

***The Four Legal Alternatives One Has in Dealing with an Emotionally Abusive Spouse***  
(When circumstances at home feel intolerable)

- 1. Separate and file for divorce**  
*(may offend the Lord and generally doesn't work as well as people say it will)*
  
- 2. Stay with the spouse and try to change their behavior by arguing and nagging**  
*(offends the Lord and never works)*
  
- 3. Stay with the spouse, detach emotionally, and pray that God will bring about repentance**  
*(Biblically acceptable, risky because the offended spouse may "fall off the cliff" emotionally, and sometimes works)*
  
- 4. Separate from the spouse and wait for God to bring about repentance**  
*(Biblically acceptable, inflammatory, and sometimes works)*

*Mal 2:13-16*

*13 Here is another thing you do. You cover the LORD's altar with tears, weeping and groaning because he pays no attention to your offerings, and he doesn't accept them with pleasure. 14 You cry out, "Why has the LORD abandoned us?" I'll tell you why! Because the LORD witnessed the vows you and your wife made to each other on your wedding day when you were young. But you have been disloyal to her, though she remained your faithful companion, the wife of your marriage vows. 15 Didn't the LORD make you one with your wife? In body and spirit you are his. And what does he want? Godly children from your union. So guard yourself; remain loyal to the wife of your youth. 16 "For I hate divorce!" says the LORD, the God of Israel. "It is as cruel as putting on a victim's bloodstained coat," says the LORD Almighty. "So guard yourself; always remain loyal to your wife." NLT*

*1 Cor 7:10-11*

*10 To the married I give this command (not I, but the Lord): A wife must not separate from her husband. 11 But if she does, she must remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband. And a husband must not divorce his wife. NIV*

*1 Cor 6:5-7*

*5 I say this to your shame. Is it so, that there is not among you one wise man who will be able to decide between his brethren, 6 but brother goes to law with brother, and that before unbelievers? 7 Actually, then, it is already a defeat for you, that you have lawsuits with one another. Why not rather be wronged? Why not rather be defrauded? NASU*

Ultimately, we never recommend divorce; we labor with all God's resources to help struggling couples who seek our assistance to save their marriages; and if a couple divorces, we endeavor to love both parties. We have not walked in their shoes.