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Christian Ethics on Divorce: Balancing Forgiveness Verses Prudence

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Abstract

The institution of marriage, originally started and blessed by God, is facing the threat of desacralization, disrepute, and collapse. Divorce is now emerging as the leading intervention to marital conflicts. A greater concern however is that among the people that choose divorce and remarriage are Christian leaders and clergymen and clergywomen. Their decision on accepting divorce is based on their understanding that Jesus and Paul gave some reasons and excuses why and how someone would take divorce and remarriage as a choice. This paper argues that the biggest factor at play, is the worldviews that people have on marriage, something which guides judgement, and determine options that someone takes when they are faced with extended family row. The people that hold the “I need you” or ‘you needed me’ mindset, would either choose divorce as the only option, or decided to endure the partners. This paper argues that both of these are ramification of entering marriage with unstable worldview. The people that enter marriage with the ‘I was wanting, I am made whole by you’ mindset, are likely to view extended marriage row as something positive, and pray for God to help them overcome the trial, in order to come out victorious.

Key Words: Marriage, divorce, worldview, biblical view, sacrifice, love, forgiveness, prudence

Introduction

The institution of marriage was established by God himself. Unfortunately, and as said by Michel de Montaigne, it has become like a cage where one sees the birds outside desperate to get in, and those inside equally desperate to get out. In many countries in the world, divorce has become the

norm. The importance of having well managed families for the development of the society however, cannot be overemphasized. Family breakdown have however been on the rise in the world. In Kenya, divorce rate is more alarming than any other time in history; threatening to collapse what is considered as the primary church in any society. News of deaths and injuries that result from domestic violence have further compounded the problem, eliciting more questions than giving answers, on how a Christian family should be. In the United States, the average In America, there is one divorce approximately every 36 seconds. That's nearly 2,400 divorces per day, 16,800 divorces per week and 876,000 divorces a year, according to McKinley Irvin Family Law data (2017). The church however depends on the existence of families in a way that glorifies God, in order for the Church to become the salt and the light of the world, as taught by Jesus.

The Kenyan constitution allows divorce. The grounds for seeking divorce in a court of law, are properly spelled out in specific terms, which make it clear to argue for the need: adultery, physical and mental cruelty, desertion, drunkenness or use of other narcotics, non-support or neglect, insanity, or living separately willfully for an extended period of time (Constitution of Kenya, 2010 page 33, Part 2, article 1, 2, 3, 4).

In Genesis, a woman is depicted as being made from the bone of a man. God's original plan for marriage envisaged such a fundamental unity between man and his wife that they would enjoy a loving, trusting and happy married life (Gen 2:24). However, with the fall, sin and hatred became part of the human condition and thus divorce came into our world. In the Early Church, Augustine of Hippo understood divorce to come only in the case of new adultery, but even so, the marriage is not dissolved deliberately, the marriage bond gradually became dormant and soon led to divorce. Martin Luther started that marriage is a worldly thing rather than a sacrament of the church, but he allowed for all divorce in case of adultery. He however is known to have laid the ground work for a more moderate view of divorce which later led to acceptance of divorce in protestant nations, for example England (1857).

We have been told in Malachi 2:16 that "God says he hate divorce" the prophet Malachi was addressing the issues of mixed marriage and divorce both of which were serious problem at that time. Malachi teaches that husband and wives should be faithful to one another because they have

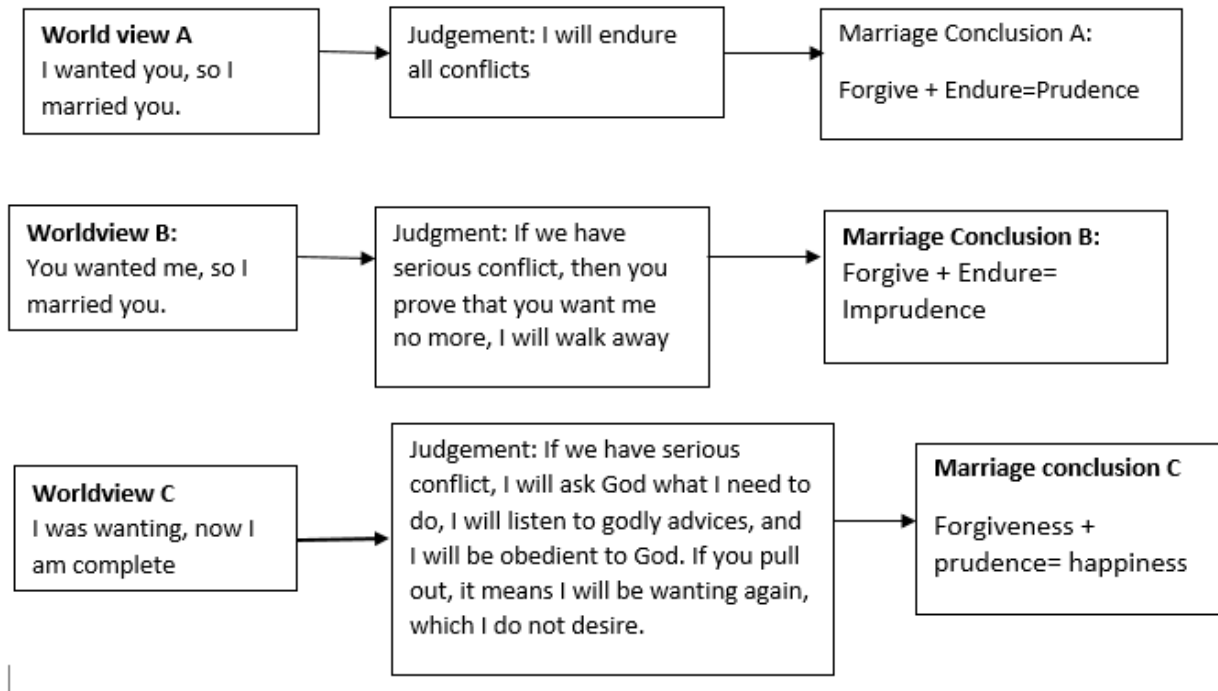
one God as their father and their relationship rest on solemn covenant for the benefits of godly offspring.

Divorce, which is the legal dissolution of marriage institution, is mentioned in the Bible both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament. Divorce is also defined as a legal or customary decree that a marriage is dissolve. The term is derived from the Latin word *divortium* from the word *divertere*, *divorter* which means to “separate” (Davis, 2015, p. 100). The timeless vow of Christian marriage state that one takes their spouse in marriage as long as they live, for better or worse, for richer or poorer, in sickness and in health, until death do them part. This vow is repeated in church matrimones throughout the world. This vow has recently become one that is difficult to keep in many countries. Hundreds or thousands of ministers in the world are already living with divorced parties.

In the recent days, divergence of opinions have been growing louder, and the demand for answers has been growing noisier, on whether to allow couples to divorce peacefully, or persuade them to endure each other for the sake of their Christian faith, and children. Those who are of the view that husbands and wives need to endure challenges, and assume they were ordinary trials that must come to human beings, also run into another problem: They are accused that their options are not prudent, especially when one partner is killed while trying to endure. Those who are of the view that families should be guided to divorce peacefully, to let each member be free but safe, also run into another challenge: They are accused of not faithful to the biblical teaching on forgiveness, love, and endurance. They are accused of not being concerned of their children, and not being good example in the community. Many marriages have therefore been just for convenience, with people living together, sharing roofs, but not hearts; a practice which is hypocrisy, or at least not ideal before God. While some people may see this as a problem with education, development or gender movements in the world, evidence show that worldview play a significant role in human behaviour. This paper seeks to argue that there are three main worldviews of marriage for Christians in Kenya; these worldviews determine if a family will forgive and endure, be prudent and divorce, or if a family will have a happy marriage, where divorce is not a factor to consider.

Worldviews, Marriage and Divorce

In this sections, three marriage worldviews are presented, and a case is argued that those major worldviews define how Christians respond to extended marital conflicts, and how they chose divorce as an intervention for their conflicts. The first worldview, is the “I wanted you, so I married you” mindset. The second worldview is the “You wanted me, so I married you” mindset. The third view is that “I was wanting; I am now complete.” It is shown in this section also, how each worldview affects judgements and conclusions related to marriage and divorce.



I. “I Wanted You” and “You wanted me” Mindset

Daniel Lagat (2016) in his article argued that some people enter marriage because they felt they needed the other person for what that other person would offer. For example, money. In this case, marriage becomes a money making enterprise. The people that have this view, according to Lagat, do not aim for the permanence of marriage. They get married to be rich and when their need is not satisfied, they get off the marriage. They marry solely to improve their financial status, then escape either after achieving or when they cannot achieve. Lagat further argues that there is another crop of people who get married so as to be served. A man would take a woman in marriage so that the woman would wash his clothes, the wife being at the disposal of the man; to do as he wishes with her. The man here takes kingship and authority roles, and the woman receives. Marriage vows are

made like state treaties, where the suzerain makes an agreement with the vassal. In some cases it is also the woman who has this mindset, and who marries a man because she wants his services, not money. In this worldview of marriage, one member is grossly abused in the mind. In some other cases, though rare, people enter into marriage to test if they are fertile. They could also marry to hide from something. Lagat notes that if one partner feels that he/she is pressed in life, he/she can decide to get married in order to be shelved from such challenges. Pressure could be coming from relatives or culture. Such a marriage, Lagat argues, is a marriage of convenience or consolation. In all these cases, the mindset is the same: I want to use you mentality.”

This “I wanted you” worldview, as Lagat (2016), can only survive for a limited time. Marriages based on this worldview, are like houses built on top of sand in a dry river bank. When the challenges of marriage come, they do not survive. To understand how this worldview will influence judgement related to divorce, we ask the question: In case of serious extended domestic row; in the case where your spouse has really become difficult to live with, what options do you choose, and why? The people that feel that they wanted their partners, would either want to stay on (endurance) or walk out (divorce) depending on whether they have achieved what they wanted. In both cases, the marriage does not become joyful.

Those who would endure, do so because they are still ‘hunting’ for something, or still gold digging. Those who choose to divorce in this case, do so, because their original intention for marriage has either been met, or is not likely to be met anyway. Their arguments or excuses for divorce would therefore be based on one or more of the arguments which is presented here in the next section.

The second view is held by people who feel that they entered into marriage because they were bringing a resource that ‘only’ their partners needed. The person says, “I would have been OK without you, but you insisted, and I agreed to come, to offer.” It is argued in this article, that marriages based on this worldview, like the previous view, are like houses built on top of sand, which will fall in the times of floods. If the people holding this worldview face difficult spouses; if their spouses treat them with contempt, so that they feel unwanted, they would choose divorce. If they are Christians, and they decide to divorce, they would most likely argue their decision based on the following excuses/reasons.

Arguments in Support of Divorce

There are views that the Christians can actually divorce their partners acceptably. Such opinions are based on what Jesus said in Matthew 5:32 and 19:9, in relation to adultery as the first cause of divorce. Secondly Paul's answer to a question from the Corinthian church about a partner that deserts his wife or her husband, because of faith incongruence (I Corinthians 7:15). This view is commonly called the "Pauline privilege" (Jackson, 2018). This view argues therefore that the assertion by Paul, that "the believing brother or sister is not bound in such cases" should be interpreted to mean that a person becomes free to remarry, because they are not 'bound' any more. They say that Paul has given a license to divorce, because "God has called you to live in peace." This view is said to have been supported by church fathers such as Chrysostom (c. A.D. 347-407), Roman Catholic Canon law, and even reformers such as Martin Luther. The theory certainly is not a new one. It was advocated by one of the so-called "church fathers." It became a part of and was defended by Martin Luther. This view, we are convinced, is unwarranted and constitutes a compromise of the Lord's teaching on divorce and remarriage. (Robertson, 1995)

Thirdly, there are people that argue that due to human sinfulness, God provided grace, knowing very well that laws could not be kept. They argue that marriage laws are just legalistic, the very things that Christ abolished, when he gave grace. These voices opine that God, having been aware ahead of time, even began making provision in the time of Moses for divorce, as can be seen in Deuteronomy 24:1-4. 'This,' they argue, 'shows that God understands.' Therefore, divorce is seen as the lesser of two evils. Basing on the study of Romans and the purpose of the law, proponents of this view argue that Christ gave humans freedom. They draw inference on how Jesus handled the Sabbath puzzle put on him. He said that the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath (Mark 2: 27). Similarly, they argue, marriage was made for human, not human for marriage. (Geisler, 2010)

An example given by proponents of this view, of 'God's flexibility, is that he provided another option if someone could not keep the law of the Passover because they were ceremonially unclean (Numbers 9:10-11). Therefore, these proponents argue that, it should be inferred also in this circumstance, that since marriage laws are too complex to keep, people should just be allowed to divorce and take new partners. (Davis, 2015)

Theological arguments is also put forward to argue that since God divorced his wife Israel over cases of unfaithfulness, human beings can imitate God, and expel their spouses. Instances where divorce is used by prophets in the Old Testament, such as Jeremiah 3:8, Isaiah 50:1 are used to provide basis for this argument. Israel is portrayed as a wife, who went to seek satisfaction from other husbands, leaving their matrimonial spouse, God, dejected, and left with no other option, but to seek and execute divorce.

On the issue of marriage vows being a covenant that must be kept by both parties, proponents of divorce argue that marriage covenants are not like the suzerain-vassal agreements, but are mutual. Thus, they opine, that marriage covenant, which is a mutual vow, is not unconditional but conditional. They argue that marriage vows are made by two people and kept by both. If one fails, to honour, the other becomes automatically freed from the requirement to honour. They further aver that since the relation is mutual one person's vows are impossible to keep if the other person is unfaithful, hence the innocent party is not bound to his or her vows if the other party walks away (1 Corinthians 7:15).

Others also opine that that Christians should not set general rules for divorce because they are not helpful. He opines that divorce cases should be treated on cases by case basis "rather than having one-size-fits-all approach." He opines that Christians need wisdom and insight in order to respond to each case with caution care and discernment. He avers that hard cases makes bad laws, and hard laws make bad Christians; harsh rulings disregard the spiritual care of the divorced. He instead advocated for the acknowledgement of that inadequate understanding or insisting to the cultural values, belief and practices of a spouse can also destroy marriage. He opined that Christian leader should imitate Jesus gracious response to the woman at the well who had been married to five husbands (John 4) and woman caught in adultery (John 8:1-11) when Jesus forgive them; he did not lay down any hard rule. Instead of rules, Jesus instructed to live their new lives apart from sin. Only that. He simply said leave your life of sin. He did not deny that there were moral principles involved, but compassion and mercy triumphed over a harsh judgements. (Kunhiyop, 2009, p. 258)

Lastly, some proponents introduce an argument of on the nature and extend of conversion. What happens when a sinner repents? Do they get forgiven? Are they made clean, and worthy to serve

God? Do they become new creatures, where the old is gone, and see, everything becomes new according to II Corinthians 5:17? If the answers to these questions are in the affirmative, then the proponents of this view argue that Christians can divorce their partners and marry new ones, an act which make them sinners, but go ahead and repent profusely before God, which will make them clean; and alas! New! They argue that divorce is not one of the unforgivable sin.

II. “I was wanting, but you Completed me” Mindset

This view holds that a person enters marriage, with an understanding that they are deficient in some way, and can only achieve complete wholeness if they enter into a marriage pact with someone else. People that enter marriage with this view, are likely to make and appreciate sacrifices. Melissa Hall and Joshua Hall (2011) argues that genuine love always entails sacrifice. Sacrifice in marriage is being prepared to do more than what culture expects, and more that even expected by the partner, using one’s own resources, such as money and time. It involves shelving rights to do certain things for the common good of the family. Lagat (2016) says Sacrifice involves emptying oneself positions of prestige, in order to serve. A man for example can be having a right to be cooked for, but when his spouse is sick or tired, the right ceases to exist, for the sake of service. Based on Ephesians 5:28, people that hold this view would not try to sustain their feelings of rights or privileges all the time. Paul exhorts in that context that husbands should “...love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.”

People marry because they hold the view that they were wanting in some way, would also offer and appreciate the Christian love. Love is said to be the engine which keeps the marriage running. Lagat (2016) opines that for the husband and wife to become one, the desire to love each other and grow their love would be prominent. Christian worldview is rooted in the sacrificial example of Christ loving the church (Ephesians 5:25). In this verse also, husbands are exhorted to love their wives without condition (1 Corinthians 13:1-8). Lagat thus asserts that Christian marriages shall be entered to and will last only on the basis of true love.

Finally, the people that enter marriage thankful that they found someone to complete them, are likely to submit to the other partner, not because they feel inferior, but just the way the legs, submit to the call of the eye, in normal functioning of the body (Lagat, 2016). Ephesians 5:21 outlines the requirements of submission in marriage, as one being submission.

Concerning views that a husband cannot submit to his wife because he is recognized in the Bible as the head, Littleton (1988) defines the word 'head' putting it in the right context. In his conclusion, Littleton argues that in the 'head' was understood as being the one responsible, to answer question when something goes wrong. Paul gives the husband that role, with is not more power, but more service. Submission, simply stated, is this: In obedience to God, a wife accepts her place in the family under her husband to function in his responsibility with her full support, she permits him to make final decisions....if you are rebelling against your husband you are actually rebelling against God.” Other worldviews see this kind of submission as foolishness and subject to abuse. However, to a Christian couple, this is an imperative to implement in love. Husbands should not however celebrate their “lordship” over their wives. Getz (1977, p. 121) holds to the view that submission is not a women thing. Getz states “wives were not the only ones who were to practice submission. Paul, before exhorting wives to submit to their husbands, exhorted all believers to “submit to one another out reverence for Christ (Ephesians 5:21).” This submission though directed to wives is not limited to the only but cuts across all believers and that include husbands too. In conclusion, this mindset of marriage holds that two people enter marriage and they want to love, to sacrifice and to submit to each other all the time, because they both feel insufficient on their own, and each feels completed by the other. When confronted with a situation therefore, where a spouse has become so difficult to deal with, when marriage is greatly threatened, couples holding this marriage worldview, will not have an option to divorce on their table. Some of the arguments to support their non-divorce attitudes could be one or more of the following.

In brief, the people that enter marriage with this mindset that “I was wanting, I have been made whole by you” have a humble attitude, and would rather work out their marriage with prayer and acceptance. Family conflicts are seen as ordinary trials, which the Bible warned that would come to all Christians, and which the Bible promised that God would provide a way for them to overcome. These couples would then think of what God expects them to act in those circumstances. If it becomes too much, and their partners decide to pull out of marriage, these Christians who hold this view, would become devastated, just like people that lost their loving spouses in an accident, and who dream severally that their spouses have come back to them.

Arguments against Divorce

First marriage is seen as a covenant, between two people, a man, and a woman, and between them and God (Malachi 2:4). In Proverb 2:7, marriage is referred to as a covenant arising out of mutual commitment, and condemning the adulteress who has left the partner of her youth and ignored the covenant she made before God. Since God is covenant keeping God, and who invites human beings to emulate him, Christians should keep the covenants they made in marriage, by making sure they remain in it. Again, Jesus commanded that what God has joined together, no man should be allowed to separate (Matthew 19:6), thereby establishing a principle of permanence. This idea is reference by Paul in passing, when he said that a married woman is bound to her husband as long as he is a lives, and the same thing to the woman (Roman 7:2). Divorce is seen as violating God's design for marriage. Divorce is seen as breaking a vow, which was understood even in the Old Testament as a wicked thing. Ecclesiastes 5:5 shows that good people keeps their vows.

Secondly, divorce is understood to have been condemned by Jesus. He neither gave exceptions nor excuses to divorce (Mark 10:1-9). In the case of unfaithfulness, where Jesus seem to have given that as an exception in Matthew 19:1-9, the law of forgiveness would still override. Therefore, it would not be possible to find a reason to divorce, especially because Jesus taught his disciples to forgive so many times. Even the law referred to here, of Moses dealing with an intention of divorce for allegation of unfaithfulness, (Deuteronomy 22:13-19) Moses still provided guidance that was against divorce, and for continuity of marriage. Furthermore, in Luke Jesus gave no exception for divorce but said flatly, "Anyone who divorce his wife and marries another woman commits adultery" (Luke 16:18).

Thirdly, divorce is condemned by Paul while exhorted the Corinthians (I Corinthians 7:10-11). In fact, Paul did not even permit divorce in the case where one party became converted, while the other remained reprobate. He routed for continuity (I Corinthians 7:12-13).

Fourthly, leaders of the church are to show example by living together as long as they live. A study of I Timothy 3:2 reveals that Paul's instruction for the election of bishops meant that a divorced person would not be a church leader in any way. A church leader "must be of one wife." If someone separate with his wife, or divorces, or worse still, takes another, they cannot and must never be

leaders, according to Paul's instructions. This clear instruction, perhaps is not popular in a world ridden with rampant cases of divorce, and especially where remarriage is the option available. But what happens in a situation that someone argues that they are with their tenth partner, but only that partner at that moment? This question can be answered by interpreting another similar passage. When Jesus met the Samaritan woman by the well, she was living with a sixth partner. Jesus pointed to her that she had had five husbands and was living with the sixth, but even that was not her husband (John 4: 17-18). This is taken to imply that one's first spouse is the only spouse.

On a theological basis, there are some views that divorce violates a sacred typology, which is supposed to represent. Marriage ought to reflect God's relation to the Church. The church may not be perfect, but God imputes his (Christ's) righteousness on the Church, and then marries this church (Ephesians 5:32). In the case of divorce, because the relationship did not work out for one reason or another, the act totally misrepresents what happens in the divine kingdom. A good Christian would therefore, act like Hosea, who is married to a harlot, but forgives her severally, and goes to look for her. Hosea found his wife beaten and injured severally, and he chose to love and rebuild her repeatedly. God said, that was symbolizing what he was doing to Israel his people, his wife.

Response to the arguments for Divorce

According to James Strong and John McClintock (1880), these precepts of the Jesus give the substance concerning divorce of the New Testament instructions. Strong and McClintock aver that Jesus showed in these passages that divorce was not God's original intention, but was given by Moses because the people became hard hearted, and therefore, cannot be used as normative. Jesus shows that if one divorces (only in the case of sexual immorality), the end up committing the same crime (Mt 5:32). Jesus thus show that the only divorce that could work, is if one separates from their partner, because of sexual immorality (as the last option, if forgiveness and endurance can no longer be tolerated), that person stays unmarried, as long as their partner is alive. Concerning practices, where people divorce their spouses and take new ones, it should be born in mind, that those practices cannot be based on scripture, but on reformation tradition, as Strong and McClintock (1880) assert:

The law of all Christian states in the West until the Reformation, and of Roman Catholic states since, has been shaped by canon law, which knows no divorce with remarriage even for the cause of adultery. After the Reformation, when the Protestants had abandoned the doctrine of the sacramental character of marriage, and the Protestant interpreters generally held that malicious desertion, according to the apostle Paul, released the innocent party from the marriage bond altogether, many ecclesiastical ordinances in Protestant Germany permitted divorce with remarriage on this account, as well as in cases of adultery. Thus the Geneva "ordonnances ecclésiastiques" of 1541 declare that "if any one maketh a business of abandoning his wife to stroll through the country, and continueth unamended, it be provided that the wife be no longer bound to such a man, who will keep neither faith with her nor company." And in the ordinance of Braunschweig-Grubenhagen for 1581 it is said that divorce shall be granted only for the two reasons which Christ and Paul in the Gospel declare to be sufficient, of which the second is "malicious desertion, running away, and abandonment, whereof St. Paul speaketh, 1 Corinthians 7." Still another ordinance, that of Lower Saxony of 1585, says that "whatever other grounds besides these two (adultery and desertion) are alleged by certain emperors, as Theodosius, Valentinian, Leo, Justinian, cannot be sufficient for divorce."

Therefore, an honest study of what Jesus taught in the gospels, was that married couples should strive to live together, and in case they have to separate, then they need to accept the ramification of remaining celibate as long as their partners are alive.

According to Wayne Jackson (2018), this was a context of correcting fallacies that had been planted, concerning sexual intercourse in marriage being evil. Paul's answer was basically that if one of the parties in marriage became a Christian, he/she should not separate from their partner. So Paul said, even in the case where one person was not a Christian, sexual intercourse in marriage should be consummated, as that was not an avenue for spread of evil. Jackson (2018) opines that, certain words need to be clarified to get the proper meaning of this passage: separated/divorced (*chorizo*) and bondage (*douloo*). In his view, the word that Paul used here *chorizo*, does not mean

divorce, but accept the separation. If one party in marriage wants to walk away because they are not comfortable of the faith of their partner, this Christian is to allow. The Christian should strive for peace, but should not feel bound, or enslaved, to the partner that wants to leave. The next word *douloo*, used here in the perfect tense *dedoulotai*, denotes a present state resulting from past action. He indicates that it should then be read to mean “the Christian “**was** not bound [past action] and **is** not bound [present state]” to be with him/her. Bloomsfield (Bloomfield, 1837) affirms here that this passage is not about divorce. He avers: “the conjugal union is not to be dissolved by reason of difference in religion; yet if the unbelieving party be disposed to separate, the believing party may blamelessly submit to such separation.” McClintock and Strong also add:

What does ‘not in bondage’ mean? The fathers, at least to some extent, the Catholic and older Protestant interpreters, understood it to mean not in bondage to keep up the marriage connection, and hence, at liberty to contract a new one. The interpretation has had wide effects. In the canonical law a believing partner was allowed, if thrust away by an infidel one, to marry again; and as the early Protestant theologians extended the rule, by analogy, to malicious desertion in Christian lands, an entrance-wedge was here driven into the older ecclesiastical laws, and much of the shocking facility of divorce in some Protestant countries has flowed from this source. But we reject the interpretation. We hold ... that the apostle means ‘not under bondage’ to keep company with the unbeliever at all events, without having the thought of remarriage in mind. This must be regarded, we think, as settled by the soundest modern exegesis. (McClintock & Strong, 1968, p. 841)

What McClintock and Strong affirm is that in a case where one is an unbeliever, and this person wants to divorce, Paul enjoins on the believer to be passive, to take no active steps in divorce, bearing in mind that the unbeliever is still their legal spouse.

Dealing with Marriage Problems

Christian marriages involve a lot of mindset review, and correct attitudes. Marriage, as Lagat (2016) puts it, is to be enjoyed rather than endured. It is bad that sometimes couples are forced to be in marriages of convenience for the sake of children, against God’s original plan for marriage,

where Eve comes as Adam's helper, a companion and the one who would make his life enjoyable and complete. They felt no shame. They were happy. Divorce was never an option to consider. Their marriage was meant to be as long as they lived. Marriage problems can therefore be addressed in this context. It is important first to view marriage covenant vows as "... a solemn, sacred agreement, in which persons bind themselves to obligations, swearing an oath and signifying in a ceremony the total commitment to fulfill the obligations. The promise is made under God's watchful eye," as Jeff Goethem puts it (Goethem, 2005, p. 99). This covenant involves an intent, a vow, presence and sign. The intent of the partners getting married is made clear in their vow, and a verbal communication of what is supposed to be in their hearts. Never should couples who made such vows be surprised that certain obligations are expected from them: husband is to offer an unconditional love, his wife has to offer unconditional submission. The vow is made to declare willingness to keep promises. Christian marriage is also done in the presence of witnesses, and in understanding that God is also present and blessing the marriage. The sign worn, in most cases a ring, is a public declaration that one is living for the other.

One major cause of family conflict in Kenya has been money. Sometimes the money becomes too much and so it becomes a problem. Sometimes the money becomes too little, and it also causes problems. There are cases where someone gets married in the time of affluence, but they lose their main source of income due to one thing or another. Their spouses then begin to withdraw their love and affection. The question of money in marriage is a serious concern. One main teaching of the Bible is that people need to work, and lead productive lives. Huffman (1975, p. 49) says that a good marriage is that in which both husband and wife are working and making resources for their family, a thing that will give them satisfaction, and one does not have to entirely depend on the other. Paul even describes a Christian husband who cannot provide for his family as being worse than a non-believer (I Timothy 5:8). Alice and Robert Fryling (1984, 137), hold the view that a man in the marriage ought to be the one showing the way, on what must be done to make wealth for the family (Fryling & Fryling, 1984, p. 63).

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