

FROM THE BEGINNING: RELATIONSHIPS THAT GIVE LIFE

Matthew 19:3-11

Week 4

Read the Scripture passage above and then work through the introduction below to help guide your personal study.

This weekend Pastor J.D. addressed Jesus' teaching on divorce. This is a difficult issue because it has become commonplace in our culture, and is regarded by many as an insignificant legal practice. Yet for individuals who have personally been affected by divorce it can be a source of deep emotional pain and life altering consequences. It is obvious to any honest observer that our culture's view on divorce and remarriage does not line up with its effects on human life. Because of this we must go back to Scripture and actively seek to submit our view of every aspect of life to the word of God.

In the book of Matthew Jesus is confronted by Pharisees who attempt to trap him into legalistic contradictions by asking questions about marriage, divorce, and the Mosaic Law. In his typical fashion Jesus confounds the Pharisees by seeing through their games and addressing the heart of the matter. Instead of having a procedural debate Jesus gives glory to the Father by drawing attention to His original design and then addressing the problem of human sinfulness. Through this exchange Jesus teaches us that God's intention for humanity is greater than a legal system, and that our need for Him as savior extends into every area of our life.

Work through these questions below before you come to small group and be ready to interact and share answers.

Study Questions

1. What from the sermon this weekend helped you think with more Biblical wisdom about God's design for marriage?
2. How does God's intention for marriage give us a picture of the Trinity?
3. What is the difference between a concession and a command? How do we see these used in the Bible?

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4. Read Matthew 19:8. What does Jesus mean when he says “hardness of heart?”

5. Read Matthew 18:21-35. Notice that Jesus’ parable on forgiveness directly precedes His teaching on marriage and divorce. What can we learn about how God has forgiven us through this parable? What can we learn about how to forgive each other?

6. Read Matthew 19:13-14. In contrast to the Pharisees’ schemes to trap Jesus with difficult questions the little children come to Jesus only that He might bless them. What is the fundamental difference in these two ways of approaching Jesus?

7. How can the church show the love of Jesus to those who have been affected by divorce?

Prayer Guide

- Read Matthew 18:26 and recognize that you still need God’s forgiveness.
- Read Matthew 18:27 and thank God that His mercy is never ending.
- Read Matthew 19:8 and ask God to soften your heart.
- Read Matthew 19:14 and bring your fears and needs to Jesus with the heart of a child.