

BOOKS ON DIVORCE RECOVERY

CHRISTIAN BOOKS:

Redemptive Divorce By Mark W. Gaither

The redemptive divorce process is designed to honor the sacredness of the union while offering practical relief for the suffering partner and tough love for the offending spouse. In some cases, it might even be the catalyst for the restoration and rebuilding of the marriage. Practical, provocative, and utterly unique, *Redemptive Divorce* includes a helpful guide with worksheets for implementation.

Formerly A Wife, by Welby O'Brien

Welby candidly shares her own personal story of betrayal and unwanted divorce by her husband, and her steps to recovery. She is a Christian and professional counselor.

When He Leaves (1998) by Kari West and Noelle Quinn.

General book on an unwanted divorce for Christian women. Not specific enough about infidelity for my tastes, but a very good resource for any female seeking to recover from an unwanted divorce.

Live, Laugh, and Love Again: A Christian Woman's Survival Guide to Divorce (2009) by Borques, Wetzell, Spinks-Seay and Nelson. Stories told by four women of how they made it to the other side of sorrow. Three divorces involved infidelity one did not. Well written. Easy read.

When "I Do" Becomes "I Don't" (2008) by Laura Petherbridge (DivorceCare Expert)

This has become my favorite book for Christians of either gender experiencing an unwanted separation or divorce. She presents sound material from an obvious wealth of experience helping people find hope and healing during a marital break-up and beyond. Laura does a terrific job answering most of the typical questions Christians ask when experiencing this unwelcomed trauma in their lives. Very practical.

Shattered Dreams (2001) by Larry Crabb.

In this book, Larry brings to life the story of Ruth and Naomi, highlighting how they dealt realistically with the grief of shattered dreams in their own lives. I appreciated his candor and insights into how to grieve honestly, without the performance pressure we receive to "get over it" in Christian circles. He offers hope that God can bring redemption to people who feel like their lives are in shambles. I think this is Larry's best book and found this to be one of the most pivotal resources during a personal crisis.

A Grace Disguised: How the Soul Grows through Loss (1996) by Jerry Sittser.

He's a Christian professor at Whitworth in Spokane, who lost his mother, wife and a young daughter in a tragic car accident. One of the best books on grief. Easy to apply to any kind of intimate, catastrophic loss.

God is My Witness: Making a Case for a Biblical Divorce (2014 2nd edition) by Cindy Burrell.

"God Is My Witness" is a unique biblical exposé on the subject of Christian divorce. Author and abuse survivor Cindy Burrell takes the reader far beyond the traditional church script, tearing down the walls of legalism to lead us back to the passionate, personal heart of God. Very helpful for those struggling with a fear of not having biblical grounds for divorce.

Growing Through Divorce (2007) by Jim Smoke.

Used by a number of Divorce Recovery groups in churches. Very helpful.

SECULAR BOOKS:

The Journey from Abandonment to Healing (2000) by Susan Anderson. One of the most helpful books during my own recovery. Validates the sorrow of an unwanted break-up. She uses some pet words that some have thought were “new age” sounding, but that is not her intent. Don’t let that stop you from benefiting from this wonderful, healing book.

Runaway Husbands: The Abandoned Wife’s Guide to Recovery and Renewal (2010) by Vikki Stark. This is my new “favorite” book for spouses who’ve been betrayed and abandoned! Practical. Well-written. She identifies what she calls “Wife Abandonment Syndrome.” Covers ways to cope with the pain, understand what just happened to you, and how to rebuild for the future.

The Betrayal Bond: Breaking Free of Exploitive Relationships, (1997) by Patrick J. Carnes
I included this with the books on infidelity because it is so helpful for traumatized spouses who are having a hard time letting go of their abusive partners. I believe infidelity is a form of emotional abuse and *may* be an indicator of deeper and more hidden abusive dynamics that preceded the affair. Patrick Carnes, best known for his writings on sexual addiction and twelve step treatment programs, knows how to help the recipients of abusive behavior. He likens trauma victims as unhealthily attached to their betrayers much like hostages who bond with their captors (as in the Stockholm Syndrome.)

Forgiving the Unforgivable (1994) by Beverly Flanigan
Although Beverly does not claim to be a Christian, she is an expert on the subject of forgiveness. I liked this book because it honors the pain of the wounded in a way that I seldom see in the “forgiveness” literature. My copy is highlighted on nearly every page. Highly recommended for those left by a non-repentant spouse and/or who still feel stuck in the mire of pain. No clichés or trite solutions offered.

Transcending Post-Infidelity Stress Disorder (2009) by Dennis Ortman.
Very good book with a generic spiritual bent. Helpful and validating for anyone suffering the heartbreak of a partner’s unfaithfulness. Contains useful exercises and thoughts that would go well with journaling on your healing journey.