

Reading 3: A Letter to God from a Child of Divorce

Jennifer Johnson

Notes

Dear God,

Will you please tell book publishers to stop publishing books about “two homes” for children of divorce? Every time I see one, I want to scream. I know those authors and publishers think they are performing a needed service, but in reality they are whitewashing an extremely painful experience that never ends. Please tell me You understand what I’m saying because it seems to confuse everybody else. Let me explain. Take this quote, from *I Am Living in Two Homes*, by Garcelle Beauvais and Sebastian A. Jones:

*It’s a grownup choice, through no fault of your own.
Your dad and I are happier in two different homes.*

Notice the word “choice.” It reminds me of “pro-choice.” “Choice” has been awfully hard on recent generations, Lord, don’t You agree?

Who is weaker, Lord: children or adults? I always thought children were weaker, but this book makes me feel like I was supposed to be the strong one and sacrifice my happiness for the sake of my parents’ happiness. Isn’t that backwards, Lord? It seems like the older generations had a lot more family unity than more recent ones. Looking back, you can see that their parents sacrificed their “choices” in favor of their children.

Lord, I am reminded of what you said in Matthew 18:

Woe to the world because of offenses! For it must needs be that offenses come; but woe to the man by whom the offense cometh.

I love my family, Lord, very much, and I know You do too, but frankly, I'm offended. Very offended. In important ways it's not their fault so please don't be mad at them. When professionals who know better are silent, how can the normal people who listen to their advice be blamed? The psychological, psychiatric, and medical communities have abandoned people like me by not speaking out to defend the natural family, even though they know it is the best environment for children. My entire culture has gone off the rails by propagating beliefs like these:

- "Kids are resilient."
- "Babies are blank slates."
- "Kids can and do thrive under any number of family configurations."

"The Sexual Revolution has blinded adults to the structural inequalities they are creating for their children. They have all embraced ideas of "freedom," that are very heavy and burdensome for children who grew up like me and have to live with adults' "choices." For a long time I have tried to be a trooper and carry the burden as well as I could, Lord, but I am tired. So very tired." It hurts so badly that my dad spends more time with his step-children than he does with me, and my mom had created a new family that I am not fully part of. Worse, I can't say anything about it because I'm afraid of their reaction. And what good will it do? Will they get back together if I speak out? How can they get back together when they are already remarried with new families? I figured out a long time ago that there is no escape, and it makes me profoundly sad.

In addition to the professional communities mentioned, almost all of the Christian churches have abandoned me. Even my own church, the Catholic Church, the only Church that upheld the fullness of Your teaching about marriage and human sexuality in recent decades, is considering it. Will You please talk to the Catholics, Lord? I need somebody to go to bat for me. If they abandon me, where will I go? Children don't have any money to put into the basket on Sundays. Let their tears be an offering instead, OK?

This verse in Your Word at Psalms 56:8 gives me comfort:

You keep track of all my sorrows. You have collected all my tears in your bottle. You have recorded each one in your book.

In the meantime, publishers need to know that we don't need any more books whitewashing children's pain of living in "two homes." In fact, we need the opposite: we need books that encourage adults to live in "two homes" so that their children can live in one home. Yes, the children should live in one home, and the adults should be the ones to pack suitcases every week and make the back-and-forth trip. I'd appreciate it if you'd let them know that this is what they should be doing, instead of pushing that burden down to their children. I think this would wake them all up as to how heavy of a burden it really is.

Here is another thing we children of divorce can never understand: if one of my parents is too awful for my other parent to live with, then why am I packing my suitcase to go and stay at the awful person's home on a regular basis? If they are so awful, then I shouldn't be going there. Since I am going there regularly, then this means that they can't be that bad. Either that, or I am being put into harm's way.

Finally, Lord, will you please ask someone to write a book or make a movie telling adults that it is okay to stay together for the sake of the kids? I would be very grateful for that, and I know that other kids of divorce would too.

Sincerely,

An adult child of divorce who has been struggling with the aftermath for over four decades

Tip: Remember that only God is God. Let your loved ones be human. Give your loved ones a break from always being perfectly understanding, always loving and always there for you. (Tip #7 from "101 Tips for a Happier Marriage.")