

“How Do I Recover From My Husband’s Adultery with Prostitutes?”

I have only been married four short years this December. I just learned my husband committed adultery on at least 2 occasions with a prostitute. He says he is sorry and wants to salvage the marriage. I have conflicting emotions from moment to moment. If we as Christians are supposed to forgive others for their sins, why does God allow for divorce when a spouse is unfaithful? I find it hard to believe that a marriage can survive infidelity and I am wondering how one ever trusts their spouse again after this type of betrayal? We are both Christians. He was saved three years ago, no religious upbringing. We do not have a Church home and share no Christian friends. We sought counsel from a Christian and that counselor told me that I had approximately 30 days from discovery to either remain, forgive and never speak of the adultery again or divorce. He says that the 30 days is biblical. I have never heard of this nor have I read it in the Bible. I think if I choose to stay within the marriage it should be based on my spouses behavior. I appreciate any information you may have and I thank you for your time.

I am so very, very sorry for the pain you are experiencing. Your conflicting emotions are totally normal and to be expected.

The biggest thing you need to know is that there is a difference between forgiving someone and trusting him again. They are not the same. When we forgive, we release the other person from our desire to exact revenge on them for hurting us. We let go of their sin against us into God’s hands so that He can deal with them. But broken trust is another matter; it needs to be earned back, and that takes time. A good amount of

time, consisting of one faithful, responsible, caring choice after another.

In order to understand God's allowance for divorce, consider what the Lord Jesus said in Matthew 19:8—"Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But it was not this way from the beginning." The Lord allows for divorce as a matter of love and grace for the one being hurt by a hard-hearted spouse. In the case of infidelity, when a spouse is repentant and truly wants to mend the marriage, God's desire is that He glorify Himself in the marriage by demonstrating His power and grace in the relationship.

There are many spouses who will attest to the fact that there is indeed trust after betrayal if the unfaithful one truly repents and commits to faithfulness. But it takes time, like I said. Probably close to a year minimum.

I disagree with the 30-day ultimatum. I see nothing in the Bible that says that. I do agree that if you choose to stay in the marriage it would depend on whether your husband shows remorse, demonstrates repentance, seeks accountability and is willing for his whereabouts to be checked on at all times. People who are hiding nothing have nothing to fear from accountability.

Here is a link to the Midlife Dimensions website, which offers help and resources for dealing with an affair: www.midlife.com/html/resources/articles/category_affairs.htm.

I am concerned that you two are not plugged into a church home and therefore do not have any support system. This is going to make recovery unnecessarily difficult. I would hope that one way your husband could show you he's serious about mending your marriage is to find a church home and get connected to other people who will help support your marriage. God never intended for us to be "Lone Ranger Christians." His intent is for us to be knitted into the body of Christ for support and as a way to receive His various kinds of grace. You are

cheating yourself and yourselves to not be connected to an important source of life and strength. I want to strongly suggest that you make this a priority.

I hope you find this helpful.

Sue Bohlin

P.S. You might also poke around the New Life website (www.newlife.com) and educate yourself on sex addiction. If it were me, I would want to know what drove my husband to a prostitute. I would also want to know if my actions played any part in it. (For example, this is one reason the apostle Paul tells married people not to deprive each other sexually.) It sounds like you have an opportunity to each look at your own "stuff" and see what you can both do to build the marriage, as long as he's serious about it.

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