

Report on Divorce and IFCA Membership

IFCA International Board of Directors

June 2008

For the last four years there has been a concerted effort to examine the IFCA position on divorce as it relates to membership. A blue ribbon committee was appointed in 2004. The committee met in 2005 and 2006 and presented their work to the Board of Directors in 2007. Preliminary results were distributed to the Convention in 2007 followed by a non-binding member survey. As a result of this entire process the Board of Directors has set forth the following:

Though the IFCA International Statement of Faith has never included a statement concerning marriage, divorce and remarriage, we, the members of the Board of Directors agree with the following five statements:

- Marriage is a divinely-ordained covenant intended by God to be between one man and one woman for life.
- God hates divorce, but the Bible presents the fact of divorce as a reality in a fallen world marred by sin.
- Any divorce involves sins which are forgivable, though such forgiveness may not necessarily constitute qualification for church leadership.
- There are godly men with strong commitment to a literal interpretation of an inerrant Scripture, and its application to ministry and the church, who hold to differing positions relative to the matter of divorce and church leadership.
- Though we recognize that the Bible is neither vague nor contradictory on this issue, we as individuals are of varying opinions as to the correct understanding of the biblical teaching.

The Board of Directors has carefully examined the matter of divorce and remarriage and its effect upon ministry and membership in IFCA International. It is our conclusion that several positions can be defended from Scripture, and that members of our fellowship hold to various positions with strong convictions about this matter. While recognizing the exegetical integrity of godly men who differ on this matter, we believe the standard for individual membership stated in the Constitution and By-Laws of IFCA International (By-laws, Article II, Section 6b) reflects a scripturally defensible position. Since individual membership in IFCA International is comprised primarily of church and ministry leaders, and because our fellowship is deeply divided with strong convictions, we therefore conclude that it is in the best interest of effective ministry for the fellowship to maintain the present standard for membership. We do, however, encourage godly men who are divorced to be active in the Regionals and Conventions. Further, we believe that because several positions can be defended from Scripture, it is the prerogative of each member church to determine its own standards relative to church leadership. Finally, we strongly encourage all of our men, churches and Regionals to extend a spirit of loving fellowship in encouraging the participation of men who do not qualify for membership due to our divorce policy.