

Hey guys....today let's talk about bad marriages.

So apparently there are a lot of women who have come to faith in Christ after marriage and either before or after adultery or abuse was committed by their husbands and now she doesn't know what to do. I personally would never tell a woman to leave her marriage. I think it is insensitive to do that. I have a husband and I like, no, I love being married and having a man and I know I wouldn't do well as a single woman and so, I wouldn't want that for any woman who currently has a husband. But this is my own personal feelings which are based entirely upon my own desires.

You see, In my mind, I have a line that is the last straw for my husband. Once he crosses that very specific, very subjective line, I will divorce him. But as for anything else I don't like, or find distasteful or wish was different, I will always forgive and work on my marriage. And I don't tell other women my marital problems because their line is usually very different than mine & they would have me leaving my marriage because my husband yelled at me.

I think a lot of women are like that. They have a line they know is the point of no return for their marriage. Now some women may accept adultery or abuse or emotional abuse and I say accept it because she's telling everyone this is her reality and yet, she hasn't divorced him. Which is fine, that's her choice. But she's going around asking people what she should do when she has no intention of doing any of it. She will always find a woman who will say "stay, pray, trust God, forgive, blah blah blah" and she will find another woman who will say "girl, leave, I left my sorry excuse for a husband because he did blah blah blah" but ultimately, the decision is hers and she will stay if she wants to.

Here's the dilemma though. The bible gives counsel on divorce, Jesus himself speaks on it. The christian woman...CHRISTIAN, born again believing woman, not the unbeliever, not the sinful woman, not your sweet cousin who's been done wrong, you, the CHRISTIAN has read it. You searched for it because you wanted to know what you are allowed to do about your marriage. You have read it and you have made a decision to not take the out offered by the Bible. How do I know, because you have collected your advice from all the people, you've read it

in the Word of God and yet, you are still married and have no real plans to divorce your husband. And that is okay.

Here's the other problem, well a second problem because I have a third one I will get to after this. The second problem is that you want to stay married for a different reason. There is a reason why you are willing to take what you call abuse and still stay. Maybe you don't have an education to get a higher paying job to support yourself and your children, maybe your husband is very handsome or successful or well-known and you are proud of the fact that you are his wife, maybe you know everyone is rooting for you guys to split up and so by sheer determination you are desperate to make the marriage work, maybe you don't want to break up the family, maybe you like the arguing and abuse because let's be honest, some of us are attracted, perversely, to physical pain or fear, maybe you are afraid of being poor because you enjoy a certain lifestyle now, maybe you can't stand the idea of him being free to love someone else, maybe you just don't want to be a single mom, maybe you don't think you'll find someone else, maybe you are squirreling money away for when you feel confident to leave, or maybe you hope your faith in God will right every wrong you've experienced so you want to give God a chance to do that before you give up, maybe you like to hold it over his head that he's a horrible person because let's be honest, us women love to feel superior to men and we also love to be a victim for sympathy I get it...I like sympathy too, it can be any number of reasons why you stay in what you considered a bad marriage.

But here's the thing...you know your why. You know exactly why you want to stay but you won't tell your counselors why. So you keep searching for someone to tell you it's okay to stay. I will tell you this right now, it's okay to stay if you want to, just make sure you understand that no one is forcing you. So stop pretending that staying in your marriage is a day-by-day choice you have to make. You've already made it, he has done his worst and you are still there because you don't consider those harsher treatments as a more compelling reason to leave. And that's okay if that's what you want.

But here's the next problem, if YOU decide to stay, don't forget your husband gets a choice too. He might decide to divorce you. He is free to say he wants out to be free to do his sin openly. How can you get mad because you were willing to stay married, even though you had strong grounds for divorce and approval from heaven to divorce but you chose not to take it? Now you feel like a fool. Rightly

so. You had the upper hand but you held it close to your heart, for your own reasons, and then he one-upped you and divorced you instead. Life is a gamble sometimes. And let's be real here, your true anger is that he took the step you wished you would have taken first and you are embarrassed.

So if you stay you have to understand that the Lord offered you an out which you refuse to take and now you cannot expect or force God to fix your situation. His fix was a right to divorce and possibly remarry but you don't want that. So now, you are to live your christian life without complaining, without trying to pray specific prayers to move the heart of God to pity you and make your life better, without Jericho marching around the courthouse to stop the divorce proceedings. you are to trust the Lord to conform you to Christ, all while still in your bad marriage. You have tremendous, absolute tremendous opportunity to grow in sanctification. You get to practice unconditional forgiveness, which you received from God. You get to practice the love chapter in 1 corinthians 13, you know how it goes: love suffereth long, and is kind; love seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no **wrong** Beareth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. There is tons of opportunity to grow in that regard in your marriage. You can practice giving a blessing instead of evil for evil. I could list a dozen more commands in scripture that you can practice in your marriage in order to cooperate with the Holy Spirit's job of conforming you to Christ. You can also learn that salvation is about God, what Christ accomplished for sinners, who you are saved from, who you are now to obey because you have been bought with a price, how to glorify God in your members, how you are apart of the body of Christ and are to keep the unity of peace, and many many more aspects of the reality of faith in Christ. Marriage, or better said, a good marriage cannot be your primary focus nor the only reason why you are with God because that is considered idolatry. If Your marriage is your highest pursuit, your most consuming thoughts and the fact that you cannot be happy unless your marriage improves is idolatry. You value marriage more than Christ and that is idolatry. I know because marriage was an idol in my life many years ago. And until I was ready and willing to lose that marriage, I couldn't be free from idolatry. So if you want to stay in your marriage, which you can if you want to, tear down the idolatry, confess your sin, turn to God, resist the devil and he will flee, cleanse your hands and submit yourself to the true and living God, thinking only of living a life pleasing unto him.. That is the only way to live out the Christian life, sister.

Focus on loving & serving and honoring God; he's able to make even your enemy be at peace with you. Just don't serve him for your own benefit though; he's infinitely worthy of all adoration and service and glory and praise and you are blessed if you know and understand him!

Paul talks a lot. Living the life in Christ and this is supposed to be our greatest and most diligent pursuit. and only when it is will we grow up in wisdom and proper God honoring behavior in our marriage to live out the crucified life in Christ. This is exactly why It doesn't matter if you are married or single or divorced or widowed or a virgin. The Christian life is about Christ and living in the relationship status He supplies for you. Too often women are only concerned about having a good marriage especially a marriage that is earthly successful but we ought to be trying to live Christ centered marriages to the glory of God being pleasing in his sight as Christian women.first and foremost.

That's it for today guys....