

# Every Man Ministries: Dealing with Divorce

We all know God hates divorce—mainly because of the pain that ripples out of it. Still, because of human nature, it happens.

People cheat, steal, hurt others, treat spouses unfairly or just walk away (with half of everything). Even the most amicable divorce is never good. Divorce stains, leaving a lasting impression on the spouses, children, families, friends and co-workers.

Regardless of the reason, divorce is common. It's become a cultural norm, despite its nasty repercussions. In some ways, divorce is harder to deal with than a death in the family. At least the death provides closure. Divorce, on the other hand, never goes away. It is the end of a marriage, but the relationship with the spouse and children never ends.

And divorce doesn't discriminate among faiths. One study, albeit 10 years ago, showed divorce is actually more common among "Bible-believing" Christians. Statistics are sometimes fishy, because they typically involve a sample size "representing" a population. But nevertheless, divorce is a cloud overhead just waiting for someone to rain on. If you know someone in the rain, do you leave him alone all wet or do you bring an umbrella and stand in the rain with him?

Unfortunately, *friends divorce friends over divorce*. Men in the church going through divorce often find themselves isolated, partly because God's men don't know what to do. It's a shame. So I wanted to give my top tips for dealing with men going through divorce.

1. Embrace, don't disgrace. Nobody expects to be in this position. Even in the case of infidelity, divorce rivals any crisis. This is not the time to pile on. Being a friend

doesn't mean taking sides, it just means to be a friend in a time of need. Be available to help the hurt and pray together. Consider this verse from Matthew 7:1 from The Message:

"Don't pick on people, jump on their failures, criticize their faults— unless, of course, you want the same treatment. That critical spirit has a way of boomeranging. It's easy to see a smudge on your neighbor's face and be oblivious to the ugly sneer on your own. Do you have the nerve to say, 'Let me wash your face for you,' when your own face is distorted by contempt? It's this whole traveling road-show mentality all over again, playing a holier-than-thou part instead of just living your part. Wipe that ugly sneer off your own face, and you might be fit to offer a washcloth to your neighbor."

**2. Don't Bible thump.** Instead speak with love, grace and truth. Friends going through divorce may need Jesus more than ever, and God can work in this situation. But don't condemn or judge your friend like you've been deputized in the "Holy Spirit Police Force." Do the loving thing, and love. While navigating this relationship, God may teach you something about yourself, vulnerabilities and character.

**3. Do what the Samaritan did.** In Luke 10, Jesus tells us exactly how to act towards a "neighbor." While other men walked around the beaten man stripped of his clothes, money and dignity, the random Samaritan interrupted his travel plans to do what? He took pity for the man. He went to him. Bandaged his wounds. Then he took him to safety. Put him up in a hotel and took time to care for him. In other words, don't ignore your friend and don't wait to help. Pray. Bring a meal. Provide a helping hand. Get the kids, help with the garbage ... whatever the need, give your friend a glimpse of Jesus working through you.

If Jesus tells us to be like the Samaritan and serve neighbors with this kind of attention, how much more should we serve a friend? Helping a friend in need is a friend indeed. Divorce

provides an opportunity to carry out God's love, and you will have a friend for life.

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