

What the Bible says about Divorce

- Introduction
 - There are many false teachings on this subject from people claiming to be Christians.
 - We are going to look at Bible versions and variations of translations that affect the way people believe and teach this subject.
 - The good news is still good news! This is a detailed study so hang in there.
- The Bible and Traditions of Men
 - The Case of Mary and Joseph
 - Matthew 1:19
 - God Hates Putting Away
 - Malachi 2:16
 - The Law Concerning Divorce
 - Deuteronomy 22 and 24
 - Jesus and the Pharisees
 - In the Gospels
 - The Apostle Paul on Divorce
 - 1 Corinthians 7
 - The Traditional View of Divorce

The Case of Mary and Joseph

- Mt 1:18-21
- “Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows:
- when His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph,
- before they came together she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit.
- And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man and not wanting to disgrace her, planned to send her away secretly.
- But when he had considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David,
- do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife;
- for the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.
- "She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins."
- Observations on Definitions of Words
- "The fact that Joseph had in mind the **putting away** of his espoused wife, Mary, without the formality of a bill or at least of a public procedure proves that a decree was not regarded as absolutely necessary" (Mt 1:19).
- -International Standard Encyclopedia-
- Joseph did not have in mind to formally divorce Mary, they were engaged not married.
- Joseph wanted to “put away” Mary.
- Some translations mistranslate “put away” as “divorce”. There is a huge difference in these two words that modern translators ignore.

God Hates Putting Away

Malachi 2:14-16 ASV 1801

- (14) Yet ye say, Wherefore? Because Jehovah hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously, though she is thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant.
- (15) And did he not make one, although he had the residue of the Spirit? And wherefore one? He sought a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth.
- (16) For **I hate putting away**, saith Jehovah, the God of Israel, and him that covereth his garment with violence, saith Jehovah of hosts: therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously.
- God hates “Putting Away” without a Divorce.
- Isaiah 50:1 God divorced Israel then put her away.
- The people of that time were under a different system than we are.
- Men had all the power and were treating wives with injustice.

The Law Concerning Putting Away and Divorce

The Law Concerning Putting Away

Deuteronomy 22:13-14, 19

13 If any man take a wife, and go in unto her, and hate her,

14 and lay shameful things to her charge, and bring up an evil name upon her, and say, I took this woman, and when I came nigh to her, I found not in her the tokens of virginity;

19 and they shall fine him a hundred *shekels* of silver, and give them unto the father of the damsel, because he hath brought up an evil name upon a virgin of Israel: and she shall be his wife; he may not put her away all his days.

Deuteronomy 22:28-29

If a man find a damsel that is a virgin, that is not betrothed, and lay hold on her, and lie with her, and they be found;

then the man that lay with her shall give unto the damsel's father fifty *shekels* of silver, and she shall be his wife, because he hath humbled her; he may not put her away all his days.

The Law Concerning Divorce

Deuteronomy 24:1-4

When a man taketh a wife, and marrieth her, then it shall be, if she find no favor in his eyes, because he hath found some unseemly thing in her,

that he shall write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house.

And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man's wife.

And if the **latter husband** hate her, and write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house; or if the latter husband die, who took her to be his wife;

her **former husband**, who sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after that she is defiled; for that is abomination before Jehovah: and thou shalt not cause the land to sin, which Jehovah thy God giveth thee for an inheritance.

Jesus and the Pharisees

Matthew 5:31-32

It was said also, Whosoever shall **put away** his wife,
let him give her a **writing of divorcement**:
but I say unto you, that every one that **putteth away** his wife,
saving for the cause of fornication (Deut.22:22 that would be death not divorce)
maketh her an adulteress:
and whosoever shall marry her
when **she is put away** committeth adultery. (Why? She is put away not divorced.)

Does this translation match yours?

This is the ASV which translates the Greek words correctly.

The problem Jesus is dealing with is “putting away” without a divorce.

-Jesus cannot contradict the Law or He would not be Righteous!

Matthew 5:17-20

Matthew 19:3-9

And there came unto him Pharisees, **trying him**, and saying, Is it lawful *for a man* to **put away** his wife **for every cause**?

And he answered and said, Have ye not read, that he who made *them* from the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh? So that they are no more two, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

They say unto him, Why then did Moses command to **give a bill of divorcement**, and to **put her away**?

He saith unto them, Moses for your hardness of heart suffered you to
put away your wives: but from the beginning it hath not been so.

And I say unto you,

Whosoever shall **put away** his wife, except for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and he that marrieth her when she is **put away** committeth adultery.

The Pharisees are trying to discredit Jesus.

Jesus points out the Pharisees error in putting away faithful wives without a bill of divorce.

Unfaithful wives were not to be divorced, the Law said they were to be killed! Deut. 22:22.

Divorce was not adultery. It was the correct way of ending a marriage under the Law. Deut. 24:1-4.

Putting away without a divorce and marrying another was adultery because the person was still married!

Jesus did not contradict the Law. Matthew 5:17-20

If Jesus contradicted the Law they would discredit Him.

Jesus did not contradict or change the Law. Mt. 5:17-20

He wanted them to stop putting away without a divorce. Jesus was an advocate for the weak. Women had no power in that Jewish system. Jesus was pointing them to the truth not a new law.

Clearly, divorce is the result of sin, and not in line with the original intention of marriage.

- However, divorce is not the subject of Matthew 19. Quite the opposite is the case.
- Jesus does not here condemn divorce; he upholds the teaching of Moses.

What he condemns is the “sending away” (as in Malachi 2) without terminating one’s first marriage, and marrying another.

Teaching About Marriage, Divorce, Putting Away and Adultery

Mark 10:1 And having risen from there, He comes to the coasts of Judea, through the other side of the Jordan, and again multitudes come together to Him, and as He had been accustomed, again He was teaching them.

Testing Jesus to see if He would contradict the Law of Moses- He does not.

v2 And the Pharisees, having come near, questioned Him if it is **lawful** for a husband to **put away** a wife, tempting Him,

v3 and He answering said to them, “What did **Moses** command you?”

v4 And they said, “**Moses** permitted to write a **bill of divorce**, and to **put away**.”

Deuteronomy 24 God institutes divorce so people could end bad marriages and remarry.

v5 And Jesus answering said to them, “For the **stiffness of your heart** he wrote you this command,

After sin entered the world God instituted Divorce though Moses.

v6 but from the beginning of the creation God made them a male and a female;

v7 on this account will a man leave his father and mother, and will cleave to his wife,

v8 and they will be—the two—for **one flesh**, so that they are no longer two, but one flesh;

v9 what God therefore joined together, do not let man separate.”

Jesus goes back Before sin entered the world, this is the original intention of marriage.

Here was the problem of Jesus’ day.

v10 And in the house His disciples again questioned Him of the same thing,

v11 and He says to them,

“Whoever may **put away** his wife, (without a bill of divorce)
and may **marry another**, **commits adultery against her**;

v12 and if a woman may **put away** her husband, and is **married** to another, she commits **adultery**.”

The men of Jesus’ day were putting away without the bill of divorce. This caused adultery.

Today, bad translations have replaced “put away” with the word “adultery” and caused all kinds of evil.

Jesus did not contradict the Law of Moses. If He did He would not be right.

The Apostle Paul on Divorce

Paul does not contradict Jesus or the Law.

1 Corinthians 7:1-3

Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote: It is good for a man not to touch a woman. (2) But, because of fornications, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband. (3) Let the husband render unto the wife her due: and likewise also the wife unto the husband.

1 Corinthians 7:8-9

But I say **to the unmarried** and **to widows**, It is good for them if they abide even as I. (9) But if they have not self control, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn (with passion).

1 Corinthians 7:10-11

But unto **the married** I give charge, *yea* not I, but the Lord,
-That the wife **depart not** from her husband (11) (**but should she depart, let her remain unmarried**, or else **be reconciled to her husband**); and that the husband **leave** not his wife.

The word “divorce” is not in this passage, only “separation”.

Remember putting away without a divorce? This is separating without a divorce.

1 Corinthians 7:12-16 Not under bondage

(12) But to the rest say I, not the Lord: If any brother hath an unbelieving wife, and she is content to dwell with him, let him not **leave** her. (13) And the woman that hath an unbelieving husband, and he is content to dwell with her, let her not **leave** her husband. (14) For the unbelieving husband is sanctified in the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified in the brother: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy.

(15) Yet if the unbelieving departeth, let him depart: the brother or the sister is **not under bondage in such cases**: but God hath called us in peace. (16) For how knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? Or how knowest thou, O husband, whether thou shalt save thy wife?

Divorced People Can Remarry Without Sin

1Co 7:27 Art thou bound unto a wife? Seek not to be loosed. Art thou **loosed from a wife**? Seek not a wife.

1Co 7:28 **But shouldest thou marry, thou hast not sinned**; and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned. Yet such shall have tribulation in the flesh: and I would spare you.

Paul is only stating what the Law said.

Divorced people can remarry without sin.

God has called us to peace not marital war.

God does not want us to divorce but if we do, then we need to do it where justice is served.

The Traditional View of Divorce

Thinks ‘put away’ means divorce

Does not recognize divorce unless fornication was committed

It makes the innocent parties in a divorce remain celibate and not eligible to marry again because there was no fornication to actually break the first marriage

Adultery is with the person in the new “unrecognized” marriage

No one can be baptized unless they divorce “unscriptural” mates

Forbids marriage to those “un-scripturally” divorced

All of these problems come from mistranslations in Bible versions that have led many astray.

What the Bible says about the Traditional View

Forbidding to marry is the doctrine of demons.

1Ti 4:1-3

“But the Spirit explicitly says that **in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons,**
by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron,
men who forbid marriage *and advocate* abstaining from foods which God has created to be gratefully shared in by those who believe and know the truth.”

Moses, Jesus and Paul

Moses, Jesus and the apostle Paul all spoke the same thing concerning marriage, divorce and remarriage. We have seen that the Law of Moses had more grace than the Traditional View of “Marriage and Divorce”.

The Traditional View of Divorce is the deception of demons trying to destroy the people of God. There is grace for divorced people. It is not the unpardonable sin.

We do not promote divorce but grace for those who have gone through one of the worst agonies possible.

Summary

There is no contradiction with the truth of the Word of God.

Translations of the Bible are in error at times.

God instituted divorce for bad marriages so people could remarry without adultery.

Religion has is wrong. Avoid those people.

God came to give us grace not law that no one can keep.

We are now in the new covenant that promises life and a new start no matter what.

The Good News is still good news!