

SLIDE 1

I. Intro

● Anecdote

- Divorce
- When it comes to the controversial topics that we find in the Bible - Divorce most certainly makes the top ten.
- One reason why is due to the fact that - many Christians have exchanged the Biblical doctrine of divorce...
- ...for the unbiblical belief that divorce is acceptable in every situation - - otherwise known as - no-fault divorce.
- As a result - most of us have been impacted by divorce - wether directly or indirectly.
- As a matter of fact - at least a third of Americans who have ever been married - have also experienced divorce.
- This includes the nearly 2 million Americans - who were divorced in 2023.
- And based on the data - more than 80 couples will divorce here in America - before this Bible study is over.

II. Outline

● Points

- Damage
- Without debate - most of us here this morning have been negatively affected by the damage of divorce.

- And listen - things weren't that different - during the days when Paul wrote this epistle - to the Christians in Corinth.
- It's for this reason that he took the time to discourage the disciples of Christ - from getting divorced.
- And as we study the scriptures before us this - we'll begin to see that...

SLIDES 2-4

1. ...Divorce Damages our Testimony
2. ...Divorce Damages our Family
3. ...Divorce Damages our Sensibility

- With this as our outline - let's open our Bibles to 1st Corinthians chapter 7...
- ...where we find Paul - presenting the original recipients of this epistle - with the details concerning divorce.

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III. Testimony

- Context
- As we make our way to the seventh chapter of 1st Corinthians - I wanna take some time to put our text back into it's context.
- And I should begin by reminding you that it was back in the beginning of this chapter...
- ...where Paul encouraged those who were single - to abstain from the sin of sexual immorality - by remaining celibate.
- At the same time - he also encouraged the unmarried Christians to realize that...
- ...those who were burning with passion should feel the freedom to marry a believing spouse.

- And now - here in our text today - we find Paul - helping his audience to understand that - those who are married - should remain married.
- Let's consider how he explained it - here in 1st Corinthians 7 - look with me - beginning there at verse 10 - where Paul declared...

SLIDE 6-9

1Co 7:10 Now to the married I command, yet not I but the Lord: A wife is not to depart from her husband.

1Co 7:11 But even if she does depart, let her remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband. And a husband is not to divorce his wife.

1Co 7:12 But to the rest I, not the Lord, say: If any brother has a wife who does not believe, and she is willing to live with him, let him not divorce her.

1Co 7:13 And a woman who has a husband who does not believe, if he is willing to live with her, let her not divorce him.

1Co 7:14 For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; otherwise your children would be unclean, but now they are holy.

1Co 7:15 But if the unbeliever departs, let him depart; a brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases. But God has called us to peace.

1Co 7:16 For how do you know, O wife, whether you will save your husband? Or how do you know, O husband, whether you will save your wife?

- Married
- Here in our text today - we find Paul - continuing to tackle the questions that the Christians in Corinth sent to him in a previous correspondence.

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- And while he began this chapter - by addressing those who seemed to think that it was more spiritual to remain single...
- ...we now find Paul - shifting his attention to those who were already married.
- And as we consider the content of these verses - it seems to me that he may've been answering questions...

- ...posed by those who wanted to know more details about the right to divorce.
- In response - Paul began by reminding them about the command previously presented by Christ Jesus.

- The Lord

- With this as our focus - let's back up - and take another look at verse 10 - where Paul declared...

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1Co 7:10 Now to the married I command, yet not I but the Lord: A wife is not to depart from her husband.

- Here in this verse - we find Paul - presenting his case against the legal process by which married couple is divorced.

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- And we must not fail to notice that Paul was actually reiterating the same command that Christ Jesus presented...
- ...on the day when a group of Pharisees approached him with a question about divorce.
- With this as our focus - we should take some time to consider the way that Jesus responded to those religious rulers.
- And so - hold your place here in 1st Corinthians - and let's turn in our Bibles - to Matthew chapter 19.

- Beliefs

- As we make our way to the 19th chapter of Matthew's gospel account...
- ...we should take a moment to consider to two major rabbinic schools of thought - concerning the dissolution of a marriage.
- One group held a more conservative view - by insisting that a divorce was only permissible in the case of adultery.

- Then there were those who held a more liberal view of divorce - by arguing that...
- ...a husband could divorce his wife for any reason - including finding another woman more attractive - or - if she was a poor cook.
- Rabbi Hillel even taught that a man could divorce his wife...
 - “...if she spoiled his dinner, if she spun, or went with unbound hair, or spoke to men in the streets, if she spoke disrespectfully of his parents in his presence, or if she was a brawling woman whose voice could be heard in the next house.”

- Separate

- With all of this in mind - let's consider how Jesus responded to the Pharisees who wanted to know if a man can divorce his wife for just any reason?
- Look with me - beginning there at verse 4 - where Jesus asked...

SLIDE 13-14

Mat 19:4 “Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning ‘made them male and female,’

Mat 19:5 “and said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’?

Mat 19:6 “So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate.”

- Now - as we consider this response - we can see that Christ Jesus is clearly opposed to divorce...

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- ...and the reason why is due to the fact that - the relational union that is created through the marital covenant...
- ...was designed to be a lifelong commitment - which should only be dissolved through death.
- And it's for this reason that the marriage that the couple that God has joined together - should not be separated.

- Moses
- In response to this - the Pharisees presented Jesus with a loaded question about the certificate of divorce that Moses permitted.
- Let's continue to consider Matthew's account of this conversation - look with me there at verse 7 - where we learn that...

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Mat 19:7 They said to Him, "Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?"

Mat 19:8 He said to them, "Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so."

- Now - as we consider this question - it's important to note that Moses never commanded anyone to divorce.

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- No - instead - Moses permitted them to divorce - in the case of adultery - and the reason why was because...
 - ...the hearts of the people were too hard - to walk in forgiveness.
 - And seeing how God's original plan for the marital relationship was a intended to be a lifelong covenant...
 - ...then - there should be no doubt that the Lord Jesus would have us to forgive our spouse - rather than divorce them.

• Adultery

- At the same time - the Lord Jesus did allow for divorce - in the case of sexual immorality.
- As a matter of fact - it's in Matthew chapter 5 - verses 31 and 32 - where the Lord Jesus declared...

SLIDE 18

Mat 5:31 "...it has been said, 'Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.'

Mat 5:32 “But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery.

- From this - we can see that there is no basis for a no-fault divorce - and irreconcilable differences is not a reason to file.

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- The only reason that a Christian should file for a divorce - is in the case where a spouse has engaged in sexual immorality.
- And just to be clear - I believe that a Christian should only consider divorce as a solution...
 - ...when the sinning spouse is unrepentant in their adultery.
 - It's for this reason that Paul encouraged every Christian to rethink their reasons for wanting a divorce.

• Wife

- With this as our focus - let's turn back to 1st Corinthians chapter 7 - where we find Paul - discouraging divorce.
- Look with me again - beginning there at verse 10 - where he declared...

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1Co 7:10 Now to the married I command, yet not I but the Lord: A wife is not to depart from her husband.

1Co 7:11 But even if she does depart, let her remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband. And a husband is not to divorce his wife.

- As we take another look at these verses - we can see that Paul was discouraging wives - from seeking a divorce.

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- At the same time - he also gave some space for a wife to depart - or separate from her husband.
- And if I had to guess why - then - it's probably because he realized that there are wives - who are married to abusive men.

- That being the case - he gave them the liberty to depart - and remain unmarried...
- ...while simultaneously encouraging them to prayerfully seek relational reconciliation.
- Husband
 - Not only that - but - it's there at the end of verse 11 - where Paul directed Christian husbands to refrain from divorcing their wife.
 - And while it's true that Paul provided wives with the liberty to separate from an abusive husband...
 - ...Paul doesn't seem to extend this same liberty to the man in the marriage.
 - And if I had to guess why - it's probably because the Christian husband has been called to love his wife...
 - ...with the same sacrificial love that Christ extends to His bride - the church.
 - And what this means is that - our marriage is supposed to serve as a testimony - of Christ's relationship with His church.
- Testimony
 - In order to make my case - let's consider the way that Paul explained it - in the epistle he sent to the church in Ephesus.
 - Hold your place here in 1st Corinthians - and let's turn in our Bibles to Ephesians chapter 5.
 - And as we make our way to the 5th chapter of Ephesians - I wanna take a moment to point out that...
 - ...the Lord designed the marital relationship to serve as a similitude of our Savior's relationship with His church.

- And what this means is the husband who decides to divorce his wife is damaging the testimony...
- ...which is designed to reveal the way in which our spiritual Groom graciously forgives His bride - of every transgression.
- Mystery

- Let's consider how Paul put it - here in Ephesians chapter 5 - look with me beginning there at verse 22 - where Paul declared...

SLIDE 22-26

Eph 5:22 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.

Eph 5:23 For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body.

Eph 5:24 Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.

Eph 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,

Eph 5:26 that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word,

Eph 5:27 that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.

Eph 5:28 So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself.

Eph 5:29 For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church.

Eph 5:30 For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones.

Eph 5:31 "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh."

Eph 5:32 This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

- Here in these verses - we find Paul - helping his audience to understand that...

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- ...the marital relationship is actually a mystery - which was designed to reveal the relationship that Jesus has with His church.

- And seeing how Jesus is the Groom - Who loves His bride with limitless forgiveness...
- ...then - it only stands to reason that the husband who divorces his wife - is damaging their Testimony of Christ like love.
- In similar fashion - the wife who divorces her husband - is also damaging their testimony - of living in submission to our Savior.
- What this means is that - Divorce is a decision that will always Damage our Testimony.

● Transition

• Points

- Now - this brings us to our second point - because listen....

1. ...Divorce not only Damages our Testimony...

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2. ...but - Divorce also Damages our Family

- With this as our focus - let's continue to consider the point that Paul was making - here in our text today.
- Let's take another look - beginning there at verse 12 - where Paul declared...

IV. Family

SLIDE 29-30

1Co 7:12 But to the rest I, not the Lord, say: If any brother has a wife who does not believe, and she is willing to live with him, let him not divorce her.

1Co 7:13 And a woman who has a husband who does not believe, if he is willing to live with her, let her not divorce him.

1Co 7:14 For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; otherwise your children would be unclean, but now they are holy.

- Not
- Here in these verses - we find Paul - helping his audience to understand how divorce damages families.

SLIDE 31

- But before we study this section of scripture - we should first take a moment to consider what Paul meant...
- ...when he qualified this passage as something that he was presenting - and not the Lord.
- Just to be clear - I should take a moment to remind you that - it was back in verse 10...
- ...where Paul assured the original recipients of this epistle that he was presenting them with the command of the Lord.
- And now - here in verse 12 - Paul appears to be shifting gears - by informing them that...
- ...he was adding additional information about divorce - which was not from the mouth of the Lord.
- Inspired
- Now - before we begin to believe that the following statement is simply the personal opinion of Paul - - I can assure you that it's not.
- In order to make my case - let's consider how the scholars who created the Amplified Bible rendered the beginning of verse 12 - they put it like this...

SLIDE 32

1Co 7:12 To the rest I declare—I, not the Lord [since Jesus did not discuss this]...

- In other words - Paul was about to present the Christian in Corinth - with an additional reason...

SLIDE 33

- ...for why a Christian might be set free from their marital covenant.

- And while it's true that the Lord Jesus allowed for divorce - in the case of a spouse that has engaged in adultery...
- ...it's also true that He never addressed the issue of abandonment.
 - It's for this reason that the Holy Spirit led Paul to weigh in on this important issue about Abandonment.
- Unbeliever
 - But now - before presenting this additional detail about divorce - Paul took the time to discourage the disciples of Christ - from demanding a divorce.
 - With this as our focus - let's take another look - beginning there at verse 12 where Paul declared...

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1Co 7:12 But to the rest I, not the Lord, say: If any brother has a wife who does not believe, and she is willing to live with him, let him not divorce her.

1Co 7:13 And a woman who has a husband who does not believe, if he is willing to live with her, let her not divorce him.

- Here in these verses - we find Paul addressing those who were wondering if a Christian should divorce an unbelieving spouse.

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- The chances are - there were many at the church in Corinth - who were already married - before they became a believer.
- And it's possible that they wanted to know if it would be better for them to divorce their unbelieving spouse.
- And if you find yourself in the same situation - then - it'll help you to know that...
 - ...Paul was perfectly clear - when he discourage the disciples of Christ - from initiating a divorce with an unbelieving spouse.
- Sanctified

- One reason why can be found there in the beginning of verse 14 - where Paul declared...

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1Co 7:14a For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband...

- Now - just to be clear - it's important for us to understand that - Paul was in no way suggesting that...

SLIDE 37

- ...an unbelieving spouse is automatically saved - through the faith of a believing spouse.
- No - instead - he was simply helping the believers who were married to unbelievers to realize that...
- ...the unbelieving spouse will benefit from the blessings that the Lord pour out on the believing spouse.
- And in this way - the Lord consecrates the family - according to the faith of the believing spouse.
- Children
- In order to further grasp my point - let's take another look there at verse 14 - where Paul declared...

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1Co 7:14 For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; otherwise your children would be unclean, but now they are holy.

- Here in the second half of this verse - we find Paul - helping his audience to understand that...

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- ...it's better for a believer - to remain married to an unbeliever - for the benefit of their children.
- You see - the children who are being raised by at least one believing parent - will have a better chance of also becoming a believer.

- Let's consider how Pastor Charles Swindoll explained this principle - when he declared...

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“...when a Christian spouse stays with the willing non-Christian partner, the children also benefit. Children raised in a mixed home have greater opportunity to see the love of Christ exhibited in the believing parent's life than those who must live with the consequences of a broken home.”

• Stats

- Now - as we consider the way that the Lord blesses a mixed faith family - through the faith of the born-again believer...

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- ...we should also take a moment to consider the way that divorce damages the children who watch their parents dissolve their marriage.
- According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention - roughly 50% of American children will witness their parents' divorce.
- Not only that - but an additional 50% of the children who witness a parent's divorce...
 - ...will also see the breakup of a parent's second marriage.
 - And it's sad to say that Children of divorce are 50% more likely to marry another child of divorce.
 - And Children of divorce are 35% more likely to have a divorce of their own.
- Studies
 - Studies have also shown that children of divorced parents are more likely to experience academic difficulties.
 - According to research from the University College London - children who's parents divorce when they are between the ages of 7 and 14...

- ...have a 16% higher likelihood of experiencing behavioral issues.
- And a 2019 study published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences estimates that...
 - ...divorce is associated with an 8% lower probability of a child completing high school...
 - ...as well as a 12% lower probability of college attendance, and a 11% lower probability of college completion.
 - And a 2019 study published in World Psychiatry reports children of divorced parents are 1.5 to 2 times more likely to live in poverty.
- More Studies
 - There are also studies that show - children of divorced parents are more likely to experience behavioral problems and mental health issues.
 - As a matter of fact - teens in single-parent and blended families are 300% more likely to need psychological help.
 - Children from broken homes are almost twice as likely to attempt suicide.
 - And while it's true that children of divorced parents are more likely to become juvenile offenders...
 - ...it's also true that more than two thirds of prison inmates who are incarcerated on a long-term basis due to more serious crimes...
 - ...are children who were born and raised in broken homes.
 - And as we consider all of this secular research - there should be no doubt that - divorces damages families.
- Damage Done
 - Now - it's possible that this damage is already done - and you're currently raising kids - as a single parent.

- Or - you might be a divorced believer - who is sharing custody - with an unbelieving ex.
- If so - then - I want to encourage you - by helping you to realize that - the Lord can help you to raise your kids...
- ...according to the training and admonition that we find in God's holy word.
- And with this as the goal - I encourage you to plug in to your family of faith...
- ...so that your kids can be influence by a congregation of Christians who are happy to help.
- Summary
 - At the same time - I also encourage those who are single to realize that marriage is a lifelong covenant - which should be take seriously.
 - And one reason why is because - God expects us to keep our covenant - for as long as we both shall live.
 - That being the case - those who are currently married to an unbelieving spouse should realize that...
 - ...the believing spouse should refrain from filing for divorce - and the reason why is because...
 - ...the Lord wants to use you to bless your family - with the grace that He pours out on those who trust in Him.
 - And as we keep our marital covenant - we will avoid the damage - caused by divorce.

● Transition

- Points

- Now - this brings us to our third point - because listen....

1. ...Divorce not only Damages our Testimony...

2. ...and - Divorce not only Damages our Family...

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3. ...but - Divorce also Damages our Sensibility

- With this as our focus - let's continue to consider the point that Paul was making - here in our text today.
- Let's take another look - beginning there at verse 15 - where Paul declared...

V. Sensibility

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1Co 7:15 But if the unbeliever departs, let him depart; a brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases. But God has called us to peace.

1Co 7:16 For how do you know, O wife, whether you will save your husband? Or how do you know, O husband, whether you will save your wife?

- IF
- Here in these verses - we find Paul - expanding upon the issue about Abandonment.

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- And while it's true that the Lord Jesus never mentioned Abandonment - as a valid reason for the dissolution of a married couples covenant...
- ...Paul assured us that the believer who has been abandoned by their unbelieving spouse...
- ...is no longer bound to the vows they made on their wedding day.
- At the same time - I also believe that the person who claims to be a believer - - and yet abandons their spouse...

- ...is - at the very least - acting like an unbeliever - - and is quite possible a Christian in name only.
- It's for this reason that I believe - those who have been abandoned by their spouse - are free from their marriage covenant.

- Peace

- At the same time - Paul also encouraged the abandoned believer to seek the peace of God - before rushing to a response.
- Let's consider again how Paul put it - there in verse 15 - where he declared...

SLIDE 45

1Co 7:15 ...if the unbeliever departs, let him depart; a brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases. But God has called us to peace.

- Now - in order to understand the point that Paul was making - it's important for us to realize that...

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- ...the believer who is no longer bound by their wedding vows after being abandoned...
- ...is still called to keep the peace - by seeking the will of the Lord.
- And listen - the path of peace could be the patience to prayerfully seek reconciliation with your spouse....
- ...according to the instructions that Paul presented - in 2nd Corinthians chapter 5.

- Reconciliation

- It's verses 18 thru 21 - where he declared...

SLIDE 47-48

2Co 5:18 Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation,

2Co 5:19 that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

2Co 5:20 Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.

2Co 5:21 For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

- Christian - listen - every believer has been called to engage in the ministry of reconciliation.

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- Just to be clear - the word - reconciliation - refers to the restoration of a relationship - resulting in relational peace.
- And while it's true that the ministry of reconciliation is directly related to our calling - to preach the gospel message of Jesus Christ...
- ...Christians have also been called to accomplish the ministry of reconciliation...
- ...by becoming peacemakers - who are ready to reconcile with those who have sinned against us.
- Reconcile
- In order to make my case - let's consider how Paul used the verb form of the same Greek word - here in our text today.
- Let's back up and take another look at verses 10 - and 11 - where Paul declared...

SLIDE 50

1Co 7:10 Now to the married I command, yet not I but the Lord: A wife is not to depart from her husband.

1Co 7:11a But even if she does depart, let her remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband...

- That word - reconciled - is the verb form of the same Greek word that Paul used - when he referred to the ministry of reconciliation.

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- And in this context - Paul was helping the Christians in Corinth to realize that the Christian wife who separates from her husband...
- ...should either remain unmarried - OR - she should engage in the ministry of reconciliation.
- And while it's true that the spouse who has been abandoned - is no longer bound by their wedding vows...
- ...it's also true that we've been called to become peacemakers - who are ready to reconcile - according to the leading of the Lord.
- Save
- With this as our goal - let's consider how Paul explained it here in 1st Corinthians chapter 7.
- Look with me again - beginning there at verse 15 - where Paul declared...

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1Co 7:15 But if the unbeliever departs, let him depart; a brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases. But God has called us to peace.

1Co 7:16 For how do you know, O wife, whether you will save your husband? Or how do you know, O husband, whether you will save your wife?

- God has called us to pursue peace with all people - so that we can lead them into the love of the Lord.

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- And yes - this is especially true in the context of a mixed faith marriage.
- Christian - listen - if you're married to an unbeliever - - and you feel like you have grounds for divorce...
- ...then - I encourage you to realize that your marital conflicts might be keeping you from accomplishing the relational reconciliation...
- ...that could be the catalyst that results in the conversion of your spouse.

- Know
- In order to further explain my point - let's take another look at the question that Paul posed there in verse 15 - where Paul declared...

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1Co 7:16 For how do you know, O wife, whether you will save your husband? Or how do you know, O husband, whether you will save your wife?

- Rather than affirming the right of the Christian to dissolve their marriage after they've been abandoned...

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- ...Paul instead posed a probing question about God's plan for reaching the unbelieving spouse.
- And he did this by asking - How do you know? - How do you know if God wants to use you...
- ...to reveal the sacrificial love of the Lord - through your attempts to reconcile with your spouse?
- In other words - do we have the spiritual sensibility to know what God's will is - in this situation?
- Sensible
- With this question in mind - we should take some time to consider the instructions that the apostle Peter presented in his first epistle.
- Turn with me to 1st Peter chapter 3 - and as we make our way to the third chapter of Peter's first epistle...
- ...I wanna take a moment to point out that - there are many who are quick to encourage divorce.
- Whether we're talking about friends and family members - or we're talking about professional counselors and divorce attorneys...

- ...there are many who are quick to encourage divorce - as a means of resolving relational conflict.
- For example - consider the racy billboard that a Chicago law firm once put up - which read - "Life's short. Get a divorce"
- Sadly - this is the perspective shared by most people today - - and that includes many who profess the Christian faith.

• Won

- In contrast to this - the apostle Peter encouraged a different perspective - as he encouraged wives to win their hearts of their husbands.
- With this as our focus - let's consider how Peter put it - here in 1st Peter chapter 3 - look with me beginning there at verse 1 - where he declared...

SLIDE 56-58

1Pe 3:1 Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives,

1Pe 3:2 when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear.

1Pe 3:3 Do not let your adornment be merely outward—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel—

1Pe 3:4 rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.

1Pe 3:5 For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands,

1Pe 3:6 as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror.

- Here in these verses - we find the apostle Peter - encouraging wives to realize that...

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- ...the most sensible way to maintain the marital covenant - is to yield in cooperation with your husband.

- Now - this is not to suggest that the Lord wants you to live in sin - in order to keep the peace.
- And this is not to suggest that a wife must continue living with an abusive man - - this certainly is cause for separation.
- At the same time - the sensible wife who wants to help her husband to walk by faith with the Lord...
 - ...should simply focus on developing the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit - which is very precious in the sight of God.
- Stats
 - Sadly - there are many women in the church today - who have been duped into believing that...
 - ...the best way to deal with a husband who is failing to live up to her expectations - is to leave the one they promised to love.
 - And while this is not to suggest that husbands never file for divorce - - the data helps us to see that most divorces are initiated by angry wives.
 - As a matter of fact - women initiate nearly 70% of all divorces here in America.
 - And listen - if we focus in on the category of college-educated women - this number climbs up to 90%.
 - And while I have no doubt that there are times when the divorce is justified...
 - ...the question that must be asked is this: how do you know, O wife, whether you will save your husband?
- Husband
 - Paul posed the same question to the husbands - who think that divorce is the best solution - for dealing with an angry wife.

- How do you know, O husband, whether you will save your wife?
- In other words - in the midst of the relational conflicts - and in the middle of the marital disappointments...
- ...do you have the spiritual sensibility to slow down - and seek the peace of God - which surpasses all understanding.
- And rather than listening to every person who encourages you to get a divorce - because life is short...
- ...will you look to the Lord - for the knowledge we need - so that we can maintain our marital vows - according to God's perfect plan.

VI. Conclusion

● Wrap up

- Now - as we begin to wrap up our study of this tough topic - I have no doubt that there are some who are struggling with the content of this message.
- And knowing that most of us have been affected by the damage caused by divorce...
- ...I encourage every Christian to set aside our personal opinions - so that we can embrace what the Bible says about this subject.
- And in order to understand why we need a Biblical perspective - I should remind you that...

SLIDE 60

1. ...Divorce Damages our Testimony...

- ...and the reason why is because - our marriage was designed to reveal the relationship - between Jesus and His church.
- And it's sad to say that this testimony is damaged by divorce.

2. ...Divorce also Damages our Family...

- ...and the reason why is because - divorce not only divides the one flesh relationship that God has joined together...
- ...but - divorce also has a negative impact on the children who see their separation of their parents.

3. ...Finally - Divorce Damages our Sensibility...

- ...which is to say that - those who allow the emotional pain of relational conflict to culminate in divorce...
- ...will often times fail to walk in the peace of mind - that helps us to know how to accomplish the ministry of reconciliation.
- And as we consider all of the Damage caused by Divorce - we will all do well to develop a Biblical perspective on this tough topic...
- ...so that we can protect our family - and our friends - and our fellowship of faith - from the damage of divorce.

SLIDE 61