

DIVORCE AND MINISTRY

Every generation of Christians has had to wrestle with exceedingly difficult and complex issues in trying to arrive at biblical positions. For example, what was the right position on submitting to the British Parliament if you were a Christian living in Massachusetts in 1776? Christians came up with answers which were in conflict with what other Christians thought. In the second and third centuries Christians faced this controversy: What was the appropriate response to professing Christians who had denied Christ during times of government persecution but then wanted to rejoin the church as soon as the persecution ended?

In our day one of the most difficult questions pertains to the opportunities and restrictions for leadership roles for Christians who have divorced and remarried. Different churches have drawn their lines in different places. Some are very restrictive while others are mostly silent on the issue. With the present divorce rate being the highest in American history we need to give careful thought to what the Scriptures teach. We want Grace Community Church to have a philosophy of ministry which is loyal to the Scriptures.

In 2003 I wrote the following paper for Grace Community Church. I presented it to our Deacons and asked them to study it and critique it. After prayer and discussion the Deacons voted to adopt it as Grace's official position. I've decided to include it in **The Grace Life 2017** for the following four reasons:

1. So that our congregation knows our position.
2. To encourage you to diligently search the Scriptures for yourself.
3. To train all of us to always ask this question about any issue: "What does God think?"
4. To serve as a reminder of the tremendous importance of working hard to preserve and protect our marriages.

Dear Lord, grant us wisdom and balance!