

*Statement of Conviction Regarding*  
**Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage**

The Elder Board of LifePointe Church of Fort Collins  
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Likely the most precious and profound of human relationships in this fallen world is that between a man and a woman in marriage. Established by God for the purpose of complementary companionship<sup>1</sup>, chaste sexual intimacy<sup>2</sup>, and procreation<sup>3</sup>, it is a covenant union of two human beings whereby the two become one flesh<sup>4</sup>. Through this union, and the family that it produces, marriage forms a special means whereby humans reflect, as God's image bearers, the relationship that is intrinsic to God's triune nature<sup>5</sup>. Marriage is defined by creation and the law of God to be a legal and moral joining of only one man to only one woman for the duration of their mutual earthly lives<sup>6</sup>. A Christian is to willfully and knowingly marry only another Christian<sup>7</sup>. Christian marriage, when lived in love and respect, becomes a portrait of the bond between Christ and His church<sup>8</sup>. As such, marriage is to be cherished, nurtured, and guarded with great attention and reliance upon the Holy Spirit.

Divorce, which constitutes the fracture and destruction of this most special of human ties, is hated by God<sup>9</sup>. Every effort should be made to prevent it from occurring. Nevertheless, there are specific sinful situations that may befall a Christian which warrant divorce. The first is physical sexual immorality by one's spouse, believer or unbeliever in Christ<sup>10</sup>. The second is desertion by an unbelieving spouse<sup>11</sup>. In both cases, divorce should be considered only when all reasonable means to repair and restore the marriage relationship have been attempted. Though less clear in Scripture, a possible third situation warranting divorce is persistent unrepentant physical abuse.<sup>12</sup> Divorce for any other reason constitutes adultery, or unfaithfulness to the marriage covenant.

In the case where a spouse who professes to be a follower of Christ deserts a Christian, the church should follow the course of discipline and restoration, laid out by Christ, toward the deserting spouse<sup>13</sup>. If the deserting spouse remains unrepentant, refusing to return, he or she should be treated as an unbeliever, and the faithful spouse is not bound but is free to divorce and remarry. Remarriage is permitted in the case of the death of a spouse<sup>14</sup>, and following divorce for reasons of sexual immorality or desertion by an unbelieving spouse.

By the grace of God, the leadership of LifePointe Church of Fort Collins will strive to esteem and honor marriage; teach the congregation biblical principles about a joyful, thriving, and Christ-honoring marriage; provide biblical training and guidance for couples considering marriage; counsel and support marriage relationships to prevent divorce and to chart a course for marital success; discipline and restore offending spouses when necessary; and guide church members in discerning when legitimate grounds for divorce are present and in a healthy process of remarriage.

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<sup>1</sup> Gen. 2:18; Mal. 2:14

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. 7:2 – 9; Heb. 13:4; Prov. 5:18 – 19

<sup>3</sup> Gen. 1:28; Jer. 29:5 – 6

<sup>4</sup> Gen. 2:23 – 24; Matt. 19:4 – 6; Mark 10:5 – 9

<sup>5</sup> Gen. 1:27 – 28

<sup>6</sup> Matt. 19:5 – 6; Rom. 7:2 – 3

<sup>7</sup> 1 Cor. 7:39; 2 Cor. 6:14

<sup>8</sup> Eph. 5:22 – 33

<sup>9</sup> Mal. 2:15 – 16

<sup>10</sup> Matt. 5:31 – 32; 19:8 – 9

<sup>11</sup> 1 Cor. 7:12 – 15 (in relation to 1 Cor. 7:39)

<sup>12</sup> Mal. 2:16

<sup>13</sup> Matt. 18:15 – 17

<sup>14</sup> Rom. 7:2 – 3; 1 Cor. 7:39