

Angie's Marriage Column – February 4, 2009

Biblically Speaking Can I Divorce My Alcoholic Husband?

Marriage Question: Biblically speaking do I have to remain married to my alcoholic husband? He has physically abused me once and emotionally abused me for 10 years? We have 3 young children together, and we are currently separated. Thank you so much for your work.

Marriage Guidance: I am sorry to hear of your suffering and pain. There is too much aggression going on in marriages today. But there is a solution. Most of us, when tough times come butting their heads into our marriage, want out of the marriage, because we cannot see a way out of our problems. Divorce is an easy option, but it is not what God had in mind at all.

Marriage Belongs To God

Marriage was intended to be a sanctified union between a man and a woman and **set apart from the world** for God and his purpose. What is God's purpose for you, as a wife, married to an alcoholic? Do you think that God wants you to divorce your husband? Have you asked God what He wants?

The key question here, "is your marriage "set apart from the world?" If it isn't then I suppose the only option you can **see** is a divorce. But if your marriage is set apart from the world then wouldn't your option be based upon God's principles?

"Haven't you read," he replied, "That at the beginning the Creator made them male and female, and said, "For this reason *a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become **one flesh**. So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, **let man not separate**. (Matthew 19:4-6)*

The key declaration from God in this verse is “become one flesh”. How can a mere man tear apart what God created as being one? It’s impossible! Nothing that God has created can be destroyed by man – nothing. Let man not separate.

Permanency of marriage was God’s intention. Jesus says in no uncertain terms that marriage is a lifetime commitment. To leave your spouse and marry another may be legal with the state but it is adultery in God’s eyes. God designed marriage to be indissoluble.

Jesus said, “Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery, and the man who marries a divorced woman commits adultery. (Luke 16:18)

There are no loopholes for divorce in the bible. That doesn’t mean you have to *live* with an abusive husband either. What other options are there? Ok, well, let’s see, there are worldly options and then there are Godly options. Let’s take a look at the two.

Adam and Eve were created perfect for each other, just as you and your spouse were created perfect for each other. **The only time marriage becomes flawed is when couples stop allowing God to be the architect.** What do you think God’s purpose is for your marriage? For one thing, no matter what, you are still your husband’s wife, whether you live together or not. You are still a child of God and have responsibilities to yourself and to your children and to do what’s right by God.

To be able to do what’s right and to keep your marriage *set apart from the world*, you must stop focusing so much on the negative aspects of what is going on in your marriage and start focusing on what God can help you accomplish for your marriage. When we take ourselves out of the equation we can look at our alcoholic husband with a different attitude, and then you will be able to find your answers and solution through God’s will for you.

This certainly does not mean to live with an abusive husband. On the contrary, maybe God wants you to stay separated, for the time being, so

your husband will **see** what he has lost and then gets the healing he needs for recovery. Do not underestimate the power of God working in our lives to teach us, heal us, love us, and bless us. God does all of those things because we have TRUSTED in Him.

Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised. Romans (4: 20-21)

Have you allowed God to strengthen you? The world sees alcoholism and abuse in marriage and the first thing that comes to mind is divorce. God sees alcoholism and abuse in marriage and the first thing He sees is “how can I save these two people from temptations and all of the worlds desires?” You see, God uses people like yourself to help people like your husband.

But maybe you need to help yourself first. Separating yourself from an abusive husband is the first step. The next step is getting the inner healing you need for yourself and for your children. Where would you start to get healing from years of abuse? I would start with the Word of God. I would read the bible and get to know God better through reading, studying, prayer and supplication. I would beg God for forgiveness of my own sins so I can become the Godly woman God wants me to be. I would ask God into my heart and ask Him to be my protector!

When you have done that, you will then **see** your husband with a different perspective and you will be able to help him and comfort him, even though he is an abusive alcoholic. Then I would talk with other Christian women who have or are going through alcoholism with their own husbands.

Be careful! Some of these women will tell you to leave your husband. It is usually the women who have been empowered by feminism and they hate men. So you have to be careful and discerning about “what to believe” and “who to trust” and “who to become friends with.” All of those women and men who have left their alcoholic husbands and wives don’t realize that they may have been able to save their marriage and grow in the Lord to be a stronger person over it. When we do not face life adversities through God

we don't grow from them and we remain stagnant like a dirty pond. God wants us to grow.

You see, the Christian life is not about what we want, but what God wants. We have to shift the "me, me, me attitude" over to "what does God want me to do attitude". This is where the Holy Spirit comes in (our Comforter – our Protector.) Jesus is with all of God's children but many professed Christians don't know that because they don't have the faith to believe.

And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever – the Spirit of Truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he live with you and will be in you. (John 14:16-17)

Once you have faith enough to humble your own life to God you will see clear enough to help your alcoholic husband. You will understand what your purpose is for your marriage and family.

God Bless!

Angie and Frank

Book Resources: The Alcoholism Trap

<http://www.lulu.com/content/946885>

This is the complete book on alcohol addiction, written in two parts. Why does the alcoholic drink and how they can beat alcohol addiction for good! The second part is written for the loved one (enabler/rescuer) of an alcoholic. Do you feel trapped with the alcoholic? Do you feel like you are married to a Jekyll and Hyde? You're not alone. You can break free when you stop trying to rescue the alcoholic and rescue you instead! See the chapter preview at Lulu. <http://www.lulu.com/content/946885> -- The Alcoholism Trap is also available from many online bookstore outlets.

The Alcoholism Trap: Review by Dawn Elliott
Professional Organizing Consultant

*This book by Angie Lewis is by far one of the easiest reading books out there. Angie speaks from a first person perspective who has been there, done that and lived it. Her own life experience allows her to relate to the pain and anguish of Alcoholism and its deadly devastation in the lives of countless hundreds. Not only has she risen past the addiction and achieved lasting healing to not only her and her family but gives practical step by step help for those caught in its ugly snare and explains how to be "free" once and for all. Her book is both biblical and sound and very practical for either the Alcoholic or for those who live with the pain and experience of Alcohol in the life of a loved one close to them day by day. A must read for anyone seeking help and understanding from such addiction. -- Dawn Elliott
Professional Organizing Consultant.*

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