

A study on divorce and remarriage in the church

by Jim Drago

Myths

Lately, as I've been discussing the issues of divorce and remarriage with men that I have come across who are in remarriages while their covenant wives are still alive some of the excuses and justifications I've heard have astounded me. Though these can be easily disproven by the Word of God they are taught and believed to be gospel truth. While some of these conversations are fresh in my mind I wanted to put my thoughts in writing. I'm calling these myths to be kind what they truly are, are blatant lies. Lies from the pit of hell sent to steal unsuspecting, misled souls.

Myth number 1: God's grace covers it.

I was recently talking to a man during a small group meeting of men and he made the comment that according to the Bible he was committing adultery for the Bible said that to remarry after divorce is adultery. He then also went on to say that he was grateful that by God's grace he was forgiven.

This man is a Christian, a leader in his church, he understands that the Bible teaches that to remarry after divorce is adultery. He confessed to a knowledge that he was committing adultery. He understood that adultery was sin. Yet somehow the sin of adultery in this case is forgivable with no need to repent. I find it hard to understand why the sin of adultery that takes place because of remarriage after divorce (which it clearly is according to Matthew, Mark, Luke, First Corinthians 7, and Romans 7), is a sin that somehow is winked at by God. Ignored by

Him. I daresay that the people who believe that this sin somehow needs not be repented of would not dream of telling a homosexual, or murderer, or child molester, or someone who is still married and committing adultery, that they could continue in their sin and still have salvation; That God in his mercy would forgive them. No! These people would for the most part in Christian churches today be told that they must repent, that turning from their sin would be how they showed that through Christ they have dealt with it, that they would have to turn from it in order to be forgiven of it. Which is indeed the truth; sin must be repented of to be forgiven of. Simply the fact that the sin of adultery caused by remarriage after divorce is so widespread in the church and has infected it so deeply, from leadership through laymen does not make it immune from having to be repented of, to be forgiven of.

Usually a statement is made that goes along with this misleading train of thought is that surely God would not have me cause pain and emotional trauma to this person that I am currently, though only by a paper of the state married to. It strikes me as odd that in many cases these people will speak of their covenant spouse with contempt, nearly void of any signs of being concerned for the hurt they had been caused. Yet somehow this adulterous mate deserves to be treated gently. Make no mistake this is not meant as a harsh statement for indeed the consequences of sin are painful, and the emotions that are invested in these relationships are real. I understand that, and the pain that it causes in people's lives grieves me. What I am saying though, is sadly it seems the church, its leaders, teachers, and counselors seem to fight harder against people who are speaking biblical truth concerning these matters, and people who show repentance and feel led to leave adulterous remarriages, than they do people who want to leave covenant marriages. I also have to go back to the example of a homosexual relationship, the emotions can run just as deeply in these relationships as in a heterosexual relationship, yet for the most part it would not be even remotely considered that this relationship would somehow be covered by God's grace and allowed to continue. God does not differentiate between sin. Any separates us from Him if not repented of. He then said, "Since we all sin, you are saying no one is saved". Missing the point! REPENT, Turn away from it. Flee.

Myth number 2: My first wife is remarried so there is no longer a covenant.

Another man that I was talking to told me this as his reasoning. The fault that lies in this reasoning is that covenants can be broken by something short of death. They cannot be. Covenants can only be ended by death. When a man and a woman whom neither have a living spouse are married, God joins them in their covenant. He sees it as a covenant until one or the other dies. The simplest example scripturally to look at which disproves this theory that remarriage breaks the covenant would be the story of John the Baptist, Herod, and Phillips wife Herodias. If indeed remarriage ends the covenant marriage then John the Baptist gave his life for nothing. We know he didn't; he died because he stood on the fact that even though Herod and Herodias were married, that in God's eyes she was Phillips wife, and therefore her and

Herod were not a covenant marriage they were committing adultery. The remarriage did nothing to affect the covenant that God had entered into with Philip and Herodias.

He went on to say that since his wife had remarried and broken their covenant that he was then free to remarry. The fault here is the belief that somehow one person's sin, makes it OK for another person to sin. First of all as we looked at above covenants can only be broken by death. They can be violated, and when they are the person who violates them has committed sin. However we each answer for our own sin. So when a spouse violates a covenant they will be judged for it, for God is just. That does not give the second party somehow a free pass to sin themselves and it somehow be accepted by God. For you see as far as God is concerned the covenant that He entered into with the couple is still intact. He sees it as a covenant until the death of one of them, so He expects the second person to remain committed to it until the death of one of them. By the way I've also heard it said, "Oh they are dead in my heart, so I'm freed from the covenant." No you are not; dead means dead. So are you saying that if my spouse leaves me and remarries another person or another or another, that God would expect me to remain faithful to the covenant. Yes. He indeed does. For the Word says in 1 Corinthians 7:10,11:

To the married I give this command — not I, but the Lord — a wife should not divorce a husband (**but if she does, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband**), and a husband should not divorce his wife.

By the way men the Bible is not sexist the statements that It makes are transsexual so don't think that this verse doesn't apply to us also. It does.

That's enough for now. We will look at more myths later.

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