

Life Group Discussion Guide

All Things Love—Week 3: Marriage, Divorce, and the Grace of God

Key Scripture

Matthew 5:31-32

Icebreaker (5–7 minutes)

What's one thing you've observed—either in your own family growing up or in a couple you admire—that shows what a healthy, committed marriage can look like? (No pressure to share anything personal.)

Discussion Questions

1. In Jesus' day, religious leaders treated divorce as something that could be done for almost any reason. In what ways do you see our culture today treating marriage and divorce similarly? Why do you think this mindset feels so natural to us?
2. Jesus' complete teachings on divorce do not start with Old Testament law about a certificate of divorce. Instead, He points all the way back to God's original design in creation ("male and female... one flesh").
 - What does that original design reveal about God's heart for marriage?
 - Why is it significant that Jesus anchors the conversation there?
3. Scripture repeatedly uses marriage language to describe God's relationship with His people—first with Israel in the Old Testament, then with the church in the New Testament (see Ephesians 5:25-32 and 2 Corinthians 11:2).
 - How does viewing marriage as a living picture of Christ's love for the church change the way we understand why God cares so deeply about it?
4. The Old Testament includes a provision in Deuteronomy 24 for divorce in cases of "indecency." Yet Jesus makes it clear that this was never God's ideal.
 - Why do you think God made any provision at all for divorce?
 - What does this tell us about how God deals with human hardness of heart and sin?
5. Jesus says that divorcing a wife (except for sexual immorality) causes her to commit adultery, and marrying a divorced woman commits adultery. Rather than focusing on the "exception clause," how does this statement expose the deeper issue Jesus is addressing in the hearts of His listeners?
6. The book of Hosea gives us a powerful picture of God's love: a husband who pursues, redeems, and restores an unfaithful wife at great personal cost.
 - What stands out to you most about Hosea's actions?

- How does this story help us understand God’s posture toward us—even when we have failed in marriage or any other area of life?
7. The message of the gospel is that every sin—including every sin connected to marriage and divorce—can be forgiven and covered by the blood of Christ. There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.
- How does this truth about grace free us from shame or guilt over past failures?
 - At the same time, how does grace also call us forward to “go and sin no more”?

Application & Prayer (15–20 minutes)

- This week, how can you intentionally reflect God’s covenant-keeping love in your closest relationships (spouse, children, friends, or church family)?
- Who in your life—perhaps someone walking through a difficult marriage or the pain of divorce—might need encouragement, prayer, or practical support from you or this group?

Prayer Focus

- Thank God for His pursuing, redeeming love that never gives up on us.
- Ask Him to heal any places of hurt, shame, or resentment related to marriage and divorce in our group and church family.
- Pray for the marriages represented in your group—that they would mirror the faithful, sacrificial love of Christ for His church.
- Pray for those who are single, widowed, or divorced, that they would experience the fullness of God’s grace and the support of His people.

Take-Home Challenge

Sometime this week, read the book of Hosea (especially chapters 1–3 and the closing promise in chapter 14). Ask God to show you afresh how wide and deep His restoring love really is.

Closing Reminder

There is nothing we have done that puts us beyond the reach of God’s grace—and there is nothing we can do to earn it. In Christ, the old has gone and the new has come. Let’s walk in that freedom together.