



Does God Want Me to Stay in an Abusive Marriage?

Under What Circumstances Does the Bible Permit One to Separate from a Mate?

Does God Want Me to Stay in an Abusive Marriage?

- I am not going to define abuse by the more liberal and feministic contingents of contemporary mental health
- I am not going to waste my time and yours in talking about what Brother Big Name Magazine Writer says about it.
- Not interested in how many different views there are on the subject. Completely irrelevant!
- Not interested in how many people subscribe to any particular view. Establishing sound doctrine is not a democratic process
- Not going to consider what views you hold on this matter nor how this lesson may apply in your own life.
- I am going to teach only what I can prove from the scriptures and by reasoning from the word of God

Does God Want Me to Stay in an Abusive Marriage?

- Nowhere in the Word is there a place where God tolerates abuse. In fact, abuse is inherently the opposite of God's nature.
- If believers are made new creatures in Christ and partakers in His nature, how can they attempt to justify or excuse abusive behavior by someone bearing the name "Christian?"

Scriptural Obligations Of Husbands And Wives

- Eph. 5:22-33
- Col. 3:19 - "Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them."

Scriptural Obligations Of Husbands And Wives

- Husbands must love their wives in the same manner that Christ loves the church. Jesus would never beat or abuse His Church
- Husbands who abuse their wives do not love them as Christ loves the church; their protests are lies and self-deceit
- Husbands must love their wives' persons as they love their own bodies. They would not want abuse; therefore, they must accord their wives the same treatment. The golden rule applies.

Scriptural Obligations Of Husbands And Wives

- Wives must be subject to their husbands. It is critical to God's design for harmony in the home. The same disharmony occurs in the home as happens in the church when the church is not subject to the Lord
- Wives must respect their husbands. They must show the same kind of respect for them that the church shows the Lord.
- When a wife fails to manifest Christian subjection to and respect for her husband, it is no less a sin than his abuse of her mate. God does not weigh sins the way we do.

Scriptural Obligations Of Husbands And Wives

- 1Peter 3:1-7 - "...7 Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered."
- Failure to keep our obligations to our mates interferes with our relationship with God

Scriptural Obligations Of Husbands And Wives

- Prov. 10:12 - “Hatred stirs up strife, But love covers all sins.”
- Prov. 22:8-11 - “He who sows iniquity will reap sorrow, And the rod of his anger will fail. 9 He who has a generous eye will be blessed, For he gives of his bread to the poor. 10 Cast out the scoffer, and contention will leave; Yes, strife and reproach will cease. 11 He who loves purity of heart And has grace on his lips, even the king will be his friend.”

Scriptural Obligations Of Husbands And Wives

- Husbands, you are not smarter than God, and you never will be.
- Your pride will be your undoing
 - Num. 32:23 - “But if you do not do so, then take note, you have sinned against the LORD; and rest assured, your sin will find you out.”
- What you try to hide in your home is not hidden from God, and will be exposed on Judgment Day
 - Ecc. 12:14 - “For God will bring every work into judgment, Including every secret thing, Whether good or evil.”

How Does One Deal With An Abusive Spouse?

- First, examine yourself to be certain of a healthy relationship with God.
 - I am not suggesting that sin in your life means that you have earned abuse from your mate. Wrong!
 - But the first thing we do in any undertaking is to begin with a clean heart and soul
 - Trials teach us things we would not learn otherwise, exposing our own places that need to be refined and conforming us to the image of Christ while dealing with an abusive spouse

How Does One Deal With An Abusive Spouse?

- Second, maintain a humble spirit, remembering that God loves us all equally, including an abusive mate.
 - It is easy to develop a prideful and judgmental spirit. We have to remember that every person is created in the image of God, even the abuser.

How Does One Deal With An Abusive Spouse?

- Third, remember that the abusive mate bears ALL of the responsibility.
 - The ending of a marriage is wrong and the mate responsible will be held accountable. An abusive mate who drives his spouse away or endangers her life is guilty of the breakup of the marriage.

How Does One Deal With An Abusive Spouse?

- You have been through enough bearing with the abuse; do not abuse yourself further with blaming yourself for his sin
- Take care of yourself with the means God has given you:
 - Prayer, meditation, worship, Bible reading, good works
 - The companionship and support of fellow Christians and friends.

How Does One Deal With An Abusive Spouse?

- Fourth, follow the Matthew 18:15-17 outline for a very specific process in dealing with an offender, which would include spousal abuse.
 - Matt. 18:15-17 - “Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. 16 But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that 'by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.' 17 And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector.”

How Does One Deal With An Abusive Spouse?

- A Christian does not enable another person to continue in sin. By remaining in an abusive home, a Christian sends the message that the abusive behavior is acceptable; it is a de facto affirmation of the abuser's sin.

How Does One Deal With An Abusive Spouse?

- When an abused person asks the church for help, it is important to remember that God has always asked people of strength to come to the assistance of those who are weak and oppressed
 - Ez. 34:1-5 - “And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 2 Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD to the shepherds: Woe to the shepherds of Israel who feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flocks? 3 You eat the fat and clothe yourselves with the wool; you slaughter the fatlings, but you do not feed the flock. 4 The weak you have not strengthened, nor have you healed those who were sick, nor bound up the broken, nor brought back what was driven away, nor sought what was lost; but with force and cruelty you have ruled them. 5 So they were scattered because there was no shepherd; and they became food for all the beasts of the field when they were scattered.”

How Does One Deal With An Abusive Spouse?

- When an abused person asks the church for help, it is important to remember that God has always asked people of strength to come to the assistance of those who are weak and oppressed
 - If a local church does not come to the aid of the abused, they are no more a sound church than if they installed a piano and fellowship hall.

How Does One Deal With An Abusive Spouse?

- “Godly people must not send a battered woman back to her home with the advice to “be more submissive.” When appropriate, they will help a battered woman to apply the full extent of the law. Their motive must not be to return evil for evil, but to use the principle of government to bring an out-of-control husband to his senses. No one does an abusive husband a favor by allowing him to continue degrading himself and his wife with violence or emotional battering in any way.”

How Does One Deal With An Abusive Spouse?

- “The woman who passively allows her husband to abuse her may be sincerely trying to be obedient to the principles of 1Peter 3:1-6. Or she may believe that to report the abuse would result in even greater endangerment to her or her children. In either case, Peter's intent was NOT to help abusive husbands indulge even more in the childish lust for power and control that Jesus condemned.”

Must One Stay In An Abusive Home?

- Can one scripturally divorce a mate for abuse?
 - Can one scripturally divorce for any cause and remain unmarried?
 - I find no Biblical support for God's approval for divorcing for any cause and remaining unmarried; therefore, I cannot advocate it under any circumstances other than what the Lord specified
 - To do so requires an assumption and two sophistries

Must One Stay In An Abusive Home?

- Matt. 19:3-8
- Matt. 5:32 - “But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery.”
- Mal. 2:16 - “For the LORD God of Israel says That He hates divorce, For it covers one's garment with violence, Says the LORD of hosts. Therefore take heed to your spirit, That you do not deal treacherously.”

Must One Stay In An Abusive Home?

- Can one scripturally separate from a mate for abuse?
- There were three matters that brought about separation in scripture
 - The “present distress” - 1Cor. 7:5, 26
 - A mate that leaves rashly - 1Cor. 7:10-11
 - The departure of an unbelieving mate - 1Cor. 7:12-16

Must One Stay In An Abusive Home?

- These constitute extraordinary and unfortunate circumstances
 - The apostle permits separation on a restricted basis under such circumstances.
- It is within reason to view abuse that endangers or damages a mate to be extraordinary and unfortunate circumstances
 - Therefore, separation that follows the restrictions of 1Corinthians 7 would be permitted
 - Remain unmarried with a view toward possible reconciliation

Must One Stay In An Abusive Home?

- What would it take to make reconciliation possible?
 - Full, unreserved repentance on the part of the abuser
 - An undefined period of time while the ex-abuser brings forth fruits that manifest repentance
 - A restoration of trust in the victim of abuse.

Must One Stay In An Abusive Home?

- “But if he says he is sorry, she has to take him back.”
- Really? Would you:
 - Put the treasury checkbook back in the hands of an embezzler?
 - Put children back into the care of a child molester?
- Forgiveness of sins and temporal consequences are two different matters; sometimes consequences remain

Must One Stay In An Abusive Home?

- God allows His children the right of self-preservation
 - Not all commands require suffering and death as an element of successful command keeping
 - The authority principle of expediency proves that

Must One Stay In An Abusive Home?

- Bible examples of self-preservation
 - David eating the showbread - 1Sam. 21
 - David fleeing the authority of the king and going to live with the Philistines - 1Sam. 21
 - Elijah hiding from the King - 1Kings 19
 - Paul appealing to Caesar - Acts 25
 - Jesus reasoning with Pilate
 - John 18:36 - “My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here”

Must One Stay In An Abusive Home?

- You are permitted by the Lord to act to preserve your life, even if it means that you must distance yourself from a mate who intends harm
- God does not expect you to remain and be a punching bag

Must One Stay In An Abusive Home?

- It is tragic that an ungodly mate makes this necessary, causing pain in the marriage, and causing heartache when people must flee his evil
- It is harmful when professed Christians turn their heads and do nothing when a family is hurt by an abuser; you will answer to God

Must One Stay In An Abusive Home?

- It is sinful when professed gospel preachers tell abused women God requires them to live with abuse
 - Such a man is either ignorant, in which case he should not be allowed to preach until he learns better
 - Or he has some personal agenda, in which case he should not be allowed to preach until he repents
 - Or he is a false teacher, in which case he needs to be marked and avoided