

Looking For Love In All The Wrong Places

Introduction: 1. As of 2016, both marriage rates AND divorce rates in the US are decreasing. Recent studies have shown that millennials are choosing to wait longer to get married and staying married longer and are the main driver in the decline of both the marriage and divorce rate in the US.
2. The marriage rate in the U.S. is currently 6.8 per 1,000 total population.
3. The divorce rate in the U.S. is 3.2 per 1,000 population (as of 2014 the latest year of data from the CDC. This is known as the "crude divorce rate".

U.S. divorce rate per 1000 married women

4. Currently, the divorce rate per 1000 married women is 16.9. Many experts feel that this is a much more accurate measure of true divorce rate.
5. The divorce rate per 1000 married women is nearly double that of 1960, but down from the all-time high of 22.6 in the early 1980s.
6. Almost 50% of all marriages in the U.S. will end in divorce or separation.
7. Researchers estimate that 41% of all first marriages end in divorce.
8. 60% of second marriages end in divorce.
9. 73% of all third marriages end in divorce.
10. The United States has the 6th highest divorce rate in the world.

HOW OFTEN DIVORCE TAKES PLACE IN THE U.S.

11. Every 13 seconds, there is a divorce in America.
12. That equates to 277 divorces per hour, 6,646 divorces per day, 46,523 divorces per week, and 2,419,196 divorces per year. That means:
13. There are 9 divorces in the time it takes for a couple to recite their wedding vows (2 minutes).
14. More than 554 divorces occur during your typical romantic comedy movie (2 hours).
15. 1,385 divorces happen during the average wedding reception (5 hours).
16. There are 19,353,568 divorces over the course of an average first marriage that ends in divorce (8 years).
17. Over a 40 year period, 67% of first marriages terminate.
18. Among all Americans 18 years of age or older, whether they have been married or not, 25% have gone through a marital split.
19. 15% of adult women in the United States are divorced or separated today, compared with less than one% in 1920.
20. The average first marriage that ends in divorce lasts about 8 years.

God's Word says that *love* is the highest attribute of mankind. It is greater than faith, greater than hope. (1 Cor. 13). There are many varied distinctions in the use of this great word. A lot of so-called "love affairs" are no more than "lust affairs." Then there are degrees of love. Oh, the affection and devotion of mother love, the strength and feeling of father love, the tenderness and beauty of our companion's love. But the greatest love known to man is the Savior's love, unmerited and undeserved.

Oh, how marvelous, Oh, how wonderful is my Savior's love for me. However, misplaced affection can be very dangerous and I want to bring you today face to face with seven Wrong Places.

Wrong Place No. 1 is SELF

Men shall be lovers of their own selves. (2 Tim. 3:12).

A Quaker lady said to her husband, "Bill, sometimes me-thinks that the whole world is crazy but me and thee and sometimes methinks thee is crazy."

We are taught in the Bible not to think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think. Proverbs 6:17 tells us that God hates a proud *look!* Again in Proverbs 16:18 the Bible says, "Pride goeth before destruction and an haughty spirit before a fall." Covetousness, which God calls idolatry, greediness, selfishness are wicked sins, though very respectable in many churches.

The attitude of the world and the worldling is, "What do I get out of it?" The attitude of a Christian is, "What can I give?"

Wrong Place No. 2 is THE LOVE OF MONEY.

For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. (1 Timothy 6:10)

It is not money but the love of money that is the root of all evil. 1 Timothy 6:10. The Apostle warns that those who covet after money "have erred from the faith and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." He is saying making money is not the main business of a Christian, serving and loving the

Lord is. A man who works all week and is too tired on Sunday to go to God's house is a foolish man. A man or woman who says they can't afford to tithe (when God's Word plainly says the tithe is the Lord's) is greedy and selfish and will live to regret their thievery of God. The only poverty that hinders folks from giving to the Lord's cause is spiritual poverty.

Wrong Place No. 3 is THE LOVE OF THE PRAISE OF MEN.

And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. (Matt. 6:5)

Now I know I'm stepping on plenty of toes. This is one sin most people hate to have exposed, but Jesus said: "Take heed that ye do not your alms before men to be seen of them. Otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in Heaven. (Matt. 6:1). Jesus taught that when we prayed, we were not to pray standing in the synagogues and street corners to be seen of men this is the way hypocrites pray, and the praise of men for their flowery recitation is their reward. But our Lord has taught us to do the bulk of our praying in the closet, in the secret place. and Jesus assured us that our Father which seeth in secret shall reward us openly.

Isn't it a shame that some preachers won't preach if the crowd is too small when Jesus did most of his preaching to a congregation of twelve. Isn't it a shame that some singers like to go where there's a big crowd and a lot of slaps on the back, where the praise of men is sweet in their ears. Isn't it a shame that some will sing in the choir if they have a solo or some will serve on a committee if they are chairman. Oh, beloved, this grieves the Savior. This is just the vanity of the flesh which needs to be put to death continually. Remember, no one is immune. Beware!

Wrong Place No. 4 is THE LOVE OF THE WORLD.

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever. (1 John 2:15-17)

God's Word is very plain on this 1 John 2:15-17 we read: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world; If any man love the world, the love of [the] Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life is not of the Father but is of the world; and the world passeth away and the lusts thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever."

If you love the Lord Jesus, you don't have a hard time distinguishing between the devil's domain and the Lord's territory. No sir. Prayer to the Father through the shed blood of the Son is of God. So is singing praise to the Lord, witnessing for the Lord, attending regular church services where the Word of God is preached and where you get the right kind of Christian fellowship. Everything that is pure, clean, and of a good report, that's perfectly all right for a Christian. But places where Jesus wouldn't be welcome, with the crowd that's indecent, immoral and vulgar- that's off-limits for one who loves the Savior.

For example, the dance is of the world. The attraction is the lust of the flesh. The dance can prove to be an incubator of adultery and lust.

Same goes with the filthy movies. Every honest person will admit that there are movies that glorify illicit sex, crime and other debauchery. The lives of many of the characters are generally sordid and sinful. Lust, drinking, gambling, smoking, and loose-living and all kinds of ungodliness often provide the main themes for Hollywood movies.

A man stepped up angrily to a ticket window of a drive-in show and pushed a gun in the cashier's face. "My wife's in a parked car with another man and I want you to call her outside. Tell her if she doesn't I'm coming in to kill her and the man with her." The girl nervously sent the message over the Public Address system to the cars. Then she whispered softly, "I suggest that you slip away immediately through the back exit." One of the ushers said he saw about 35 cars hurriedly leave through the back exit.

Wrong Place No. 5 is LOVING PLEASURE MORE THAN LOVING GOD.

Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn

away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, (2 Timothy 3:4-6)

Clean recreation is fine, fun is fine, pleasure is fine and normal for us provided we do not place our love for it above our love for God. God pity the woman who goes to a movie and weeps crocodile tears and makes fun of weeping Christians in the church. God help this crowd who go to a ball game or wrestling match and jump and shout like Comanche Indians, then go to church and sit as bored as little wooden Indians. Some church members will drive a thousand miles on a pleasure trip and won't drive a few blocks to church. Some of you will put all kinds of money into boats, fishing gear, golf clubs, and cabins but gripe like the mischief when a radio preacher asks for an offering to help preach the gospel to the thousands. You're not fooling God, my friend. He knows where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

These Wrong Places lead to LOSING OUR FIRST LOVE.

Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. (Revelation 2:4)

Oh, how dangerous this is for a Christian. God tells these to repent or else. Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many (for the Lord) shall wax cold. Marriages go on the rocks because of this. Husband takes wife for granted. Wife shows little attention or affection for the one she vowed to cherish and obey. So here is the real cause why so many Christian's lives have been shipwrecked spiritually. We take our wonderful Saviour and His work for granted. We become careless in our prayer-life, careless in our Bible reading, careless in our church attendance, selfish in our giving, cowardly in our witnessing, compromising in our convictions and thoughtless in our associations with those who do not love and worship our Lord. Have you lost your first love for Jesus? Oh, how drab, how dull, how dead your profession seems to be. Then, repent! Turn to Him for forgiveness. As David prayed, "Lord, I will be sorry for my sin." "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."