

# How do Women's Leaders Talk to Women About Divorce?

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We are always challenged to teach truth in the face of difficult circumstances women face. Perhaps you too have been faced with a woman considering divorce. Consider what guest blogger Kim Jagers has to say about this very situation played out in her own life as a leader of women.



"She isn't sure when the thought took hold. She never expected life would be so disappointing. As much as she wants to be happy, she just isn't and it is so hard to fake it for herself, for her kids, for her husband, and for her church. She is tired of trying; and she is pretty sure the man she married is too. His long hours away used to bother her. She used to wonder if there might be someone else...now she hardly cares.

You've sat with her in Bible study. You've picked up on her sadness and seen through the mask she has tried to wear. Occasionally, her words have hinted at the struggle inside her heart, and now she has confided in you; she is done trying. She wants to be happy. She deserves to be happy, right? She believes her kids would be better off away from the fighting and the faking; and she thinks she may even have scriptural grounds for divorce. She looks at you through tears. What do you say?

You've always had a happy marriage... not perfect, but happy. Doesn't your friend deserve to be happy too? How awful it must be for her kids to hear all the fighting, and if he has been unfaithful, doesn't God say it is okay for her to leave? Wouldn't it be best?

On the surface, most people in and out of church would say "yes". However, life after divorce is anything but "best", and the enemy is positioned to wreak tremendous havoc that many do not consider when contemplating divorce. When marriages end, problems multiply and are magnified and the effect is generational.

Once divorced, your friend can

- expect her income to be one fourth that of two-parent homes (National Survey of Families and Households).
- At some point, she can expect to find herself owed child support which is late or never paid (2000 National Child Support Report).
- She can expect to have to work outside of the home to make ends meet; and 48 percent of those like her will have to work two jobs (Bureau of Labor Statistics).
- As a single parent woman she can expect to experience the highest rate of unemployment and receive the lowest rate of pay regardless of her education (Economic Roundtable, 2004).
- Once her marriage ends, she may find her standard of living tumble as 41 percent of single moms live at or below the poverty level as compared to only 8 percent of married couples with children under the age of 18 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2002-2003).

Some may say they would trade their higher standard of living to get away from the constant fighting or the devastation of unfaithfulness. Yet, financial devastation may be the least of the problems she will face. Most women would tell you they would do anything for their

kids. Many would tell you they would “jump in front of a truck” to protect their child; and many believe leaving an unhappy or even unfaithful marriage is best for their kids.

However, the decision to leave a marriage can have devastating consequences for children that most people do not consider.

- Ninety percent of all kids who run away from home do so from homes where a father is not present as do 85 percent of all children who exhibit behavioral disorders (Centers for Disease Control)
- 71 percent of all kids who drop out of high school (National Principals Association Report on the State of High Schools).
- Numerous studies show kids from broken homes are more likely to have sex before marriage, do drugs, and commit suicide.
- Similar studies show children from broken homes are more likely to end up divorced themselves.

Indeed, the enemy gets a lot of generational “bang for his buck” impact when a marriage falls apart. Problems do not end when the marriage ends and are, in fact, often multiplied.

God tells us He “hates divorce” ([Mal 2:16](#)), and as I work with hundreds of Single Mom families, I have began to really understand why. I lead a ministry called [The Well](#), and most of the women we serve will tell you “the grass is not greener on the other side”. After divorce, they find their lives are still hard if not harder, and many no longer feel they fit in at church. One of our long-time church members who recently lost her marriage to divorce told me, “there is no place that I feel lonelier than church. Sometimes, it is unbearable.”

So, What then... What do you tell your friend considering divorce? Tell her what Jesus would tell her. Speak truth in love. She needs to know life may be hard now, but it could get much harder if she chooses divorce. She also needs to know, God is still the Miracle Maker. Tell your friend, tell yourself... Nothing is impossible with God ([Luke 1:37](#)). In our ministry we have seen God heal marriages that I would have never thought possible. We have even seen Him restore to joy marriages that have suffered from addiction and adultery. It is not easy. The enemy will not make it easy and we all need to know he is attacking marriages within the church like never before. But we absolutely do not have to give the enemy all he wants. Marriage is worth fighting for, but it takes incredible work and strength that only God can provide.... But He will provide it. He will be an ever-present help in times of trouble ([Ps 46:1](#)) including marriage times of trouble. With Him there is love for the unlovely and forgiveness that is beyond ourselves. In Him, there is help to do what our minds can never imagine we could do. God can restore the years the locust ate ([Joel 2:25](#)), but we have to agree to follow Him with all we have, and we have to believe it is worth it. Tell your friend it is worth it. She can see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living ([Ps 27:13](#)). When we choose to follow God, when we keep our promise to Him about our marriage....we can see His blessing even in the most gut-wrenching of trials. Furthermore, we have the opportunity to bless our children and their children after them for a thousand generations ([Deut 7:9](#)). Pray for your friend. Encourage your friend. Tell her to give it all she has and give it to God. When we give it to Him, when we fight with all we have to follow Him for our families, we can avoid regret and find surprise-ourselves strength because “The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it.” ([1 Thess 5:24](#)).