



JESUS ON DIVORCE
Living The Sermon On The Mount - Wk 13

ICEBREAKER: Where are you in your spiritual journey?

OVERVIEW: The ESV Study Bible reads, "God's original plan for the human race, as indicated in his creation of Adam and Eve as husband and wife, is lifelong, monogamous marriage.... Malachi views marriage as a 'covenant' between a husband and wife, a covenant to which God was a witness and to which therefore God will hold people accountable.... Therefore marriage is an especially serious commitment (1) between husband and wife, (2) to the society in which they live, and (3) before God himself...." However, we all know how rampant divorce is in our society today. In this study, we are examining God's heart concerning divorce, as well as thinking through what we need to do to avoid it at all costs.

1. What insight, principle, or observation from this weekend's message did you find to be the most helpful, eye-opening, or troubling? Explain. (Or what was your key take-away from Sunday's message?)

2. How have you been personally touched by divorce?

3. According to Jennifer Baker of the Forest Institute of Professional Psychology in Springfield, Missouri, 50% percent of first marriages, 67% of second and 74% of third marriages in America end in divorce. (1) Why do you think the divorce rate is so high? (2) Why do you think the divorce rate increases for second and third marriages?

4. Read Matthew 19:3-9. What can we learn from this passage about God's will concerning...
 - Polygamy:

 - Homosexuality:

 - Divorce:

5. Read Matthew 5:31-32 again. Jesus said the only exception for divorce is unfaithfulness, or *porneia*. *Porneia*, sometimes translated "fornication" and sometimes as "sexual immorality," refers to sexual sin, or any sexual behavior outside of marriage. (1) Why do you think Jesus allows for this exception? (2) What does this say about the power of sex, and about the way we should view sexuality?

6. Read Malachi 2:15-16. (1) How does God feel about marriage and divorce? (2) Does your heart mirror God's when it comes to the way you treat marriage and divorce?

7. (1) What actions are you currently taking to guard your marriage against divorce? (2) Come up with a single-sentence mission statement for your marriage, as well as 5 to 10 core values for your marriage. These core values are single-sentence rules or principles that you believe will protect your marriage from divorce if you live by them.

8. What weaknesses exist in your marriage which have the potential to grow and destroy your relationship, and what can you do to prevent this from happening?

9. If you are single (unmarried), what actions can you take (even now) to make sure that if you get married in the future, your marriage will prevail?

PRAYER REQUESTS

If divorce is not an option, then this is the only chance at marriage you will ever get. This is your only chance for a great love story, a great romance. Why not strive to make your marriage as good as it can possibly be?

