

## Tenderness in the Drought . . .

Lost income, long soup lines, and loss of lives—it was called The Great Depression. Even the hopes of farmers were dashed as the sky darkened and swarms of locusts devoured the crops. Similar devastation also descends on the heart of a spouse who hears the words, “I want a divorce.” Days become dark and dreams are devoured. The drought never seems to end, yet God tenderly speaks to the one who is deserted.

*“I will restore to you the years  
that the swarming locust has eaten.”  
(Joel 2:25)*

**Q:** “Is there any provision in the Bible for divorce and remarriage?”

Yes. Most theologians believe that the Bible makes allowance for divorce in two situations.

- Sexual infidelity—

*“I say to you: whoever divorces his wife,  
except for sexual immorality, and marries another,  
commits adultery.”  
(Matthew 19:9)*

- Physical abandonment—

*“If the unbelieving partner separates, let it be so.  
In such cases the brother or sister is not enslaved.  
God has called you to peace.”  
(1 Corinthians 7:15)*

**Q:** “If I have suffered an unwanted divorce, initiated by my mate, am I free to remarry?”

God’s heart is for reconciliation, but if your spouse has remarried, then you are free to marry. However, God has a specific plan for your life, and you need to seek His wisdom when considering remarriage.

*“To the unmarried and the widows I say that  
it is good for them to remain single as I am.  
But if they cannot exercise self-control,  
they should marry. For it is better to marry  
than to be aflame with passion. . . .  
But if the unbelieving partner separates,  
let it be so. In such cases the brother or sister  
is not enslaved. God has called you to peace.”  
(1 Corinthians 7:8–9, 15)*

## God's Heart on Divorce<sup>1</sup>

- God hates divorce. (Malachi 2:16)
- God does not see legal divorce as dissolving the “one flesh” spiritual bond in marriage. (Matthew 5:32)
- God may close His ears to the prayers of one who breaks a marriage covenant. (Malachi 2:13–14)
- God does not permit divorce just because a mate is not saved—the unbeliever becomes sanctified through the believing spouse and could become a Christian. (1 Corinthians 7:14, 16)
- God's heart is for reconciliation even if there has been a divorce. (1 Corinthians 7:10–11)

## Surface Causes of Divorce<sup>2</sup>

- Lacking strong moral convictions
- Living as man and wife prior to marriage
- Striving for financial and material gain
- Seeking fulfillment in a career
- Looking for self-centered happiness
- Believing in the myth of the ideal marriage

*“Blessed is the one who fears the LORD always, but whoever hardens his heart will fall into calamity.”*  
(Proverbs 28:14)

## God's Heart on Divorce and Remarriage

- God guards and protects the faithful spouse in a divorce. (Proverbs 2:8)
- God allows divorce and will accomplish His ultimate purpose for you. (Romans 8:28)
- God promises to meet all your needs. (Philippians 4:19)
- God requires self-examination when you have experienced divorce. (Matthew 7:1–5)
- God's heart is to bring “new life” out of the devastation of divorce. (Jeremiah 29:11)

*“[He guards] the paths of justice . . . watching over the way of his saints.”*  
(Proverbs 2:8)

## Key Verses to Memorize

*“I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. I can do all things through him who strengthens me.”*  
(Philippians 4:12–13)

## Key Passage to Read and Reread

Psalm 119:25–32

## Stages of Response to an Unwanted Divorce<sup>3</sup>

### 1. Turbulence (Isaiah 43:2)

- Denial
- Embarrassment
- Loneliness
- Rejection
- Fear
- Anger

### 2. Transition (Psalm 71:20)

- Refuse negative thought patterns.
- Recognize the divorce is not all your fault.
- Receive God's love and acceptance.
- Relinquish your rights and begin the process of forgiveness.
- Readjust to life without a mate.

### 3. Thriving (Ezekiel 36:36)

- Know that God is in control of your circumstances.
- Know that God cares about every detail of your life.
- Know that God has brought you through a character building process.
- Know that life is full of joy and promise.
- Know that God wants to use you as a representative of His love in the lives of others.

*“Heal me, O LORD, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved, for you are my praise.”*  
(Jeremiah 17:14)

## Freedom in Forgiveness!<sup>4</sup>

**F**ollow God's correction course. (Proverbs 15:31)

**O**wn your personal sins and seek God's forgiveness. (Psalm 32:5)

**R**ecognize your need to confess and seek forgiveness. (James 5:16)

**G**ive only a good report. (Ephesians 4:29)

**I**dentify the unmet needs of your ex-spouse. (Proverbs 16:21)

**V**ow to pray for your ex-spouse. (Matthew 5:44)

**E**xpect God to be working on your behalf. (Isaiah 64:4)

*“If you forgive others their trespasses,  
your heavenly Father will also forgive you,  
but if you do not forgive others their trespasses,  
neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”  
(Matthew 6:14–15)*

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### Related Topics . . .

- Adultery:  
*The Snare of an Affair*
- Loneliness:  
*How to Be Alone but Not Lonely*
- Rejection:  
*Healing a Wounded Heart*
- Singleness:  
*Single and Satisfied*
- Single Parenting:  
*Success with God as Your Partner*

1. David A. Thompson, *Counseling and Divorce*, Resources for Christian Counseling, ed. Gary R. Collins (Dallas: Word, 1989), 44–45; Ronald M. Supanic and Dennis L. Baker, *When All Else Fails* (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell, 1986), 103–15.

2. Bob Burns, *Through the Whirlwind: A Proven Path to Recovery from the Devastation of Divorce* (Nashville: Oliver-Nelson, 1989), 39–44; Thompson, *Counseling and Divorce*, 16–18.

3. Sharon Marshall, *When a Friend Gets a Divorce: What Can You Do?* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1990), 26–27, 42–44; Jim Conway and Sally Conway, *Moving On After He Moves Out*, Saltshaker (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1995), 85–93, 119–32; Dandi Daley Knorr, *Splitting Up: When Your Friend Gets a Divorce*, Heart & Hand (Wheaton, IL: Harold Shaw, 1988), 48–59; Supanic and Baker, *When All Else Fails*, 140–49; Terry Hershey, *Beginning Again*, rev. ed. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1986), 22, 56–58, 75–78, 163–65.

4. Conway and Conway, *Moving On After He Moves Out*, 94–98; Jim Smoke, *Living Beyond Divorce: The Possibilities of Remarriage* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 1984), 43–44; Burns, *Through the Whirlwind*, 146–47; Welby O'Brien, *Formerly a Wife: A Survival Guide for Women Facing the Pain and Disruption of Divorce* (Camp Hill, PA: Horizon, 1996), 28–30, 50–52; Jim Smoke, *Growing through Divorce* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 1995), 44–45; Hershey, *Beginning Again*, 71–75, 33.

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