

PART THREE: I WANT TO QUIT

No one plans on ending up in divorce court. No one plans to end up getting a divorce. Yet for 50% of the couples that get married, that is exactly what happens. What happened to the love? Life is not about finding someone to love you with their love, but finding someone to love with God's love. Loving each other with God's kind of love means never giving up, always persevering, and therefore never-failing.

BIG IDEA: Getting divorced because you've run out of love is like selling your car because you've run out of gas.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What's the best wedding you have ever been to (other than your own)?

Here are some statistics on marriage and divorce in the USA found on divorce.org.

- 90% of people will get married.
- 50% of all marriages end in divorce.
- Of those who get divorced, 80% of people will get divorced because of irreconcilable differences.
- Children of divorced parents are 4 times more likely to get divorce than children of couples who are not divorced

2. What is your reaction to these statistics?

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| a. Wow! These numbers are higher than I expected | d. Looks like children are impacted by their parents' divorce for a long time. |
| b. Wow! These numbers are lower than I expected | e. This needs to change. |
| c. Looks like some of these people should have tried to fix the first marriage instead of trying again with some one new. | |

3. Many people believe that it is better to get divorced than to be unhappy. But look at the following research:

- There is an economic cost: The average cost of a divorce is about \$20,000.
- There is an emotional cost: Divorce is the most painful and stressful experience in life outside of the death of a child.
- Researchers found that unhappily married people who divorce were no happier than unhappy people who stay married. Divorce didn't reduce depression. Divorce didn't raise self-esteem. And divorce did not increase a person's degree of self-control over their lives.
- Unhappy spouses who divorced and remarried were no happier on average than people who were unhappy and stayed married.
- Among unhappily married people who stuck it out for five years, 86% of people who rated their marriage as unhappy said that their marriage was happier¹.
- Among couples who rated their marriages as very unhappy, 77% reported their marriage to be very happy or quite happy five years later².

4. *With your Bible or YouVersion, read 1 Corinthians 13:4-8.*

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.

1 Corinthians 13:4-8 (NIV)

5. Which of these qualities is the most difficult for you to exhibit? Which quality do you value most in someone you want to date, your spouse, or significant other?

¹ From *The Case for Marriage*, by Linda Waite and Maggie Gallagher.

² Ibid.

6. Chris said, "Patience responds not with envy, but with empathy." Envy often sounds like this—*Must be nice*. Empathy is identifying with another person's struggle, and sounds like this— *Must be hard*. Which one do you naturally drift towards when dealing with other people? Envy or Empathy?
7. Chris said, "Patience responds not with pride, but with humility." In your opinion, what is humility?

MOVING FORWARD

If you date with the idea that you're on a quest for the right person, you're setting yourself up for failure. Healthy relationships don't result from pursuing desirable qualities on a checklist. You'll never mysteriously, providentially run into the right person. You don't need to find the right person. You need to become the right person. What's one step you can take this week to start becoming the person the person you're looking for is looking for?

Becoming *the person who the person you are looking for is looking for* is hard. But it is not as hard as getting married and being unprepared. Think about a couple of things you can do this week to become that person—the right person.

WHAT WILL YOU DO?

- Do you need to extend forgiveness or grace to someone else?
- Do you need to receive forgiveness and grace yourself?
- If you're not married, what are some practical ways to encourage a married couple you know?
- If you are married and struggling what is one step you can take this week to begin to transform your relationship?
- If your marriage is going well (this week ☺) what is what is one way you can affirm your spouse?
- If you are divorced is there a step you need to take on the road to healing?
- Is there a way this small group could support you in taking the steps you need to take?

Memorize these key verses during the coming week:

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.

1 Corinthians 13:4-5

CHANGING YOUR MIND

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking... 1 Corinthians 13:4-5