

**And Marries Another:
Divorce and Remarriage in the Teaching of the New Testament
Craig S. Keener
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The rising problem of divorce and remarriage among evangelical Christians today has become a major pastoral concern. Scripture is quite straightforward in prohibiting divorce under all normal circumstances. For Keener, Professor of New Testament, Hood Seminary, Salisbury, N.C., the issue under dispute is what should be done with the innocent party, or with the other party after genuine repentance and restitution have taken place. His book addresses those evangelicals who would judge or penalize the innocent party. He argues that 'many loving and compassionate people have been wounded by spouses they trusted, only to be wounded again by fellow-Christians who did not know what to do with them. Many who have sinned against their spouses by divorcing them have never been called to repentance by the body of Christ' Keener concentrates on analyzing the major passages in question: Matthew 5:32, 19:19; 1 Corinthians 7; and I Timothy 3:2. His 72 pages of endnotes, impressive bibliography, and index of ancient sources, show his vast knowledge of the Greco-Roman culture and of Rabbinic literature which deals with the laws concerning marriage and divorce.

Keener argues that the passages cited show that unfaithfulness is a valid ground for divorce, and that a valid divorce cancels the marriage bond, allowing the innocent party to remarry in the same way a single person can marry. He says that the radical demands of the Kingdom prohibit sin. They do not condemn the innocent.

Unscriptural divorces are grounds for church discipline, but the innocent parties in divorces need to be compassionately encouraged, not penalized for a sin that was not theirs. He believes that to hold the innocent party responsible and forbid remarriage is to deny Paul's teaching and to oppress the broken. He reminds the church of its essential character, which is that of a fellowship of forgiven believers. Furthermore, he argues that the apostle Paul does not exclude a divorced and remarried person from ministry. Keener's *And Marries Another* is an insightful, compassionate work which seeks to be faithful to the biblical view of marriage and divorce. It is essential reading for pastors and Christian counselors.

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