

Divorce and Remarriage – [Asaolu O. S.](#)
Sermon @ COC UNILAG [July 23rd, 2023]

Introduction: We earlier defined “Marriage” in the lesson “[Why one should not marry outside the Church.](#)” “Divorce” refers to repudiation of marital vows to dissolve a wedded couple while “Remarriage” is generally taken as marrying another person after the dissolution of an initial marriage. The three concepts are termed MDR. This lesson is aimed at establishing when and for whom, MDR is allowed in scripture.

Thesis: God ordinarily hates divorce amidst those that He joined in marriage and prohibits such from putting away a spouse to marry another. Only someone who has ab initio contracted an illicit (illegitimate) marriage may possibly engage in MDR, any other married person is to forbear with the partner till death.

Proof: Evident via inference in several passages, such as:

Malachi 2:*14 Yet ye say, Wherefore? Because the LORD hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant. 15 And did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth. 16 **For the LORD, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away**: for one covereth violence with his garment, saith the LORD of hosts: therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously.*

From Malachi, we deduce that if one has an original marital partner which God truly endorsed as a witness to their union or wedding, such should NOT put away a spouse.

Mark 10:*2 And the Pharisees came to him, and asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife? tempting him. 3 And he answered and said unto them, What did Moses command you? 4 And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away. 5 And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept. 6 But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. 7 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; 8 And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. 9 **What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.** 10 And in the house his disciples asked him again of the same matter. 11 And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. 12 And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery.*

In Mark, Jesus teach that what God has joined together in marriage, man should not put apart in divorce. The implication is that only those NOT joined by God in marriage may put their union asunder!

1 Corinthians 7:*1 Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman. 2 Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man **have his own** wife, and let every woman **have her own** husband... 10 And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband: 11 But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife.*

Inspired Paul affirm that those who are not keeping to their OWN lawful marriage partner may be prone to fornication or sexual immorality. Lawfully married persons should not divorce at all. In crisis situation of abuse, religious incompatibility, etc. such may separate but should hopefully reconcile with time. They are

not permitted to go and marry another person. [Recall that this epistle was initially written unto saints in Corinth who were commended for repenting from their various sins (including sexual immorality) to come unto Christ viz 6:9-11. Adulterers, fornicators, effeminate, etc. -> “*such were some of you*” means they have turned to godly conduct.]

Matthew 19:9 *And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, **except it be for fornication**, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.*

Only when a marriage is Fornication (adulterous, gay, bestial, incest, etc.) is one allowed to put away the partner since such are ineligible originally by God’s word. Example is the Israelites who put away their **wives** in Ezra 9-10. For the Israelites Jesus’ teaching made sense given the types of marriages prohibited in Lev 18:6-18 & Deut 7:1-4. The Lord did not side with either group of Pharisees (Hillel & Shammai) which posited one may divorce for any cause or for just adultery. Their prevailing Law of Moses had its provision for those issues as death penalty [Lev 20:10 & Deut 22:22f].

Romans 7:2 *For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. 3 So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man.*

Recall that John the Baptist charged Herod with unlawful marriage to Herodias in Mk 6:17-18, the king was in violation of the Law of Moses. It is also an illicit and unclean thing for a man to take a living brother’s wife -Lev 20:21.

Conclusion: Only those in illicit marital unions may divorce and possibly remarry if such has no living, initial divinely approved spouse.

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