

## Kids and Divorce Don't Mix

Q: My wife wants to get a divorce and I don't want to. Our marriage has been a wreck for a long time and we're having a hard time recovering. I am worried that divorce will ruin the kids, and she thinks they'll be fine. Do you think they can recover from a divorce?

A: That's a difficult question because many people are in single parent situations, and I don't want to make it sound as if there is no hope for the children of divorced parents. On the other hand, losing a parent, or even long periods of separation from a parent will certainly introduce many significant difficult trials into a child's life. I don't think it is wise to downplay the impact of divorce on children.

Suppose someone asked the following: My leg has a really sore spot on it. It has been sore for six months now. I'm thinking of getting it amputated. I know a couple of people who are amputees and they seem to get along just fine. One lady I know said that losing her leg was the best thing that ever happened to her because it made her turn to God. Another friend met his wife in the hospital, and I can't help but think that they wouldn't have met unless he lost all the fingers on one hand. So the more I think about it, the more I think that I'd really be better off cutting off my leg.

I hope you see the fallacy in that thinking.

### 1) Just because it could turn out okay does not mean that it will.

The amputee could come out stronger, or could be physically and emotionally destroyed. Your children could adjust really well to the trials a divorce brings, or they could get shipwrecked. Divorce takes a big risk with your children's lives and gives no guarantees—certainly not positive ones. Study after study shows that divorce hurts kids.

[http://www.troubledwith.com/stellent/groups/public/@fotf\\_troubledwith/documents/articles/twi\\_012755.cfm?channel=Relationships&topic=Divorce&sssct=Questions%20and%20Answers](http://www.troubledwith.com/stellent/groups/public/@fotf_troubledwith/documents/articles/twi_012755.cfm?channel=Relationships&topic=Divorce&sssct=Questions%20and%20Answers)

<http://www.divorcesource.com/CA/ARTICLES/starkv.html>

### 2) Because one path leads down a certain course does not mean it is the best course.

An amputation might be needed, but how much better to heal the limb?

A child could survive divorce, but how much better to heal the marriage? Wouldn't it be better for your children to see you committed to each other through thick and thin, to see God's ways work, and to see each of you unselfishly make choices to fix the problems?

Here's a passage that covers some reasons to stay married:

*Malachi 2:13-16 Another thing you do: You flood the LORD's altar with tears. You weep and wail because he no longer pays attention to your offerings or accepts them with pleasure from your hands. <sup>14</sup>You ask, "Why?" It is because the LORD is acting as the witness between you and the wife of your youth, because you have broken faith with her, though she is your partner, the wife of your marriage covenant.*

<sup>15</sup>*Has not [the LORD] made them one? In flesh and spirit they are his. And why one? Because he was seeking godly offspring. So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith with the wife of your youth.*

<sup>16</sup>*"I hate divorce," says the LORD God of Israel, "and I hate a man's covering himself with violence as well as with his garment," says the LORD Almighty. NIV*

## **Malachi mentions four reasons to stay married:**

### **1) Because of the vows you made to stay married**

”You have broken faith with her, though she is your partner, the wife of your marriage covenant.” (Malachi 2:14)

*(See also Proverbs 2:16-17, Numbers 30:2, Deuteronomy 23:21-23)*

### **2) Because God joined you together**

“Has not [the LORD] made them one?” (Malachi 2:15)

*(See also Matthew 19:4-6)*

### **3) For the sake of your children**

“And why one? Because he was seeking godly offspring.” (Malachi 2:14)

### **4) Because God hates divorce**

“I hate divorce.” (Malachi 2:15)

Those are all important points to consider, but to stay on topic let’s consider the third. God made you one with your spouse. Why did He do that? Because He desired godly children from that union. In context this is clearly not simply talking about being “one” sexually. It is talking about being in a permanent united relationship. God is not just concerned about multiplying the number of people on the earth. If that were the case, marriage would not be emphasized, because it is not critical to child bearing (I’m speaking biologically, not spiritually). Reproduction would be the emphasized activity. God desired “godly” children, not just children. Evidently marriage is important to produce godly offspring, because from this passage, that was why he made you one in the first place—so you could produce godly offspring.

So to think that you (or in this case your spouse) can get divorced and not negatively impact the children is thoroughly unsound. Such thinking is not logical. Unfortunately, when we are about to do something that we know is wrong, we often defend our actions very illogically. We often become clouded by our own desires and start to try to deceive ourselves that wrong is right.

*Galatians 6:7 Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows.*

Your wife thinks she can plant weeds and harvest corn, and that is because she is deceived. If she plants weeds in your family, she will reap weeds. On the other hand if you both start the hard work of rebuilding your marriage and sowing good choices, you will reap good fruit in your marriage and family.

Lastly, let me say that the two of you desperately need to talk to your pastor and get some counseling. You need specific biblical advice for your specific situation. If she refuses to go with you, go by yourself. In such trials life becomes surreal and it is invaluable to get an outside godly perspective.