

POSITION ON DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE

1. That Divorce and Remarriage is wrong and that we must teach and preach against this evil and its effect upon the Christian Church. Matt. 5:27-32, Matt. 19:1-10, Mark 2:2-12, Luke 16:18
2. That Christ's teachings on this subject, for example "The Sermon on the Mount", was addressed to His followers and the religious leaders. Matt. 5:1-2, Mark 10
3. That we plan for a strong teaching program for strengthening the ties of the Christian homes of our Congregation. Eph. 5:22-33, Col. 3:18-20
4. That our pastors (present and future) must not consent to marry any divorced persons. 1 Tim. 4:12
 - a. As a precautionary and preventive measure, that he (they) do not consent to marry a couple without scheduled and planned sessions of counseling.
 - b. That a clear acknowledgment of the couple's freedom from any previous engagements or marriage relationships be obtained early in the counseling sessions.
 - c. That our pastor or pastors pre-arrange for a number of counseling sessions with the couple in preparation for marriage.
 - d. In view of the Spiritual meaning of marriage which the Church is committed to preserve, and in view of the vows which a married person has made, we will not marry a divorced person whose former partner is still living. 1 Cor. 7:11, Rom. 7:1-3, Eph. 5:22-33, Luke 16:17
5. That we as a Congregation be in earnest in extending the message of salvation to all mankind, realizing that "*Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved*". Matt. 28:19-20, John 4:34-39, Rom. 10:9-21.
6. That God's grace and forgiveness includes all sin (with the exception of blaspheming against the Holy Ghost) including the sins of fornication, adultery, and remarriage. John 4:1-11, John 8:1-11, 1 Cor. 6:9-11, 1 John 1:9, Mark 3:28-29
7. That the Bethel Congregation does not and cannot approve of the divorce or re-marriage of any of its members nor of its members marrying any divorced persons whose former partner is still living. 1 Cor. 5:1-13, Matt. 18:15-18

8. That when someone comes to the Lord who has been divorced, that we seek to do what we can to help them re-build and re-construct their former marriage or encourage them to remain celibate. I Cor. 7:10-11

9. That we recognize God's forgiveness to individuals who may be already involved in re-marriage when they come to the Lord, but that leadership responsibilities must not be granted to them, including pastoring, Sunday School teaching, or serving on committees that involve the teaching ministry of the Church, and that this information be kept with the official records of the Bethel Mennonite Church.
 - a. That such persons be welcomed into the fellowship, be privileged to participate in communion services, share fully with the body in worship and fellowship in the grace of God, participate in church activities, service, witnessing, participate in a ministry of "rebuilding and reconstruction of broken or deteriorating relationships of husbands and wives, and sharing and exhorting others in faithfulness to the original commitment of marriage, warning against the sinfulness of adultery and reaping the tragic and bitter experiences of broken covenants. I Cor. 6: 9-11, I Tim. 3: 2, I Tim. 3:12, Titus 1: 1-9

10. That persons who may have been involved in divorce and re-marriage relationships before coming to the Lord, be willing to acknowledge that this step was an act of sin and that they were wrong in divorcing and remarrying, that they endeavor to seek forgiveness from those whom they have wronged, that they emphasize in sharing with others, that any success which they might see in their present marriage or family or business was not God's sanction or approval of what they have done but rather it is a result of God's mercy on their repentant spirit. Eph. 2:1-10

11. That I Cor. 6:9-12 includes cleansing, justification and sanctification of those caught in the grips of adultery.

12. That the Church seeks to work redemptively with each situation.