

Questions & Answers

Erin Thiele

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By Erin Thiele



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The use of all CAPS in this document reflects the nature of the contents that were taken directly from emails sent and received for publication/posting on the RMI website Q&A column. A questionnaire was filled out with the more recent questions and the pertinent information included in brackets.

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Introduction

It's not by chance, nor is it by coincidence, that you have gotten this small but powerful book. God has heard your cry for help in your marriage dilemma. He predestined this DIVINE APPOINTMENT to give you the ANSWERS that you so desperately need right now! (If you are not in a marriage crisis, but you know someone who is and you have been burdened for him or her wondering how you might be able to help, then read on, God is showing you how.)

I know and understand what you are going through!!! No matter what others have told you, your marriage is NOT hopeless!! I KNOW, after eleven years of ministry, that God is able to restore ANY marriage, especially YOURS!

Our ministry is not a typical marriage ministry. We show others what God showed me. All of the books, videos and audio tapes we offer were put together to encourage and enhance a deep and intimate walk with the Lord—for in Him and through His principles you will find peace, and ultimately, a restored marriage.

For those who come to us desperate for hope and help, we do not offer counseling support. God showed me that talking about my problems never solved them, but always made them worse! Praying and fasting healed my marriage and me!

Since most who come to us are in what others have labeled “HOPELESS” marriages, their spouse is not interested in counseling because they no longer want the marriage restored—they want OUT! This usually enhances their feelings of hopelessness since they erroneously believe what others have told them “that it takes two to fix their marriage.” That simply is not true! All you need is the Lord and yourself!!

However, you may be seeking counseling because you desperately need “someone to talk to who understands!” Instead of sending you to the “experts” we would like to pair you up with someone who is going through the very same situation you are facing. Someone who knows, who understands. Someone who will pray and help keep you accountable to what you really want—a restored marriage!

You need someone who will not offer “suggestions” that could possibly jeopardize your restoration. But, instead, will share only the Word of God or simply listen and pray with you. We would like to invite you to join our Restoration Fellowship so that we can give you an Encouragement Partner.

We put this book together because we believe that, as you spend some time reading these 300 Questions and Answers, you will be better equipped to face the crisis that you now or will face. When you choose the right response and the right decisions, you will have chosen the narrow road that will lead to your marriage restoration!

May the Lord bless you with a restored marriage and family!

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“For My People Perish for a Lack of Knowledge”

Adultery

*Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?
Jesus answered, 'I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.'
—Matthew 18:21–22*

QUESTION: I have read *A Wise Woman* workbook and listened to your tapes. They were all wonderful. My husband has been seeing another woman. I can only assume they kept in touch over the phone or by email and she'd meet him at certain events. I believe that my husband is preparing to leave me when she's divorced and her son graduates from high school this year. I have read all the verses about how the enemy plans and schemes but that God does thwart and prevail. It's just so difficult at times. Please let me know your thoughts. I believe you to be very wise.

ANSWER: Some of what you have written leads me to believe that many of your trials and the schemes of the devil are being fueled by your mind. (i.e. "I can only assume they kept in touch over the phone, email and she'd meet him at certain events. I believe that my husband is preparing to leave me when she's divorced and her son graduates from high school this year.") This may or may not be true. God tells us: "*We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ . . .*" (2 Cor. 10:5).

"Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things" (Phil. 4:8). However, if this is KNOWLEDGE that the Lord is giving you in order to pray against these things then do it; but just don't fret or you are falling for a scheme of the devil." Cease from anger, and forsake wrath; Do not fret, it leads only to evil-doing" (Ps. 37:8). ". . . in order that no advantage be taken of us by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his schemes" (2 Cor. 2:11).

Your battle will be lost or won, primarily, in your mind. If the devil can get you to worry continuously or doubt the Lord, then he has won. This worry and doubt will cause you to lose the peace; which is what will draw your husband back to you and to the Lord. You didn't mention having or reading the *Restore Your Marriage* book. This book would be much more applicable to your situation right now than *A Wise Woman* workbook. If you have it, reread it while asking the Lord to show you anything that needs to be changed in you.

QUESTION: [State: Alabama Current Marital Status: married but separated.] My restoration is progressing mightily because of God's help through you. During my study of your books and the Word old memories have flooded back. My husband did confess to adultery and I have confessed to being a contentious wife. I thought the restoration would grow from this. Then I remembered that when I got involved with my husband—he had been separated for two years but not yet divorced. She lived in another state and did not seek to be a part of his life. I have asked God's forgiveness of this and confessed with a prayer partner. When my husband confessed his unfaithfulness he asked me if I had ever had an affair. I said no. Before we were married, we lived together for 6 years. During this time I did have a one time intimate encounter with an old boyfriend. I have confessed this to God and my prayer partner. Do I need to confess to my husband to ensure restoration?

ANSWER: Yes, you probably should. ". . . The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much" (James 5:16). "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

It is certainly a scary thing to do, but God ALWAYS rewards humility. I have seen confessions turn hopeless situations around—ESPECIALLY when the spouse is currently in adultery. It's almost as if it brings you down to his level. When you confess, then you are honestly saying that you are just as bad as you claimed him to be (if you did) or what you thought him to be, UNTIL you saw your own sin.

Unfaithfulness applies to before, during or after a divorce. God sees it all and it all reaps corruption in the marriage or marriage restoration process when it is unconfessed or not repented of (a turning away from).

Make sure that you do NOT say much about this encounter. If your husband presses you for details, tell him that you have pushed all BAD memories out, and that since it didn't mean anything, you can't really remember much about it.

Also, be ready for him to become extremely angry for a time. Half of the men feel relieved that they are not the only sinner, and in some ways it breaks them. But others go into a jealous rage and call their wives all sorts of things—even though they are presently in adultery. Prepare for the worst, but hope for the best. For those whose husbands get angry, God is ALWAYS faithful to work on them and turn their heart as a reward for your humility. The truth always sets sinners free—hallelujah!!!

QUESTION: [State: Texas. Current Marital Status: divorced] I have been seeing my husband and the other woman at several of our son's events recently and notice how happy and content they seem together. Seeing how happy he is, should I not be happy for him? Isn't everyone else (her, her son, my son) going to be the ones hurt if I continue this and is that "right" to do to them?

ANSWER: Are you referring to believing for your marriage restoration as something you are "doing to them?" You know as well as I do that appearances are not always as they seem. MANY couples put up quite a "front" to appear a certain way—ESPECIALLY when someone is looking. Have you asked the Lord to show you that there is trouble in paradise? Ask Him to confirm this. And when He does, write it down and reread it when you doubt that what you are doing is right.

Wouldn't your husband be happier to be home with the wife of his youth and his own son rather than with a woman who is not the wife of his youth and a child that is not his own. Wouldn't it be better for her to be with her real husband and her child to be with his own father?

Could someone REALLY be happy if they knew that what they had done had destroyed someone's marriage? I really can't believe that they are happy and content. You do not know what goes on behind closed doors. If the devil can convince you to give up through illusions, then he has won.

QUESTION: My husband had an affair with a friend of mine and I found out six months ago. I still struggle with forgiveness even though he seems very repentant. Does it get easier with time? Also, how do you celebrate an anniversary of a wedding day when those vows were broken? I know my husband and I are going to make it by following the Lord, but it's so difficult. Am I just a hard case?

ANSWER: First, please try not to call "adultery" an "affair." Sin is NO "party"! Please try to call it by its Scriptural name. Secondly, this area of forgiveness is a day-to-day process. I talk a lot about it on the "Be Encouraged!" video series, which may help you much more than I am able to in this limited forum.

First, only God could help me forgive. I asked Him to do it "through" me. If you are past this point, then let me tell you what I learned. Almost anything can trigger your remembrance of your husband's unfaithfulness: A smell, a place, a photograph—anything. This is when I learned I MUST go to the Lord, again, and ask Him

to help me forgive my husband.

Also, if you “entertain” the thoughts when they come to mind, it will be harder to get over the same feelings you had when you first heard about it. Keep sober in your mind. *“Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour” (1 Pet. 5:8).* How? Take EVERY thought captive. *“We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ . . .” (2 Cor. 10:5).*

The devil can put destructive thoughts into our minds. But we can identify where those thoughts are coming from and fight against them. *“For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places” (Eph. 6:12).*

If you battle these thoughts now, rather than giving in to them, it will get easier every day. Your husband’s repentance will turn to bitterness if he senses that you do not forgive him. That usually turns into an opportunity for the enemy to draw him back into the same sin. Hebrews 12:15 says, *“See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled . . .”* May the Lord bring you peace.

QUESTION: Here, the shoe is on the other foot. I am the adulteress in the marriage. My husband fought hard to win me back when he knew I was cheating on him. I finally realized that it wasn’t my husband or the other man that needed to fill the empty hole in my heart; it was GOD. Now my husband has left me & decided to divorce me. I really love him. Mostly he wants to grow he says. Your book says GOD does not allow divorce because of unfaithfulness, but my Mom says that it is the only reason GOD allows it?

ANSWER: This debate of allowing divorce because of unfaithfulness is really a doctrinal debate. The Lord showed me, as I searched for the truth, was that this is NOT the case but an erroneous assumption based on the newer translations of the Bible. In chapters 11 and 12 of *How God Can and Will Restore Your Marriage*, I documented my findings to help those who are searching for the truth. With that said, I will tell you that I no longer debate this with anyone (so please don’t debate the point with your mother or anyone else either). Instead, I agree (with my adversary Matt. 5:25 KJV) and then cite Jesus’ response to forgive the sinner. *“He who is without sin cast the first stone.” (John 8:7)* I believe from the Christian point of view that adultery is not grounds for divorce but grounds for forgiveness.

In your case, you are the one who has come seeking forgiveness. Right now your husband doesn’t think he wants to forgive you; this is understandable. I, personally, did not want to forgive my husband either. But God put it in my heart and then helped me to forgive as I yielded to His Holy Spirit.

At this point, you must pray for the Lord to turn your husband’s heart so he will “want” to forgive you. God is faithful. And as you walk in obedience, you will not get in His way. By obedience I mean your willingness to allow the Lord to transform you through a deep relationship with Him. This is how we see marriages restored through our ministry, regardless of the situation. On the other hand, we have also seen all too often that when God faithfully turns a spouse’s heart back, and the believing spouse has not allowed God to transform them, the one who has returned eventually turns away again, many times to another.

In addition, you must be humble if you ever hope to be forgiven by your husband. *“But the tax-gatherer, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, the sinner!’” (Luke 18:13).* If in pride your words or actions say, “Because I’m a Christian my husband should forgive me,” God will oppose you. James 4:6 says, **“GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE.”**

Just a few months ago, God restored the marriage of a woman who was in an almost identical situation. After she poured over her Bible, devoured ALL of our resources and spent MUCH time on her face before the Lord, her husband could not resist the change in her. He dropped the divorce proceedings (on the day of the hearing), and shortly thereafter, she was asked to move back home.

Your husband not wanting you back, after fighting for you, is extremely common. Isn't that sad? We have many times prayed fervently with a woman, only for her to tell her husband off when he returns! Even our new pastor's wife told me just a couple of days ago how often she has seen this happen.

All the resources we have will help you in your situation. They were written for ANYONE who has a desire to restore their marriage. God has forgiven you; now let's pray that your husband will soon forgive you, too!

QUESTION: What am I supposed to do when my husband has been writing letters to an old friend of his from high school (female) who is single and she writes him??? This has been going on all summer, about the time when my husband wanted a divorce. Praise God that my family and I are all living under the same roof. Praise God that my husband has not filed for a divorce. I have watched your videos and read your *Wise Woman* workbook. I have seen some changes in my husband, but nothing major is happening either.

ANSWER: There have been many men who have rekindled an old flame from high school, only to leave their family. (This is just one of the reasons why our sons 20, 18, 15 have chosen not to date—hallelujah!) Many adulterous relationships have also begun over the Internet.

First of all, let me tell you what NOT to do. Do not say ANYTHING to your husband about this EVER!! *“In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives, as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior” (1 Pet. 3:1–2).* Then RESPECT him by not looking to see if letters or emails are coming in or out. If you spot one in a dresser drawer, in his coat pocket, or wherever, leave it there and PRAY!! *“Keep watching and praying, that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak” (Matt. 26:41).*

Next, give the devil a black eye. *“Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good” (Rom. 12:21).* Bless your husband that night with a special good meal or another blessing (again, don't say, hint or reveal what you have seen). His being involved with a woman is evil and insulting; therefore, we KNOW how to fight it—with a BLESSING!! *“. . . not returning evil for evil, or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing” (1 Pet. 3:9).* If you can: 1– Keep your mouth shut. 2– Keep your attitude and actions respectful. 3– Return kindness and a blessing instead of returning evil and insults. Then you WILL see something MAJOR happen—I promise!

QUESTION: Is this marriage “legal“ before the Lord as my first husband was still alive when I married again? If it isn't, where does it leave this marriage and its restoration or because the marriages were not “legal” before the Lord, since my first husband passed away am I considered a “widow“ now instead of married and therefore should let this divorce and my wait for restoration go. To not “fight” the divorce meant a complete letting go for me something that seems “the next step,” but to what??

ANSWER: I can't say whether it is “legal“ since God does not really judge from a court of law. However, if you are asking if God “recognizes” this marriage, He does. Since your first husband is now deceased, then you are certainly free from your first marriage and you are not in adultery. *“So then if, while her husband is living, she is joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from the law, so that she is not an adulteress, though she is joined to another man” (Rom. 7:3).* When we marry after a divorce, God says we “commit adultery.”

“And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery” (Matt. 19:9). “And He said to them, ‘Whoever divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against her . . .’” (Mark 10:11). “Everyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery; and he who marries one who is divorced from a husband commits adultery” (Luke 16:18).

Most agree with that to some degree or another. The disagreement sometimes begins whether God recognizes the second marriage or is it plain and simple adultery. My Bible says that it is adultery that can be, and should be, repented of. However, some believe that it must be taken to the step of divorcing a second time to completely clear us of sin. This is where I totally disagree!

No sin, not even adultery, needs our “works” attached *“less any man should boast”* (Eph. 2:8–9). When we are forgiven, God cleanses us with His blood and remembers it no more. When God truly delivers us, we supernaturally turn from our sins. Homosexuals and lesbians testify that all of a sudden their eyes were opened to their sinful lifestyle and never return. However, other than one instance (in a book by Michael Brown), I have NEVER heard of someone who repented of the adultery of a second marriage and afterwards felt led to divorce their spouse and remarry their first spouse. Why?

Deuteronomy 24:1–4 says, “When a man takes a wife and marries her, and it happens that she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some indecency in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out from his house, and she leaves his house and goes and becomes another man’s wife, and if the latter husband turns against her and writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house, or if the latter husband dies who took her to be his wife, then her former husband who sent her away is not allowed to take her again to be his wife, since she has been defiled; for that is an abomination before the LORD, and you shall not bring sin on the land which the LORD your God gives you as an inheritance.”

God does recognize your marriage. Continue to seek God for your restoration and don’t let the devil deceive you into thinking that allowing the divorce to go through will put you in right standing with the Lord. You are in right standing by the forgiveness of your sins, which Jesus Christ did for you on Calvary—hallelujah!!

QUESTION: I got confused in a recent Q&A column. If a husband is in an adulterous relationship with OW are we, as husband and wife, no longer one flesh?

ANSWER: Sorry for the confusion. That was what a pastor tried to feed me by using this verse: “Or do you not know that the one who joins himself to a harlot is one body with her? For He says, “THE TWO WILL BECOME ONE FLESH“ (1 Cor. 6:16). When I sought the Lord, He led me to look up the same verse in the Greek translation.

In the original Greek, the “one flesh“ referred to when a SINGLE man, not a married man, was intimate with a woman. This was taken from an Old Testament law. *“If a man finds a girl who is a virgin, who is not engaged, and seizes her and lies with her and they are discovered, then the man who lay with her shall give to the girl’s father fifty shekels of silver, and she shall become his wife because he has violated her; he cannot divorce her all his days”* (Deut. 22:28). God does NOT honor ANY adulterous relationship.

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Restore Ministries International
POB 830
Ozark, MO 65667