



bigIdea

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.

BIG IDEA: Children do better when the parents stay together, even when the parents are unhappy.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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

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

- Divorce rate in America after first marriage is from 41% to 50%.
- US divorce rate after second marriage is from 60% to 67%
- After 3 marriages the US divorce rate is from 73% to 74%
- 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. Read Matthew 19:1-9. What aspects of marriage does Jesus emphasize in this passage?

4. Do you view marriage as a legal agreement or a spiritual commitment? Why?

5. "Marriage is not meant to make you happy, it's meant to make you holy". If "holy" means becoming a person who is transformed through service to their spouse into the person that in Christ they are meant to be, then marriage is meant to make you holy. How do you think marriage can make someone more like Christ?

6. Read Ephesians 5:21-28. What is your reaction to this passage and why?

7. What are some practical ways that spouses love each by serving each other?

I recently attended a wedding where, as part of the ceremony, the couple took 3 cords, two were red and one as gold, faced each other and braided them together. This was a visual display of Ecclesiastes 4:12, "*A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.*" For Christ followers, marriage is meant to be a union of three people – husband, wife, and God.

8. How might that impact the way couples approach their relationship, commitment, and conflict in marriage?

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?

VERSES TO GO DEEPER

Malachi 2, Matthew 19:1-9, 1 Corinthians 7, Ephesians 4:29-32,

