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

- 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

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

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!

Follow God’s correction course. (Proverbs 15:31)

Own your personal sins and seek God’s forgiveness. (Psalm 32:5)

Recognize your need to confess and seek forgiveness. (James 5:16)

Give only a good report. (Ephesians 4:29)

Identify the unmet needs of your ex-spouse. (Proverbs 16:21)

Vow to pray for your ex-spouse. (Matthew 5:44)

Expect 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)

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

Hope For The Heart’s Biblical Counseling Library Quick Reference provides immediate, concise, biblical truths for today’s problems.

For more comprehensive help, refer to our Biblical Counseling Keys . . .

Divorce: A New Beginning from Brokenness.

If you would like more information, call 1-800-488-HOPE (4673) or visit www.hopefortheheart.org.

For prayer encouragement and biblical counsel call 1-866-570-HOPE (4673).


