

**Is it Lawful to Divorce  
for Just Any Reason?**

# Is it Lawful to Divorce for Just any Reason?

- Lawful
  - Law of Christ
- To Divorce
  - “Put asunder”
  - “Put away”
  - “Separate”
  - “Depart”
- Just Any Reason
  - Any possible reason you want to come up with
- In the context of a lawful marriage
  - Hebrews 13:4
  - Romans 7:1-4

# Is it Lawful to Divorce for Just any Reason? What Did Jesus Say?

- Jesus taught His law
  - Galatians 6:2; 1 Corinthians 9:21
  - Matthew 4:23; Luke 16:16
- Matthew 19:1-9

# “Is it Lawful for a Man to Divorce his Wife for Just Any Reason?”

Matthew 19:4-6

<sup>4</sup> And He answered and said to them, “Have you not read that He who made *them* at the beginning ‘made them male and female,’ <sup>5</sup> 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’? <sup>6</sup> **So then, they are no longer two but one flesh.**

= NO

“Is it Lawful for a Man to Divorce his Wife for  
Just Any Reason?”

Matthew 19:6

Therefore what God has  
joined together, let not man  
separate.

= NO

# “Is it Lawful for a Man to Divorce his Wife for Just Any Reason?”

Matthew 19:7-8

- <sup>7</sup> They said to Him, “Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?” <sup>8</sup> 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.”

= NO

# “Is it Lawful for a Man to Divorce his Wife for Just Any Reason?”

Matthew 19:9

- “And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery.”

Jesus approved of remarriage for the man who put away his wife for fornication.

It is necessary to conclude that divorce for fornication was lawful.

“Is it Lawful for a Man to Divorce his Wife for Just Any Reason?”

Matthew 19:9

- “And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery.”

= NO,  
EXCEPT FOR  
FORNICATION



# Is it Lawful to Divorce for Just any Reason? What Did Jesus Say?

- Jesus did not say divorce for any cause other than fornication is ok as long as you don't remarry
- Jesus did not imply divorce for any cause other than fornication is ok as long as you don't remarry
- To the contrary Jesus answered "no" three times
- One exception given in verse 9

# Is it Lawful to Divorce for Just any Reason? What Did Jesus Say?

- Matthew 5:31-32
- Based on verse 32, is it the will of Christ that a man divorce his wife for any cause other than fornication?
  - No
- Consequence of unlawful divorce?
  - “causes her to commit adultery” (obviously contemplates her remarriage)
- If you divorce your spouse for her fornication?
  - Then you do not cause her to commit adultery (obviously contemplates her remarriage)

# Is it Lawful to Divorce for Just any Reason? What Did Paul Say?

- 1 Corinthians 7:1-15
- Verses 10-11, 15 – “depart”
  - “asunder” in Matthew 19:6
- Verses 11-13 – “divorce”
- A woman is not to depart from her husband
- A husband is not to divorce his wife
- No exceptions under Paul’s consideration in this context; only the rule stated
  - 1 Corinthians 7:1

# Is it Lawful to Divorce for Just any Reason? What Did Paul Say?

- “Separate” is divorce
- “But even if she does depart, let her remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband”
  - Then divine approval to divorce?
    - No
    - Matthew 5 and 19 gave consequences
    - 1 Corinthians 7:11 likewise tells consequences
    - 1 John 2:1
- Like Jesus, Paul teaches to not divorce (the exception is not under consideration in this context)

# Speaking as the Bible Speaks

- A divorce is a divorce whether it is approved by God or not
  - Matthew 19:9
- No such thing as a “divorce in God’s eyes” and a “divorce in man’s eyes” in the Bible
- In one verse, verse 9, God calls it a divorce whether it is for fornication or not for fornication
  - Either of the divorces sundered the marriage
  - One divorce is approved, and the other is not
- Just because the marriage relationship has ended does not mean just anyone has the right to remarry! The only one given the right to remarry is the innocent one who divorced the spouse who was guilty of fornication – Matthew 19:9
- (Death, of course, releases one from the marriage bond – Romans 7:1-4; 1 Corinthians 7:39)
- “Married” does not equate to “bound”!

# What are the effects of divorce for just any cause, not for the cause of fornication?

- Who does my sin affect if I do this?
- Breaks the promise to the spouse made before God when God joined them
- No longer able to fulfil the commands they are supposed to fulfil as husband and wife
  - And what about the children?
- Doing what God hates
  - Malachi 2:16
  - Matthew 19:4-6 – permanence of marriage
- Dividing what God has joined together
  - Matthew 19:6
- Putting spouse, and self for that matter, into the possibility of committing adultery
  - Adulterers will not inherit the kingdom of heaven

- The New Testament gives the divine, God-approved answer to the question
- Is it lawful to divorce your wife or to divorce your husband for just any cause?
  - No
  - Jesus taught No, and Paul taught No
- Is it lawful for an innocent husband or wife to divorce his or her spouse for fornication?
  - Yes.
  - Jesus taught Yes.