



LIFEGROUPS

Series: *Rethink*
Message: *Rethinking*
Controversy

Scripture: *Mark 10:1-12*

Date: March 23 & 24, 2019

—[LET'S START]—

Think back to the time that you were growing up. Whose marriages did you most admire? Why?

—[LET'S TALK]—

1. **GRATITUDE AND PRAYER:** What happened last week for which you are thankful? What challenges do you see in your life? Your family? The World? As a group, take some time to pray. Thank God for the beautiful ways that He has been at work, and pray about the challenges that those in your group are currently facing.
2. This week, Pastor Dale spoke about what is for many a painful topic – divorce. In introducing his sermon, Dale said, "I realize that part of the hurt and confusion people feel when you bring up this topic stems from the fact that the church rarely addresses it and when it does it is often done in a very judgmental way . . . In Mark 6:34 Jesus recognized how heartless the spiritual leaders of Israel had been. Jesus looked at the crowds and it says, 'He had compassion on them because they were like sheep without a shepherd.'"
 - How has the church typically responded to people who are divorced?
 - How does Jesus respond to people who have gone through divorce?
3. Pastor Dale shared several passages from Scripture that speak about divorce from the Old and New Testaments. Re-read the passages (Deuteronomy 4:1-4, Malachi 2:13-16, Mark 10:1-12, Matthew 19:3-9, 1 Corinthians 7:10-16) that he read this week and then talk about what each teaches us about divorce. For help, see the sermon summary on the reverse side of this paper.
4. Read Ephesians 4:31-32. What does this teach us about God's heart for all of our relationships?
5. Read 2 Corinthians 5:17. What hope should this verse give to all who are followers of Jesus Christ?
6. At the end of his sermon, Pastor Dale gave an illustration about seashells. He talked about searching for the best shells and passing over the cracked shells. What was the point of his illustration? How does his illustration help us understand more clearly the heart of God?

—[LET'S ACT]—

Marriage is both a joy and a burden. There is no doubt that the institution of marriage is under attack in our world. That is nothing new. Pray for those who are dealing with the pain of divorce, contemplating divorce, or in very difficult marriages. Pray for God's healing, presence, wisdom and grace.

—[SERMON REVIEW]—

- The church rarely addresses divorce, and when it does it is often done in a judgmental way.
- Some Bible Passages on Divorce:
 - Deuteronomy 4:1-4, Malachi 2:13-16, Mark 10:1-12, Matthew 19:3-9, 1 Corinthians 7:10-16
- Why was God upset about divorce?
 - It's a breaking of faith between us and God
 - It's a breaking of faith between husband and wife
 - It's a breaking of faith between parents and children
- God hates divorce because it hurts His creation and it violates the sacred bond of marriage which He created. **Please notice it does not say that God hates the divorced person** but the action and consequences of a broken marriage - what it does to everyone concerned.
 - To divorce for the wrong reasons and remarry, Jesus says, is adulterous. It is the act which is adulterous. The old marriage is ended and the new marriage is a real marriage.
 - In times past, divorce was permitted because people were hard hearted and selfish.
 - God hates divorce because of the hurt it brings into the lives of those He loves.
 - Divorce is only permissible when adultery has occurred or an unbelieving spouse abandons a believing spouse.
 - Remarriage is only permissible in the case of adultery and possibly in the case of abandonment by an unbelieving spouse. This may apply to a believing spouse who abandons their believing spouse.
 - It is also possible that when a believing spouse initiates a divorce and marries someone else that this act of adultery frees the spouse who was unjustly divorced to now be able to remarry.
- Frequently asked questions on divorce:
 - Why would God want two people who can't stand each other to stay together?
 - What do you do when you just don't have feelings for the other person anymore?
 - Are you suggesting that I stay in an abusive situation?
 - What if divorce happened before I became a follower of Jesus Christ?
 - What if I'm a believer but divorced for the wrong reasons and have since remarried? Can I be forgiven?