



Marriage, Divorce and Remarriage

Position of Legacy Christian Academy.

Goal: To support God's plan for the family and the permanency of the marriage relationship.

1. Principles of Marriage:

- A. Marriage was instituted by God (Genesis 2:18, 24; Matthew 19:6).
- B. Marriage is a monogamous relationship – God gave Adam just one wife (Genesis 2:22).
- C. Marriage is to be a heterosexual relationship (Genesis 1:27-28, 2:22).
- D. Marriage involves the leaving of one's own parents in order to establish a new family as a married couple (Genesis 2:24).
- E. Marriage is intended by God to be a relationship which binds a couple until death (Mark 10:9; 1 Corinthians 7:39; Romans 7:2-3).
- F. Marriage involves role relationships (Ephesians 5:22-28; 1 Corinthians 11:3).
- G. Marriage is a picture of His work of redemption for mankind (Romans 7:1-6; Ephesians 5:22-27).
- H. Marriage involves a vow before man and God (Ecclesiastes 5:4-6).

2. Principles regarding separation/divorce/remarriage:

A. Separation:

1. Separation of any kind shall always be with the view to reconciliation and the restoration of the marriage relationship (1 Corinthians 7:11; Romans 2:18; Ephesians 4:31-32).
2. Separation may be necessary to ensure the safety or well-being of a spouse and/or children.
3. Separation may occur as a result of an unbelieving spouse who chooses to leave a believing spouse (1 Corinthians 7:15).

B. Divorce:

1. God hates divorce (Malachi 2:13-16).
2. Jesus confirms God's plan for marriage by repeating the statement of Genesis 2:24, "So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate." (Matthew 19:6).
3. Jesus teaches against divorce (Matthew 19:6; Mark 10:9); however, Jesus permitted divorce in the event of sexual immorality (Matthew 19:9).
4. Paul also teaches against divorce (1 Corinthians 7:10-13); however, Paul also permitted divorce in the event an unbelieving partner abandons a believing spouse. (1 Corinthians 7:15-16)

C. Remarriage:

1. God's original pattern for marriage requires that one cleave (glued) to his/her spouse, becoming one flesh (Genesis 2:24).
2. It is God's desire that the death of one spouse is the only thing that dissolves the

permanent (one flesh) relationship (Romans 7:3; 1 Corinthians 7:39; Matthew 19:6). However, when divorce occurs because of (i) sexual immorality by a person's spouse as described by Jesus (Matthew 19:6) or (ii) abandonment of a believing spouse by a non-believing spouse as described by Paul (1 Corinthians 7:15), then the permanent relationship is dissolved, and the non-offending spouse is permitted to remarry. Jesus teaches that if a man divorces (other than for his spouse's sexual immorality (Matthew 19:9)) and remarries, he commits adultery (Mark 10:11).

3. Paul teaches that unless the believing spouse has been abandoned by an unbelieving spouse (1 Corinthians 7:15), the believer that is divorced or separated has only two options: (i) remain permanently unmarried until the death of the spouse, or (ii) reconciliation with the spouse (1 Corinthians 7:10-11).

3. Other principles and Biblical commands relating to divorce:

- A. God commands the husband love his wife unconditionally, as Christ loves the church, in spite of her impurities or failures (Ephesians 5:25-26).
- B. God commands the wife to submit to her husband as to the Lord (Ephesians 5:22).
- C. A divorce between two believers (except in the event of sexual immorality) violates the command of 1 Corinthians 6:1-8, which forbids believers to go to law against one another before unbelievers.
- D. Ecclesiastes 5:4-6 underlines the seriousness of breaking a vow before God.
- E. Forgiveness up to "70 times 7" in the same day for the same offence is required of all believers (Matthew 18:22).
- F. Any form of vengeance is forbidden in Scripture (Romans 12:19; Hebrews 10:30).
- G. Divorce could negate God's call to suffer for righteousness sake (1 Peter 2:20-21, 4:12-14).
- H. One must recognize that no conflict is too great for God to reconcile (Mark 9:23, 10:27; Matthew 19:26).

4. General Statement:

- A. Sin is sin and all sin can be forgiven (Jeremiah 1:34). Certain sins, though, have consequences that are greater than others (1 Corinthians 6:18).
- B. Divorced and remarried people need to commit to be rebuilders, allowing God to use their experiences in a positive way to help others from making similar mistakes.

We believe that the growing trend of "Christian" divorce is both weakening the role modeling our students deserve and is contrary to our biblical understanding of God's desires for the marriage union as outlined above. The significance of the bonds of marriage and the difficulty of divorce are discussed by Paul in Romans 7 and 1 Corinthians 7. However, LCA recognizes the fallen nature of mankind and that the Christian life often falls short of the perfect standard established by God and demonstrated by His Son, Jesus Christ. We recognize that married couples do not always maintain the ideal and that divorce and, in some instances, remarriage may occur. This may be so when one or even both partners in the marriage are Christians. As we seek to apply the principle of love, LCA will consider the impact such a situation might have on the divorced person's ability to be a role model to our students.

LCA considers the issues of divorce and divorce and remarriage in the same manner in which other issues of personal lifestyle, testimony, and integrity are considered. LCA does not elevate the existence of a divorce in the life of an applicant or employee over other issues of personal conduct. But LCA reserves the right to review each matter in which a divorce or divorce and remarriage are known for final determination as to employment or retention.

In decisions related to this matter, LCA may consider the following: (1) circumstances of the divorce,

dissolution or annulment, attitudes toward the biblical expectations of marriage, and the potential for positive ministry; (2) information from the individual's pastor and other reliable references related to probable conduct, without an attempt to determine the identity of the "guilty" party; and/or (3) the conduct of the applicant/employee during the divorce, his or her testimony before and after the divorce, the length of time since the divorce and efforts toward reconciliation and renewal.

LCA does not seek to become an alternative ministry opportunity for persons whose marital situations make other ministry opportunities impossible. In such instances, personal lifestyle, testimony, and integrity remain the principal issues. We make no distinction between divorce and divorce and remarriage. We regard as the same divorces which occur before or after one's profession of faith in Jesus Christ. We maintain the same policy for faculty and staff. We believe the importance of role modeling carries an even greater accountability for our Administrative Team. In accordance with our desire that an appropriate example be provided, the Administrative Team (Superintendent, Principal(s), Athletic Director, and Operations Manager, et. al.) will at all times include only those who are not divorced or married to a divorced person.

Any question about the application of these policies should be directed to the Superintendent.