

WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS OF DISHARMONY IN MARRAGE? THE WORST TRAGEDY IS DIVORCE

(Mal 2:13-16)

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INTRODUCTION:

Our previous study listed many potential causes of family conflict that often strain the best of families, lead many to believe divorce is an easy solution in the Bible; we read that God hates divorce. – **(Mal 2:13-16)**. It “*covers one’s garment with violence*” It is “*treacherous*”. All marriages are impacted by problems. Marital problems cause couples to seek divorce on daily basis.

Whether or not a marriage survives when a problem comes, depends on the problem and how a couple decides to deal with that problem. Couples who are able to work together in resolving disharmony are more likely to be able to save their marriages. While couples who lack the proper conflict resolution skills may find themselves on the worst tragedy to deal with divorce for problems that could have easily been resolved.

Let us look at some under listed implications that trails divorced couples and siblings, and how you could better deal with them for the sake of our marriages.

I. THE EFFECTS OF DIVORCE ON CHILDREN:

MENTAL INSTABILITY...

- ❖ Teenagers in single-parent families and in blended families are three times more likely to need psychological help within a given year. (Adolescent Development Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry 1993)
- ❖ Compared to children from homes disrupted by death, children from divorced homes have more psychological problems. (**Robert E. Emery, *Marriage, Divorce and Children’s. Publications, 1988***)
- ❖ The study of children six years after a parental marriage breakup revealed that even after all that time, these children tended to be lonely, unhappy, anxious and insecure”. (**Wallenstein, *The Long-Term Effects of Divorce on Children - Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry 1991***).

SOCIAL STATUS:

- ❖ Children of divorce, particularly boys, tend to be more aggressive toward others than those children whose parents did not divorce. (*Emery, Marriage, Divorce and Children's. Adjustment, 1988*).
- ❖ Children of divorce are four times more likely to report problems with peers and friends than children whose parents have kept their marriages intact. (*Tysse, Burnett, Moral Dilemmas of Early Adolescents of Divorced and Intact Families. Journal of Early Adolescence 1993*)
- ❖ Seventy percent of long-term prison inmates grew up in broken homes. (*Marriage and Welfare Reform*)

PHYSICAL STATUS:

- ❖ Children living with both biological parents are 20 to 35 percent more physically healthy than children from broken homes. (*Dawson, Family Structure and Children's Health and Well-being - Journal of Marriage and the Family*)
- ❖ Following divorce, children are fifty percent more likely to develop health problems than two parent families. (*Angel, Worobey, Single Motherhood and Children's Health*).
- ❖ Children of divorced are at a greater risk to experience injury, asthma, headaches and speech defects than children whose parents have remained married. (*Dawson, Family Structure and Children's Health and Well Being - National Health Interview Survey on Child Health, Journal of Marriage and the Family*).
- ❖ Most victims of child molestation come from single-parent households or are the children of drug ring members. (*Los Angeles Times 16 September 1985 The Garbage Generation*)
- ❖ A child in a female-headed home is 10 times more likely to be beaten or murdered. (*The Legal Beagle, July 1984, from The Garbage Generation*)
- ❖ People who come from broken homes are almost twice as likely to attempt suicide as those who do not come from broken homes. (*Community Sample of Children Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry 1988*)

SPIRITUAL IMPLICATION:

- ❖ Religious worship, which has been linked to better health, longer marriages, and better family life, drops after the parents divorce. (*Patrick Fagan, Ph.D. and Robert Rector, The Effects Of Divorce In America, June 2000*)
- ❖ Many young people from divorced families “experience a loss of trust that affects their belief in God - making them overall much less religious than their peers from intact families,” (*Elizabeth Marquardt of the Institute for American Values and Professor Norval Glenn of the University of Texas, Between Two Worlds: The Inner Lives of Children of Divorce*)

- ❖ Children of divorced are also “much less likely to say their mother and father taught them how to pray and prayed with them – and are much more likely to say they doubt the sincerity of their parents’ religious beliefs, do not share their parents’ values, and to say there are things their parents have done that they find hard to forgive.”

II. EFFECTS OF DIVORCE ON SPOUSES.

MENTAL INSTABILITY:

- ❖ Men and women both suffer a decline in mental health following divorce, but researchers have found that women are more greatly affected. Some of the mental health indicators affected by divorce include depression, hostility, self-acceptance, personal growth and positive relations with others. (*Longitudinal Effects on Psychological Well-being, Journal of Family Issues 1998*)
- ❖ A recent study found those who were unhappy but stay married were more likely to be happy five years better than those who divorced. (*Linda Waite and Maggie Gallagher, The Case for Marriage (New York: Doubleday, 2000)*)

PHYSICAL STATUS:

- ❖ Life expectancies for divorced men and women are significantly lower than for married people who have the longest life expectancies. (*Robert Coombs, “Marital Status and Personal Well-Being: A Literature Review,” 1991*).
- ❖ After a diagnosis of cancer, married people are most likely to recover, while the divorced are least likely to recover, indicating that the emotional trauma of divorce has a long-term impact on the physical health of the body. (*Key and Jonathan M. Sarmet, “The Effect of Marital Status on Stage, Treatment, and Survival of Cancer Patients,” Journal of the American Medical Association, 1987*)

FINANCIAL STABILITY:

- ❖ Families with children that were not poor before the divorce see their income drop as much as 50 percent. Almost 50 percent of the parents with children that are going through a divorce move into poverty after the divorce. (*Patrick Fagan, Ph.D. and Robert Rector, The Effects Of Divorce In America, June 2000*)
- ❖ Studies show that women experiencing divorce face roughly a 30 percent decline in the standard of living they enjoyed while married and men show a 10 percent decline. The consistency of this finding caused one researcher to conclude: “However ‘prepared’ for marital disruption women increasingly may be, they are not prepared in ways sufficient to cushion the economic cost.” (*Pamela J. Smock, “The Economic Costs of Marital Disruption for Young Women over the Past Two Decades.” Demography 30, 1993*).

SPIRITUAL LIFE:

- ❖ Jesus taught there is only one ground for divorce and remarriage: adultery – **(Mt 19:3-9)**
- ❖ That divorce and remarriage for any other reason results in adultery – **(Mt 19:9)**
- ❖ Those who divorce their spouses for a reason other than fornication cause them to commit adultery. – **(Mt 5:32)** either by putting them in a situation where they are likely to commit fornication. Or by putting them in a situation where they might enter an unscriptural marriage. Those who commit fornication or adultery as a result of unlawful divorce or remarriage will not inherit the kingdom of heaven, unless they repent. – **(1Cor. 6:9-11; Gal. 5:19-21; Heb. 13:4)**

WHAT WE MUST DO TO ENCOURAGE HARMONY IN MARRIAGE:

- Bear and forbear.
- Work together, play together, and grow up together.
- Avoid the little quarrels, and the big ones will take care of themselves.
- Compromise (give and take). It is the antidote to divorce.
- Practice sympathy, good humor and mutual understanding.
- Don't grumble before breakfast or after it.
- Respect your "in-laws," but don't criticize them or take criticism from them.
- Establish your own home, even in a one room or bigger apartment.
- Fight for each other, but not with each other.
- Show respect to one another.
- Build your home on religious faith, with love and forgiveness.

CONCLUSION:

The purpose of this lesson is not to pile guilt on those who are divorced. They know first-hand the terrible consequences of divorce on their families and themselves. They need our understanding and help to make the best of a difficult situation. My prayer is that this lesson will serve as a cautionary tale to all families, that divorce is a treacherous and violent act for all those involved.

We need to teach our children what God has spoken and be aware that society is still learning about implication of divorce.

NOTE: "The highest happiness on earth is in marriage. Every man who is happily married is a successful man even if he has failed in everything else. And every man whose marriage is a failure is not a successful man even if he has succeeded in everything else". (William Lyon Phelps)

May God help those suffering from the tragedy of divorce, and all the Christian Home and their Family in Jesus name. Amen.