

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT (WEEK 9)
LIFE GROUP QUESTIONS – MARCH 14, 2010
PASTOR JEFF – OATHS/COMMITMENT/DIVORCE (MT. 5:31-37)

connect

1. What's your name? What music are you listening to on the radio, your CD or MP3 player? What was the first record or cd you ever bought?
2. What insight, principle or observation from this weekend's message did you find to be most helpful, eye-opening or troubling? Explain.

study

1. Read Matthew 5:31-37. How is the issue of making oaths connected to marriage & divorce? What does Jesus mean "let your 'yes' be 'yes' and your 'no' be 'no' "?
2. If your group had to write an article entitled, "The Top Ten Reasons Why Marriages Fail", what reasons would you list? Why is the subject of divorce so complex?
3. How does Jesus' statement in verse 32 compare with the general attitude in His day regarding divorce & remarriage? How about in our society today?
4. Please take time and read Matthew 19:3-9—this will help us understand Matthew 5:31-32. Why is the Pharisees' opening question a "loaded" one for Jesus? Are the Pharisees looking for loopholes or for ways to preserve God's original intent for marriage?
5. Jesus points us back to Creation in Genesis (Chapters 1:27 & 2:24). What does Jesus teach God's original intent for a marriage? In Matthew 19:8, what does Jesus say happens in people's hearts that works against & can ultimately destroy God's intent?
6. How important is preparation before marriage & being wise & patient in the selection process? What could the church do better to strengthen marriages?

7. Though God never wants or commands divorce, what grounds does He recognize in the Bible for divorce (Matthew 5:32; 19:9; 1 Corinthians 7:15; 1 Timothy 5:8)?
8. Jesus said to the woman caught in the act of adultery—"I don't condemn you, but go and leave your life of sin" (John 8:11). What about those who refuse to soften their hearts, turn back to the Lord and leave sinful patterns & practices?
9. In Malachi 2:16, God says, "I hate divorce." Why do you think He hates it so much? What are some of the costs, wounds and losses that come with divorce? Do you think Malachi 2:16 means God hates divorced people?
10. Is divorce an unforgivable sin? Can the Lord restore a person who has gone through divorce? Is there someone in our church who has been divorced but now has a real ministry to others? What does this teach us about God's grace?
11. What are some ways, we as a church, can help those who have gone through divorce? Children of divorce? Those struggling in a difficult marriage?
12. Whether we're married, divorced or single, Jesus says what matters most in our relationship with God and our relationships with others, is the state of our heart. What are some of the ways you can keep your heart tender and responsive to Him?

pray

1. Pray that we would be men and women of integrity who seek to keep our word. Whether single, divorced or married, let's pray for healthy relationships, with Jesus at the center.
2. Prayer requests – how can you pray for each other this week?