

Life, Love and Family Daily Fact Sheet
Dr. Tim Clinton

“Divorce Recovery”

- **5 Steps for Moving on After Divorce** (Clinton & Trent, 2009):
 - **Join a Recovery Group**—begin attending a divorce recovery group. Many larger churches have these groups in order to be an encouragement for those who have experienced divorce.
 - **Seek Counseling**—begin individual counseling on a weekly basis. Counseling will allow you to meet with an objective person, who can walk through this process with you.
 - **Be Careful about Making Major Decisions**—do not make any major life decisions while you are still in turmoil, without running such decisions by a counselor or pastor. This will help guard against making poor decisions when you are still emotionally vulnerable.
 - **Develop No New Relationships**—do not rush into any new dating relationships and avoid such relationships for at least one year. Focus on letting God fill the emptiness inside of you. You must heal before entering into another relationship.
 - **Begin or Continue Church Involvement**—surround yourself with godly influence. Seek out friends of the same sex to whom you can talk and with whom you can do activities. When you feel up to it, serve and help others.

- **The Importance of Forgiveness After Divorce** (Clinton & Hawkins, 2009):
 - Unforgiveness is a state of resentment, bitterness, hatred, hostility, anger, fear, and stress toward an individual who has transgressed against another in some way.
 - Unforgiveness is a cancer that eats away at the very soul of a person.
 - Forgiveness occurs when the cold feelings of unforgiveness are changed to warm, loving, compassionate, caring, and altruistic emotions because of a heartfelt transformation.
 - **What Forgiveness Is and Isn't:**
 - Forgiveness does not mean that any wrongs done to you were acceptable.
 - Forgiveness does not diminish the evil done against you, nor is it a denial of what happened.
 - Forgiveness is a key part of not letting those wrongs hurt you any longer.
 - Forgiveness does not take away the consequences the other person will face because of his or her sin.
 - Forgiveness is letting go of your desire to hurt the other person. Simply put, forgiveness means you “cancel a debt.”
 - Forgiveness is an uncomfortable process. When you make a decision to forgive, God provides the grace and strength to forgive and to maintain a heart of forgiveness.
 - Forgiveness is not weakness. It is the most powerful thing you can do. Refusing to forgive allows Satan to continue to hurt you; forgiveness stops the destructive power of Satan in one's life.
 - Forgiveness is not reconciliation. It takes two to reconcile but only one to forgive.

- Forgiveness does not require that you become a “doormat” nor does it require you to allow the offender to hurt you again.
- Forgiveness does not wait for the offender to repent. Unlike God, who provides forgiveness when we repent, humans cannot demand repentance before granting forgiveness.
- Forgiveness is about how much you trust God to take care of you.
- Forgiveness is experiencing empathy for the offender, humility about your own sinfulness, and gratitude for being forgiven by God and others.
- Forgiveness sets you free to move on with your life. It refuses to let the person who hurt you have any power over your life and opens up your relationship with God (Matt. 5:43-48).
- Forgiveness keeps you from becoming bitter and thus protects those around you. It keeps you from becoming like the person who hurt you.

- **Quotes:**

- *“Every tomorrow has two handles. We can take hold of it with the handle of anxiety or the handle of faith.”—Henry Ward Beecher*
- *“We must accept finite disappointment, but never lose infinite hope.”—Martin Luther King, Jr.*
- *“Life moves on and so should we.”—Spenser Johnson*
- *“We could never learn to be brave and patient if there were only joy in the world.”—Helen Keller*
- *“Your past does not determine who you are. Your past prepares you for who you are to become.”—Joel Osteen*
- *“It’s in our pain that usually our greatest lessons are learned.”—Tim Clinton*
- *“God does not hate divorced people—He hates the cruelty of divorce. Divorce does not eliminate problems; it just substitutes a new set of problems.”—Unknown*

- **Key Thoughts:**

- A lot of the rejection that divorced Christian women tend to experience within the church is from others’ misunderstanding and not knowing what to do.
- Divorce causes many losses including financial losses, family loss, the loss of friends and the church.
- Wholeness after divorce only comes when you continue to press on and trust God for healing.
- Refusing to grant your ex forgiveness will keep you entrenched in a cycle of pain and bitterness.
- Healing after divorce is all about surrender.

- No man—not even a good man—will meet all of your needs. You must trust God for fulfillment and purpose. Your worth and value comes from Christ alone. He is the only one who is capable of meeting all of your needs.
- Just because you are divorced does not mean that you will stay stuck in this pain forever. You have value. You are worthy. You can love again. *You will live again!*

- **Verses:**

- *“For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.”—Philippians 1:6*
- *“...for He Himself has said, ‘I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you.’”—Hebrews 13:5b*
- *“Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.”—1 Peter 5:6-7*
- *“The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.”—Psalm 34:18*
- *“‘For I know the plans that I have for you,’ declares the Lord, ‘plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope.’”—Jeremiah 29:11*
- *“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.”—John 10:10*
- *“Yet those who wait for the Lord will gain new strength; they will mount up with wings like eagles, they will run and not get tired, they will walk and not become weary.”—Isaiah 40:31*
- *“Do not fear, for I am with you; Do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.”—Isaiah 41:10*
- *“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.”—Proverbs 3:5-6*
- *“I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.”—Philippians 4:13*
- *“Delight yourself also in the Lord, and He shall give you the desires of your heart.”—Psalm 34:4*

Endnotes

Clinton, T. & Hawkins, R. (2009). The quick-reference guide to biblical counseling. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

Clinton, T. & Trent J. (2009). The quick-reference guide to marriage & family counseling.