

# THE TRAGEDY OF DIVORCE

By Donald Townsley

Divorce is painful and tragic, not only at the outset, but also in the years to come! A father and mother can never really divorce themselves from their own flesh and blood children! A husband and wife can never divorce themselves from the days, weeks, months and years of memories and shared experiences, which have become a part of their very personalities! A divorce, no matter how imperative (having scriptural grounds), is not always a clean-cut operation and there is not an immediate recovery! With a divorce there is immense emotional, psychological, and social upheaval! It is like an amputation; an amputee can often feel the fingers, foot or arm that is no longer there. I am told being divorced is like that. Also, children of divorce have less self-confidence and less ability to establish normal relationships with members of the opposite sex; and sadly, they are more likely to have a marriage end in divorce themselves!

## Why Do People Divorce?

Why do two people who are so very much in love in the beginning and vow to love one another "*till death do us part*", end their marriage in misery and heartache by divorce? This is a vital question for all of us. I believe if we understand the potential causes of divorce when we enter into marriage, we can avoid the mistakes of others. Half of the battle lies with understanding what the problems are. The other half is to work to overcome those problems.

## Factors That Contribute To Divorce

- \* Short acquaintanceship and short (*or no*) engagement period. There is a higher probability of divorce among couples that have a short acquaintanceship. It takes time to get to know a future mate and have important questions answered.
- \* Marrying too young. People who marry too young are taking a great risk because of the very high divorce rate of teen-age marriages. Many teen-age marriages are the result of the girl becoming pregnant! These forced marriages begin with a very weak foundation. Neither the husband nor the wife is ready for the responsibilities of marriage, and they are certainly not ready for the responsibility of a baby! Young people need to be taught by their parents (*and preachers and teachers of the word of God*) that God never separated sex from the responsibility of marriage (*Heb. 13:4*)! Premarital sex is sin, fornication (*Gal. 5:19*), and to separate sex from the responsibility of marriage brings dire consequences. It is a sin that will cause one to lose his soul if it is not corrected. (*Gal. 5:19-21*)
- \* There is an illegitimate child.
- \* There is an un-wed mother.
- \* There is a hasty marriage.
- \* Bitterness in later years.
- \* In some cases, an abortion (*the killing of an unborn child*)! An abortion is the taking of human life, because at conception an embryo contains the full potential of a human being--the "blue print." About sixteen days after conception the heart begins to beat, and when it reaches about eight to ten weeks, it will be moving its tiny limbs. The fetus has been photographed sucking its thumb in nine-week abortions! The fetus is the product of two life cells (*one from the man and the other from the woman*), and it develops as a "parasite." There is no vascular connection to the mother. The circulatory system of the embryo is complete four weeks after conception, and the blood flowing through the embryo's body may well be a different type from that of the mother. *Deuteronomy 12:23* says: "*the blood is the life*", so the embryo has life, and to abort it is to take life! How can a woman (or girl) who claims to fear God and His Word, give permission to take a vacuum-pump and suck a little human being from her womb (*a God-made protective chamber for the growth of human life*)? And, how can she live with herself when she knows that when this little human being was sucked from its protective chamber through a narrow tube its little head, arms, and legs were tom off! Or, maybe being *õpickled aliveõ* with a concentrated salt solution injected around it! Or, it could have been removed alive and drowned instantly! Is not the sin of fornication that conceived this child bad enough without adding murder to the sin already committed? THINK, TEACH, AND WARN!

\* Unrealistic expectations. Every human being has faults and problems, not one of us is perfect; and this must ever be kept in mind in marriage! Here are some of the major complaints wives have against their husbands:

- \* He is selfish.
- \* He is inconsiderate.
- \* He complains too much.
- \* He is untruthful.
- \* He does not show affection.
- \* He does not talk things over.
- \* He is harsh with the children.
- \* He is "touchy".
- \* He shows no interest in the children.
- \* He is rude.
- \* He lacks ambition.
- \* He is impatient.
- \* He criticizes too much.
- \* He is a poor manager of income.
- \* He is narrow-minded.
- \* He is lazy.
- \* He is bored with "small talk".
- \* He has no "back-bone".
- \* He dislikes going out with his wife.

Here are some of the major complaints husbands have against their wives:

- \* She nags.
- \* She is not affectionate.
- \* She is selfish and inconsiderate.
- \* She complains too much.
- \* She is slovenly in appearance.
- \* She is quick-tempered.
- \* She interferes with husband's discipline.
- \* Her feelings are too easily hurt.
- \* She criticizes too much.
- \* She is narrow-minded.
- \* She neglects the children.
- \* She is a poor housekeeper.
- \* She is argumentative.
- \* She has annoying habits.
- \* She interferes in husband's business.
- \* She spoils the children.
- \* She is a poor manager of income.
- \* She is lazy.
- \* She is jealous.
- \* She gossips indiscreetly.

You may ask what all this has to do with the unrealistic expectations of marriage; it has to do simply with the fact that being aware of these problems gives a more realistic picture of what to expect about marriage. There are going to be many faults and problems to work out. Remember: no one is perfect.

\* Lack of communication. This is the complaint that may supersede most others! Open communication between husband and wife is a MUST! How can problems be solved if they are not brought into the open and aired? Hugo A. Bordeaux, executive director of the Marriage Counseling Service, Baltimore, Maryland, said: "All over America, husbands and wives cannot talk to each other. This, I am convinced, is our Number One marriage problem."

\* Sexual Infidelity. This is one of the major causes of divorce and unhappiness, and it is the only grounds the New Testament gives for divorce. The New Testament teaches that there is but one scriptural reason to put away one's companion and marry again--that reason is fornication (*Matt. 5:32; 19:9*)! Only the innocent party in a marriage where one has been unfaithful to the marriage bed can obtain a writing of divorce and remarry. The one who has committed sexual infidelity can never remarry! No law ever permits a criminal to profit from his crime, and God's law on divorce and remarriage does not set the one who is guilty of sexual infidelity free to marry another!

\* Marriage with the attitude that "we can always get a divorce if it doesn't work out" This cripples a marriage from the beginning. A couple with this attitude will not work to overcome a marital difficulty. People who enter marriage with this attitude do not believe that marriage is God ordained for life anyway, and this is the basic cause of the divorce. Over one million couples will divorce in the United States this year! This should cause every couple to re-examine their marriage and determine to make it work as God has ordained it to work. A happy marriage is not something people can take for granted; it takes work-from both husband and wife!