

Westwind Church Statement on Divorce

Because Westwind Church strives to be culturally relevant and biblically ground, we prepared the following position on divorce. Although our view is certainly not the only acceptable way to view divorce, it is the position of Westwind Church.

1. Marriage is a God-ordained relational institution designed to foster love, commitment, mercy, forgiveness, and loyalty. Although it is not for everyone, those entering into a marriage should see it as a promise before God which is unlike any other human relationship.
2. Divorce is permissible by God because humanity's sinful nature. Therefore, it is a result of a fallen existence.
3. Certain situations allow for divorce, i.e., adultery (the gospels) and desertion by an unbelieving spouse (I Cor. 7).
4. Even in adultery, God's first choice for the offended partner is forgiveness and restoration. Extended commitment to this, even in light of biblical justification, glorifies Him. The committed believer should start with this premise.
5. Marriage and divorce should not be looked at casually. Any divorce, even biblically justified, should be seen as a broken covenant with God. Although the divorce before God is sin, both parties may not have equal responsibility.
6. Divorce is no greater sin than any other, but does have uniquely destructive consequences that should be avoided if possible. However, unbiblical divorce can be totally forgiven as can all other sin.
7. Westwind Church does permit divorced people to serve in leadership positions, but they must be willing to meet the following requirements:
 - 7.1. Repentance: Of primary importance is owning your sin in this issue and turning away from those sins, whether they be one-time or habitual.
 - 7.2. Forgiveness: Personal realization of God's forgiveness involves actively seeking forgiveness from God, the former spouse, and anyone else affected by the pain of the divorce.
 - 7.3. Restoration: Any unresolved issues must be resolved--whether they be obligations to a former spouse or child (alimony, child support, etc.) or behavior adjustments that would prevent serving God in a leadership role (bitterness, contempt, etc.)