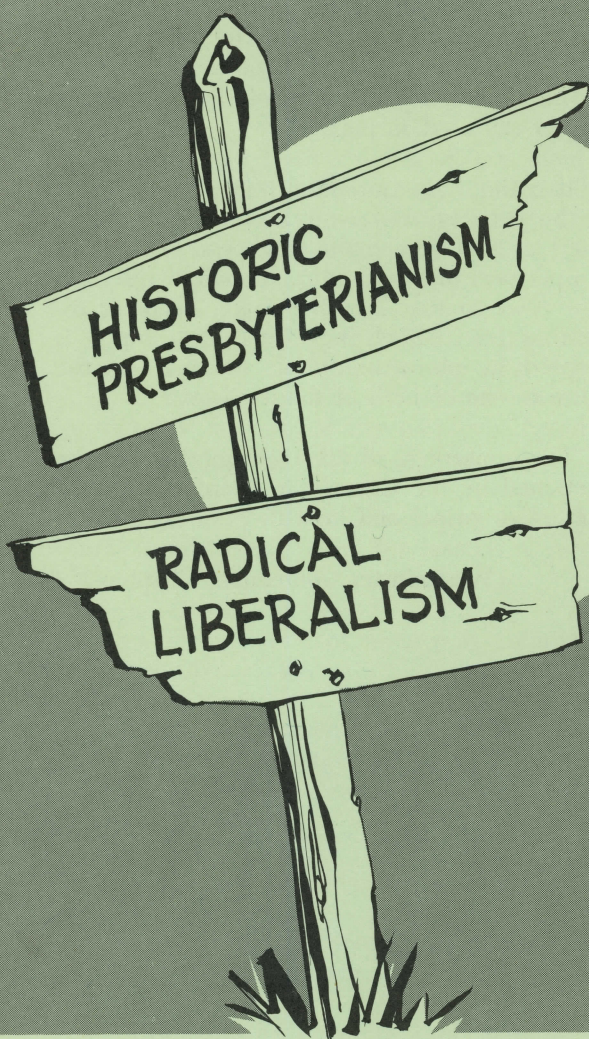


PRESBYTERIANS



WHICH WAY?

DIVORCE

The Way of Radical Liberalism

On April 26, 1959, the 99th General Assembly enacted amendments to the *Westminster Confession of Faith* which permit divorce and remarriage upon other than Scriptural grounds.

The amended paragraphs of the *Confession*, Chapter 26, read in part:

"It is the divine intention that persons entering the marriage covenant become inseparably united . . . However, the weaknesses of one or both partners may lead to . . . denial of the marriage vows so that . . . the union becomes intolerable . . . Such separation or divorce is accepted as permissible only because of the failure of one or both of the partners . . .

"The remarriage of divorced persons may be sanctioned by the Church, in keeping with the redemptive gospel of Christ . . ."

(Westminster Confession, Chapter 26)

The Way of Historic Presbyterianism

Though we recognize and appreciate the Assembly's attempt to wrestle with the involved and difficult marital problems which abound in contemporary society, true Presbyterians feel bound absolutely to the clear teaching of Christ and His Word on this subject.

The Bible plainly teaches that a man may divorce his wife on the ground of adultery. Upon the same ground a woman may divorce her husband. Remarriage in such cases is legal. (Matt. 5:32; 19:9; Mk. 10:12)

It is also evident that a believing man or woman has the right to dissolve the bond of marriage in the event of wilful, irremediable desertion by an unbelieving partner. Again, remarriage is legal. (I Cor. 7)

Separation without dissolution is un-Scriptural in all cases (except for seasons of prayer—I Cor. 7).

No other ground of divorce is permitted in God's written Word.

Historic Presbyterianism, therefore, expresses its conviction on this subject in the words of the *Westminster Confession of Faith* as originally adopted in 1646:

"In the case of adultery after marriage, it is lawful for the innocent party to sue out a divorce: and after the divorce, to marry another, as if the offending party were dead.

"Although the corruption of man be such as is apt to study arguments unduly to put asunder those whom God hath joined together in marriage: yet, nothing but adultery, or such wilful desertion as can no way be remedied . . . is cause sufficient of dissolving the bond of marriage . . ."

Published by

THE STEERING COMMITTEE FOR A
CONTINUING PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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