

Host: Welcome to Champions Arise. I'm your host _____.
For the last nine programs we've explored some of the issues adults with divorced parents face. Our coach, Kent Darcie, the founder of Adult Children of Divorce Ministries, has given us an insider's view to situations, challenges, and dilemmas adults from broken homes can experience.
Due, in part, to trust, fear, and anger issues, adults from divorced homes have a significantly higher chance of divorcing themselves. Our coach is passionate about sharing information and resources that can help them break that divorce cycle.
Today we will finish this series with some questions and answers with our coach. Since adults with divorced parents cross our paths every day in our homes, workplace, neighborhoods, and churches, we are confident that *all* of our listeners will benefit from this timely information. Please stay with us for this important program.

Music Theme out

Host: Coach, we've discussed a number of topics in this series and we appreciate your willingness to come back one last time and clean up any loose ends.

Coach: You mentioned my passion to break the cycle of divorce. If just one of our listeners has benefited from this series, it has been well worth it. It's been my pleasure.

Host: Mine as well. So Let's get right to our questions. Our first one is "Can anything good come out of our parent's divorce?"

Coach: Absolutely. Romans 8 verse 28 says, "And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose."¹ If we have a biblical perspective, lots of good things can result from our parent's divorce. In my case, I wouldn't have this ministry had my parent's not split up. I'm a good cook and love to cook mostly because I *had* to learn. My mom was out working.

Other positive things are, adults with divorced parents are empathetic. We relate to people who are in emotional pain. We have a heart that wants to help the wounded heal. We also tend to be more independent, self-sufficient, and flexible.

Host: Because you had to be

Coach: Yes. What may have seemed like a negative at the time, can prove to be a great asset in adulthood. However, we must be careful. Our strengths, out of balance, can be a weakness. For example, independence can be a good quality, but independence plus fear can produce isolationism.

Host: Ok. I think this next question really shows how different living as an adult child of divorce can be. "Is it ok to love my stepmother more than my mother?"

Coach: The short answer is yes. But the real question here is, can we love our stepmom more than our mom without feeling guilty? One of the problems adult children

of divorce have is believing that they can be honest without being hurt. Not that we are liars, it's just that many of us grew up thinking that we had to please other people.

For example, you spend two weeks with your father during the summer and have a great time. When you go back home, can you tell your mother what a fun time you had? The answer, in the world of the child of divorce, is no. Most likely, the mom, who is raising the family by herself on lower pay and is still angry at your dad, doesn't want to hear about the great time you had. So you hedge. When your mom asks how the vacation was, you give her just enough information to answer the questions, but not enough to upset her. Unfortunately, we carry this method of handling honesty into your adulthood.

However, the Bible says , "let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No.' For whatever is more than these is from the evil one."² It is important to be honest with yourself. Actually give yourself permission to be yourself. And that means you can love who you want to, including your step-mom. But it is important to have godly counsel to help you work through this process.

Host: Next question.

"Why do we need to deal with this issue at all? My parents are divorced and I'm doing just fine. And the people I know with divorced parents all have normal lives."

Coach: Good question. I want to address the second statement first. Everybody has normal lives. From the outside, I looked like I had a normal successful life, but on the inside my issues were slowly destroying my marriage. So outside appearances don't count.

To the "I'm doing just fine" statement, I would ask the individual which one of these four groups they are in.

- The first group really are doing fine, *because* they have dealt with their parents' divorce in a healthy and ongoing way. This group has the smallest number of people.
- The next group includes those who *believe* they are doing ok, but are unaware that the issues we've talked about in this series are negatively impacting their relationships and marriages. I believe this is the largest group. Because ,logically, if everyone really is ok, why is the divorce rate so high among adults with divorced parents?
- The third group are those who know there are problems, have connected them to their parent's divorce, but don't know how to address their issues. For example, they know they have trust issues from their parent's divorce, but don't know how to overcome them.
- The last group includes those people who know there are issues and are actively working to overcome them.

So the person with the question needs to decide which group he or she is in. The best way to do that honestly, is to ask your spouse or a close friend.

Host: And Adult Children of Divorce Ministries offers resources for people in all of these groups correct?

Coach: Yes

Host: This next question fits with the last one. “My wife’s parents are divorced. She doesn’t think there’s a problem, but she has major issues with trusting people and anger. How do I get her to admit that her parent’s divorce is still affecting her?”

Coach: First keep her in prayer. Second love her. Third, make sure she has no reason to fear you or have any reason not to trust you. Fourth, see if she will listen to the first teaching in this series. It is an overview and tends to open people’s eyes. If she won’t, have her girlfriend listen to it and maybe she can approach her about it. Keep in mind that acknowledging that there is a problem requires dealing with it. Dealing with hurtful divorce issues is painful. We don’t like pain and want to avoid it at all costs. So keep praying for her and seeking the Lord’s wisdom. That is what my wife did and God worked a miracle in me and our marriage.

Host: The next question is: “What would you say is the biggest issue that affects adult children of divorce?”

Coach: Individually, the research tends to say unexpressed anger is a major problem. As a group, I would say two things, unawareness that their parent’s divorce is still impacting them, and believing lies instead of God’s truth.

Host: Can you give an example of a lie they believe?

Coach: A lot of adults from broken homes have issues with feeling unworthy. They believe they aren’t worthy of anything good. That is a lie. God clearly says that we *are* worthy. Romans 5 verses 6 through 8, in the Phillips translation, illustrates this truth.

*“And we can see that it was while we were powerless to help ourselves that Christ died for sinful men. In human experience it is a rare thing for one man to give his life for another, even if the latter be a good man, though there have been a few who have had the courage to do it. Yet the proof of God’s amazing love is this: that it was while we were sinners that Christ died for us.”*⁴ God believes we are worthy enough to send His Son Jesus here to die for us.

When I really grasped this verse and stared into the face of the cross, I found that I could never again say that I was unworthy. God’s truth crushed Satan’s lie in my life.

Host: Amen. Here is a longer question, but I am very interested in your answer. “My parents were a disaster. They weren’t abusive, but are unhappily married and shouldn’t have become parents. I was in high school when they divorced and I breathed a sigh of relief. I wish they had worked it out sometimes, but aren’t I better off because they divorced?”

Coach: I get the “what if my parents *should* have divorced” question often. Interestingly, I hear it from people whose parents divorced and people whose parents didn’t divorce, but they think they should have for many of the same reasons you just read.

My answer does not apply to abusive or other unsafe situations. With that said, while every divorce is individual like a fingerprint, overall, over the long haul, you are better off if they didn’t divorce. In many cases, you don’t experience many of the depth of the issues we covered in this series. Also even if the family was dysfunctional most of the time, they will still tend to behave during major events like weddings, funerals, when children are born, when someone is very ill, etc.

However, for adults with divorced parents, major events like weddings, funerals, the birth of a child, or when someone is very ill, can be stressful because of the infighting and competing interests of parent, siblings, and step parents. So the answer is that it’s probably would have been better if they had stayed together. I realize that this may not be much consolation.

But this is an important question. I encourage you to talk with someone about something like this. Children of divorce rarely talk to anyone about the divorce.

Unfortunately that doesn’t change when they grow up.

I’ve found that even siblings have never talked about what happened around their parent’s divorce and how they felt about it. We don’t talk to our spouses and we don’t share with God either. But this is bad. It’s very important to deal with these tough issues with someone’s help. They won’t just go away. The thought of talking to someone might be scary, but it will be a tremendous help

Host: Unfortunately that is all the time we have. Would you like to share any last thoughts?

Coach: One of the biggest obstacles to healing is fear. Adults with divorced parents can have the fear of conflict, fear of abandonment, fear of inadequacy, or the fear of trusting people. But the Bible says perfect love casts out fear. With God all things are possible and I encourage you listen to this series again and to check out the resources we have on our ministry website at adultchildrenofdivorce.net.

Trust in God with all your heart. Don’t lean on what you know. Acknowledge Him in every way, and He will direct your healing path.

Host: Thanks Coach

Coach: Thank you.

Music Theme in

Host: Thank you for listening to Champions Arise where men are equipped and strengthened to meet their God-given potential. We hope this series that discussed the challenges adults with divorced parents can experience was helpful. This is the last teaching in this series. The previous teachings can be found online at

www.championsarise.org. Click on the “Breaking the Cycle of Divorce” link. We encourage you to listen to this series again, and tell a friend about it.

I’m _____, for _____. Thank you for listening to Champions Arise. May God mold you into the man He knows you can be.

¹ English Standard Version (ESV)

² New King James Version (NKJV)

³ <http://www.smartmarriages.com/before.breakup.html> accessed 11/6/12 Penn State Professor Paul Amato

⁴J.B. Phillips Translation (Phillips)