

Do all who file divorce do so from 'hardheartedness'?

By WmTipton

Before we begin I'd like to ask you dear reader, a question.

"Is ALL divorce, regardless of who is initiating it and for whatever cause, defined as 'sin' and 'hardhearted' by default" ?

Assertions/Conclusions of this article

That the hardheartedness Jesus spoke of was not 'divorce', but that frivolous (for every cause) divorce was tolerated BECAUSE of this 'hardheartedness' of the Jews.

Supporting evidence

When asked whether they could divorce 'for every cause', Jesus said that this divorce had been suffered by Moses from them only because of their hardness of heart.

Moses knew the cruelty of these men, and as such permitted them to frivolously cast a wife aside who had done no real wrong to him.

In Deut 22:13-21 we look at God's judgment on a betrothed wife who had committed adultery against her covenant husband.

"If any man take a wife, and go in unto her, and hate her, And give occasions of speech against her, and bring up an evil name upon her, and say, I took this woman, and when I came to her, I found her not a maid: Then shall the father of the damsel, and her mother, take and bring forth the tokens of the damsel's virginity unto the elders of the city in the gate: And the damsel's father shall say unto the elders, I gave my daughter unto this man to wife, and he hateth her; And, lo, he hath given occasions of speech against her, saying, I found not thy daughter a maid; and yet these are the tokens of my daughter's virginity. And they shall spread the cloth before the elders of the city. And the elders of that city shall take that man and chastise him; And they shall amerce him in an hundred shekels of silver, and give them unto the father of the damsel, because he hath brought up an evil name upon a virgin of Israel: and she shall be his wife; he may not put her away all his days. But if this thing be true, and the tokens of virginity be not found for the damsel:

Then they shall bring out the damsel to the door of her father's house, and the men of her city shall stone her with stones that she die: because she hath wrought folly in Israel, to play the whore in her father's house: so shalt thou put evil away from among you. (Deu 22:13-21 KJV)

Death was surely the penalty.

But what we're drawing attention to is not simply the death penalty, but the manner in which it is carried out.

Remember, the father is the man who pretty much married off his daughter then. He was very active in making this wedding happen, so it's not like his daughter just ran off and married someone he didn't approve of. This husband would have had to have dealt directly with the father in taking this young woman as his bride.

Now, knowing that, look at what her punishment is.

She is taken directly to her father's doorstep where the father who helped her marry this man, where her mother and her brothers and sisters all could watch on as a group of men slowly tortured their own sister and daughter to death.

Can you imagine your own little girl being beaten to death with big rocks right on your doorstep? Watching on in horror. Even if your little girl were a prostitute, she STILL is that little one that you raised and loved thru her childhood. Holding her in your arms when she was scared at night, running and playing thru the house and yard with her as she grows year by year into a young woman.

Now this daughter of yours that you love dearly is married the very man that YOU helped to arrange and approved upon is having her flesh and bones torn and broken by a mob who is like a pack of animals at your own doorstep. How will you ever walk out that door again without seeing her blood stains and hearing her screams...."MOM....DAD....HELP ME !!!"

Now I ask you all....WHICH do you find more 'hardhearted'.....that above or simply quietly putting this woman away as Joseph was about to do with Mary?

The facts and evidence show that it wasn't divorce that was the hardheartedness, otherwise in comparison we'd have to say that God's treatment of this woman was MUCH more hardhearted than what man might do in divorcing her. Divorce was permitted BECAUSE of their hardheartedness..not the same at all.

No, the hardheartedness is clearly shown in what Jesus was asked by the pharisees...."can we put her away FOR EVERY CAUSE....for ANY reason they wanted to, not for anything that was a real offense.

THAT is hardheartedness. This callous, uncaring, hateful spirit that would cast an innocent wife out for no just cause....just because we want to...or just to take another bride.

We see this very thing with Herod and Herodias.

These two met and conspired to put away their own spouses for no just cause at all simply to marry one another.

THIS is what Jesus and Moses were both dealing with.

THIS is the context of the Jews and divorcement.

IF hardheartedness is defined strictly by the actions of the person who is taking action against a spouse(divorce, punishment, etc) then I personally would say that the bible's punishment is FAR more hardhearted than any divorce could ever be. Tormenting not only this woman to her death, but also her WHOLE family who might watch and listen...her screams that they would never forget.

Is God hardhearted?

Or is this hardheartedness NOT about the punishment inflicted upon the GUILTY, but only about callously, hardheartedly punishing the INNOCENT ?

Jesus was asked...'can we divorce for EVERY cause'. Precisely what was going on.

It's not the divorce that is automatically the sin...it is the CAUSE of the divorce that is the sin.

If she commits whoredom, then THAT is the sin that causes the divorce. If a spouse divorces for no just cause, then like the Jews, it is 'hardheartedness' that is the sin causing the divorce.

Divorce is not sin by default...otherwise God Himself was sinning against Israel by threatening divorce and actually giving her a bill of divorce.

Divorce itself, is not 'hardhearted' by default, or again, we must say God is hardhearted when He gave Israel a bill of divorce (whether or not the covenant was ended then or not..the point is His word does show Him threatening divorce)...and we KNOW God does not have a hard heart.