The Effects Of Divorce On The Home

Intro: The home is one of the most important institutions ever. God realized it was not good for man to be alone; Gen. 2:18 “And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.” Jehovah made woman for the man and brought her to him; Gen. 2:22-24 “And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. 22And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. 23Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.” With this God established the divine institution of the home. When a man and a woman marry today, God joins them together as one; Mat. 19:6 “Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.” God also regulated all things concerning the man/woman, husband/wife relationship. When we properly apply the principles of the Bible within the home, God will bless the home. However, not everyone lives according to these principles, thus the home is not always what it should be.

I. SPIRITUALLY
   A. God regulates the ending of the marriage relationship.
      1. One way to end the marriage is divorce, however God hates divorce; Mal. 2:16 “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.”
      2. Thus, anytime a divorce takes place; sin is involved.
         a. God allows divorce with remarriage when fornication is involved.
            (1) Mat. 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.”
            (2) Then fornication is the specific sin involved.
         b. If a divorce takes place that is not for fornication, then the divorce itself is sin.
         c. One of the partners will be living in such a way (sinful) to bring about the desire to divorce.
   B. Part of the purpose of marriage is to help one another get to heaven.
      1. 1 Pet. 3:7 “Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.”
      2. Husband and wife are to walk together helping each other attain heaven’s home.
         a. This is part of God making man a “help meet for him;” Gen. 2:18 “And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.”
         b. This is part of their being “one flesh;” Mat. 19:5 “And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?”
      3. When a Christian marries, he should be thinking how this person can help him get to heaven, and how can I help him get to heaven.
      4. When one is divorced that help is destroyed.
         a. They are no longer a team working together to get to heaven.
         b. They must face the trials, temptations of Satan all alone.
         c. They no longer have the support system to fight the fights and bear the burdens with them.
   C. When children are involved there are other spiritual effects seen.
      1. God gave specific roles for both the father and mother.
2. God designed the development of the children that the father provides certain things in their development which the mother cannot provide, and likewise the mother provides certain things which the father cannot provide.

3. When divorce takes place, one must now try to fulfill both roles.
   a. The one is not designed to fulfill the role of the other.
   b. That is why God made male and female, not two men or two women.

II. SEXUALLY

A. God made us male and female—sexual beings, and regulated the proper outlet as being within the marriage realm.

B. Within marriage sex is a beautiful relationship.
   1. Heb. 13:4 “Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.”
   2. Pro. 5:18-20 “Let thy fountain be blessed: and rejoice with the wife of thy youth. 19Let her be as the loving hind and pleasant roe; let her breasts satisfy thee at all times; and be thou ravished always with her love. 20And why wilt thou, my son, be ravished with a strange woman, and embrace the bosom of a stranger?”
   
3. This is one of the reasons for marriage; 1 Cor. 7:1-2, 9 “Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman. 2Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband. 9But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn.”

4. It is wrong to withhold sex from one’s marriage partner; 1 Cor. 7:3-5 “Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence [the affection due her—NKJV]: and likewise also the wife unto the husband. 4The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife. 5Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency.”

C. When divorce takes place, this relationship no longer exist, and the desires God placed within man must be suppressed.
   1. This is such a problem for some that they commit fornication.
   2. Some who are not eligible for remarriage will remarry anyway because the sexual and emotional desires are too great.

III. FINANCIALLY

A. The divorce itself is expensive.
   1. Rarely can one get a cheap divorce.
   2. The initial cost depends on many issues, varies from state to state, and even regions within a state.
   3. The amount of conflict will greatly affect the cost.
      a. When there is a great deal of conflict you will not trust each other causing difficulty in negotiating (the judge must resolve things).
      b. When high level of conflict you must communicate through lawyers (must talk about lawyers issues, lawyers pace and their hourly rates).
   4. How one gets the divorce affects the cost. There are 4 kinds of divorce (from cheapest to most expensive).
      a. No lawyer divorce.
      b. An uncontested divorce.
      c. The mediated divorce.
      d. The adversarial divorce.
5. How complex your affairs affects the cost. It means:
   a. Each will probably need lawyers.
   b. Certified Public Accountants for each.
   c. May also need financial planners, bankers, business valuators, and insurance brokers.

6. On average it take family members 4 to 8 years to recover from the emotional and financial expense of a bitter adversarial divorce.

B. The cost after the divorce.
   1. The income does not increase, but expenses do.
   2. Before they had one home, now two.
   3. Often the one who must pay alimony and/or child support will quit paying out of animosity.
      a. This leaves the other mate (and children) in financial difficulty and they must go to court to try to get their money (and often have it adjusted).
      b. This is an expense to society along with trying to collect from dead-beat dads.

IV. Socially
   A. Years ago the Family Service Association of America stated: “Family breakdown is fast reaching epidemic proportions and now ranks as America’s number one social problem.”
   B. There is still a social stigma attached to divorce and those divorced.
      1. The divorced seem out of place.
      2. Most of their friends are married, thus they do not fit in.
      3. Sometimes the friends that one had do not want them around anymore or they just want to be friends with the other divorced mate and not you.
      4. Married friends may now try to set them up with another friend who is not married, when there might be no interest or grounds for remarriage.
      5. Often there is the need to make new friends and develop new interests on one or both.
   C. Many look at the divorced with a jaded eye.
      1. They have not been successful in the most import area of life.
      2. If they could not succeed in this area, what about other areas?
      3. Whether this is justified or not, it is what happens.

V. Emotionally, Psychologically
   A. It takes 4 to 8 years to recover from the emotional and financial expense of an adversarial divorce.
      1. The emotional effects are not sinful in themselves.
      2. Emotional problems do affect our spirituality.
   B. The emotional stages of ending a relationship.
      1. Early on there is the disillusionment of one mate.
         a. One to two years before anything is actually verbalized.
         b. There are vague feelings of discontent.
         c. When there are arguments, one harbors resentments.
         d. The problems are real, but they do not acknowledge them.
         e. There is a growing distance between them and a lack of mutuality.
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2. The expression of dissatisfaction.
   a. 8 to 12 months before invoking the legal process.
   b. Expressing of discontent or ambivalence to the mate.
      (1) Before there was the feeling but not the expression.
      (2) This might be the first hint on the mates part that problems exist.
   c. They might seek marital counseling or will try a second honeymoon.
      (1) This is the old college try.
      (2) They are going to give it one last try.
   d. Feelings are varied
      (1) They feel as if they are on an emotional roller coaster.
      (2) First a feeling of relief as the problems are now out in the open, thus there is no longer the feeling of trying to hide something.
      (3) Open tension between the two.
      (4) feeling of guilt, anguish, and grief.
      (5) They possess great doubt as to what they are doing and what they are feeling.

3. Deciding to divorce.
   a. 6 to 12 months before invoking the legal process.
   b. They must create an emotional distance.
      (1) They disparage and find faults with the other person or the situation.
      (2) They must build this so they will be able to leave the person and/or situation.
      (3) At this point divorce has been considered for a while and it is seldom reversible when it gets to this point.
   c. An involvement with another person is likely to occur.
   d. The other mate is just beginning the first stage (considering divorce).
      (1) They feels denied by their spouse.
      (2) This leads to depression on their part.
      (3) They also feel rejected.
      (4) They also feel anger for what the spouse has done to them.
      (5) This (along with the feelings associated with not being able to keep their marriage together) lead to a low self-esteem.
   e. Both feel victimized by the other.
   f. Feelings of anger, resentment, sadness, and guilt—leading to impatience with the other (which generally leads to greater problems).
   g. A great deal of anxiety.
      (1) Over the future and what it will hold.
      (2) Even greater anxiety for the family and what will happen to it.
   h. They have needy feelings which is the major cause of the adultery that takes place during this period.

4. Acting upon the decision.
   a. Beginning the legal process.
   b. During this period that the actual physical separation takes place.
      (1) Prior, there had only been the thought of separation and working up the antagonism to be able to leave.
(2) An emotional separation takes place during this time (but this will be complicated by emotional flare-ups).

c. The process of recreating a redefinition of self (a new self-orientation).

d. The divorce decision goes public and a setting the tone for the divorce process.
   (1) Getting legal advice and setting legal precedent for children, support, and home.
   (2) People will start choosing sides (friends and families will have divided loyalties but forced to choose).

e. Children find out now:
   (1) They feel responsible for their parents’ difficulties.
   (2) They will behave in such a way as to try to force their parents to interact with each other.

f. Children will react and feel differently based on several factors:
   (1) Age
   (2) How much the parents shield them
   (3) Amount of conflict between the parents

g. Parent’s feelings:
   (1) traumatized
   (2) panic
   (3) fear
   (4) shame
   (5) guilt
   (6) blame
   (7) histrionics (a deliberate display of emotion for their effects)

5. When the divorce takes place.
   a. Some feelings of closure and growing acceptance.
   b. A feeling of regaining power and starting over in life.
   c. It does not bring an end to the emotional and psychological effects.
      (1) Loneliness
          (a) No sense of belonging and sometimes abandonment.
          (b) No one cares for me.
      (2) Feeling of being out of place.
      (3) The loss of intimacy.
      (4) The loss of social connection.
      (5) Reduced finances
      (6) Interruption of the parental role

d. The initiator of the divorce experiences:
   (1) fear
   (2) relief
   (3) distance
   (4) impatience
   (5) resentment
   (6) doubt
   (7) guilt

e. The one not initiating the divorce feels:
   (1) shock
(2) betrayal  
(3) loss of control  
(4) victimization  
(5) decreased self-esteem  
(6) insecurity  
(7) anger  
(8) a desire to “get even”  
(9) wishes to reconcile  

C. Studies show that the divorced are at risk for serious emotional illness and destructive lifestyles.  
1. Divorced men have nine times the rate of psychiatric outpatient visits compared to married men and 21 times the rate of psychiatric hospital admissions.  
2. Divorced women have five times higher rate of psychiatric care than married women.  
3. While divorced men are at higher risk for major depression than divorced women among those with no prior history of depression, the divorced of both sexes have more than double the depression rates of those married.  
4. Suicide is four times higher for divorced white men as it is for their married counterparts.  
5. Divorce ranks as the number one factor linked with suicide.  

D. The effects on children is a study all its own, but notice these:  
1. A pervasive sense of loss.  
   a. They will express feelings of sadness.  
   b. Have signs of depression (such as sleeplessness, restlessness, and difficulty concentrating).  
2. Become very anxious.  
   a. Worry that their basic needs will not be met or that they will be abandoned or left alone.  
   b. Worry about money and their parents emotional and physical health.  
3. Feelings of rejection by one or both parents because one is leaving.  
4. With the rejection is the feeling of loneliness.  
   a. They will frequently long for the absent parent  
   b. They generally feel that they receive less attention.  
5. Increased anger—their behavior often reflects an increased sense of tension and anger directed toward one or both parents.  
6. Conflicting loyalties  
   a. Children fear betraying one parent in favor of the other.  
   b. They do not want to show partiality.  

VI. Medically  
A. A surgeon general once stated, “Divorce greatly increases your risks of cancer, chronic stress, heart problems and a bunch of other side effects you don’t want.”  
1. The risk for both physical and emotional illness for divorced adults, particularly men, skyrocket.  
2. Divorced adults are more prone to risky behaviors that could shorten their lives.
**B. The medical effects:**

1. **Cancer:**
   a. Nearly every type of terminal cancer strikes divorced individuals of either sex at higher rates.
   b. Non-smoking divorced men have almost the same death rate from cancer as married men who smoke one pack or more per day.

2. Early death from both cardiovascular disease and stroke doubles for divorced men compared to married men.

3. Premature death due to pneumonia for divorced men is more than 7 times that of their married counterparts.

4. Divorced and separated persons experience acute conditions at higher rates: such as
   a. infectious diseases
   b. parasitic diseases
   c. respiratory illnesses
   d. digestive illnesses
   e. severe injuries

5. Heart disease, rheumatoid arthritis, and osteoarthritis occur in higher rates in the divorced than in the married.

6. Automobile fatalities tripled among the divorced for both sexes.

7. In a 1990 study of sixteen developed countries, unmarried men were twice as likely to die at a younger age than married men.

8. For divorced men, the risks were sometimes ten times greater than for a married person the same age.

**C. Medically it does not pay to divorce, the effects on life are simply too great.**

Conclusion: Divorce does not remove problems—it simply exchanges a new set of problems for the old. The solution is for both partners to live according to God’s plan revealed within the pages of the New Testament. God’s way is right and when we apply God’s way to our marriage relationship, there will be no desire to divorce. It will, as many have stated, be a heaven on earth.