

# The Effect of Defending False Teachers on Divorce and Remarriage

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What we think, say and do bear consequences upon our own lives and impose an influence upon the lives of many other people in time, and will finally determine our destiny in eternity. It is a fearful thought to ponder the effects of our teaching at the judgment. "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him" (Col. 3:17). The authority of Christ is the only standard of right and wrong.

The effect of divorce and remarriage upon this age and upon the church is frightening. Those false teachers who try to justify it and promote it among brethren are making havoc of the church, and they are holding the gospel in unrighteousness. Defending false teachers on any subject bears serious consequences.

A false teacher is one who teaches that which is not in harmony with Divine Truth. The truth of the gospel is not inherent in any of us; it has to be learned, and the only source of truth is the word of God (John 17:17).

I have never known one to admit he was a false teacher, no matter what he taught. In fact, he not only denies it, but he charges me with being a false teacher when I point out his error.

A false teacher may be one with highest degrees from the best-known colleges and universities, or a veteran of many years of preaching and teaching, or even a near relative or a best friend. Anyone, without regard for age, experience, scholarship, wealth, relationship, friendship, or religious fervor, who does not teach the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, is a false teacher.

There are at least four reasons why one would defend a false teacher on divorce and remarriage:

1. He does not know what the truth is.
2. He believes and shares the views of the false teacher.
3. He loves and reveres the false teacher more than the truth.
4. He is proud and obstinate, and he will not admit error.

**Some of the effects of defending false teachers on divorce and remarriage are:**

## **A. He forfeits his fellowship with God.**

The word "fellowship" is applied to all of the collective activity of Christians in the body of Christ, authorized by Christ. It is used in reference to benevolence, to preaching the gospel, in praise and worship to God, and in the finance of the work of the church.

There can be no fellowship with light and darkness. Paul said: ". . . for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what

agreement hath the temple of God with idols? . . . Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you . . ." (2 Cor. 6:14-18).

One who preaches false doctrine on any subject, including divorce and remarriage, has no fellowship with God. He who defends a false teacher on any subject, including divorce and remarriage, has no fellowship with God. If that is not what the inspired apostle taught in 2 Corinthians 6:14-18, I have no idea what the passage teaches.

We may claim fellowship one with another, but we cannot have fellowship with God in anything that is not in harmony with the gospel. Fellowship with God depends upon abiding in the teaching of Christ.

### **B. He adversely affects his own ability to serve God.**

The effect upon one who defends false teachers on divorce and remarriage is very serious even if he does not recognize it. It greatly impairs his influence and ability to teach the truth on other subjects. Here are some of the effects upon him:

1. He is perceived as endorsing a doctrine that encourages fornication and adultery among young people both in and out of the church. He is defending and supporting those who boldly advocate such sins under the guise of teaching the gospel of Christ.
2. He reduces his ability and influence to convince and convict sinners of their sins. When one defends a teacher who advocates that divorced people for any cause may marry others who have been divorced and remarried, he is rendered ineffective in persuading other immoral sinners to repent and turn to God. We expect the guilty to deny this, nonetheless, it is true.
3. He reduces his ability to deal honestly with his own heart and conscience. The more one studies the word of God with an honest heart, the more truth he will learn. The more truth he learns, the more difficult it is to keep an honest heart and continue to defend the false teachers on divorce and remarriage. With the difficulty of maintaining an honest heart comes the conflict of conscience. Here will be the test of the person.
4. He becomes hostile and bitter toward those who oppose him. He begins to handle the word of God deceitfully (2 Cor. 4:2), as also he does with statements of friends and brethren. Pride and arrogance dominate his thinking and he goes further from the truth in his reaction to those who challenge him for his defense of false teachers.

### **C. He becomes partaker with the sin of the false teacher.**

The apostle John tells us that we are not to receive those who transgress or go beyond the doctrine of Christ. Any point of teaching, practice or thinking that takes liberty with God's word to ignore any part of it, and go beyond it, is following the false doctrine of which John speaks in 2 John 9-10.

If it is a sin to teach and practice anything contrary to the word of God, and it is, it is a sin for one to endorse and defend the false teachers. That is what 2 John 11 teaches.

#### **D. He promotes the practice of sin.**

Sin separates man from God (Isa. 59:1-2). False teachers on divorce and remarriage appeal to those who are guilty and are looking for justification, or to those who want to enter an adulterous marriage, who have little or no knowledge of what Christ taught on the subject. Millions transgress the law of Christ every day because they are ignorant of the truth (Eph. 4:18; Acts 17:23; 2 Cor. 4:3-4). False teachers on divorce and remarriage exploit this ignorance of truth to spread their corrupt teaching. All who defend these false teachers are also guilty of promoting sin.

A sinner is one who transgresses the law of Christ. "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4). This law is the doctrine of Christ in 2 John 9-10.

#### **E. He holds the gospel in unrighteousness.**

"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness" (Rom. 1:18). Those who teach false doctrines and those who defend the false teachers "hold down, restrain" the spread of the gospel by their unrighteousness. False teachers on divorce and remarriage encourage adultery and fornication by teaching a doctrine that promotes adulterous marriages.

The word of God teaches us to oppose false teachers and avoid them (Rom. 16:17; Eph. 4:14). We not only are to avoid the involvement in sin, but we are also to oppose openly the practice of sin. We must have "no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them (Eph. 5:11). Paul withstood Peter to the face because he had sinned (Gal. 2:11-14).

#### **F. He disturbs the unity of the Spirit.**

"Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all" (Eph. 4:3-6).

Unity is of God, divisions are of men (1 Cor. 15:33). When one keeps the doctrine of Christ, he is in fellowship with God and with all who walk by the same rule. False doctrines create strife and divisions which cause souls to be lost in eternity.

The word of God is powerful (Heb. 4:12). It is the sword of the Spirit (Eph. 6:17). It is the perfect law of liberty (James 1:25, 2:12; the law of the Spirit of life; the law of Christ (Gal. 6:2). It is all-sufficient to perfect a man unto all good works (2 Tim. 3:16-17). It provides all things that pertain to life and godliness (1 Pet. 1:3). We must study it and rightly divide it (2 Tim. 2:15).

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Preacher of the Word (Vol. 1, February 11, 1996, #7)  
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