

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

What Jesus Says About Marriage (Part 1)

Pastor Chad Gilligan – October 26, 2025

1. Questions about marriage are nothing new: Matthew 19:3; Matthew 14:3-4

- The cultural tension around marriage existed in Jesus' time just as it does now.
- The values of God's Kingdom are different from the values of the world.

Discussion Questions:

- What are some ways today's culture challenges biblical marriage?
- Why do you think questions about marriage and divorce have always stirred controversy?
- How does recognizing cultural pressure help us approach marriage with intentionality?

Follow-Up Prompt:

What cultural influence on marriage do you personally need to be more aware of or guard against?

2. The best response to controversy is Scripture: Matthew 19:4

- God is the Creator.
- God created humanity male and female.
- God created marriage.
- If the perfect, loving Creator gave us marriage, we do best to follow His design.

Discussion Questions:

- Why is going back to Scripture essential in discussions about marriage and sexuality?
- What challenges arise when people define marriage apart from God's design?

Follow-Up Prompt:

How can you make Scripture your first response rather than your last resort in difficult conversations?

3. Marriage is designed by God as a covenant between one man and one woman for a lifetime: Matthew 19:5; Genesis 2:18-24

- Marriage is essential to God's creation order.
- Marriage is a spiritual covenant, not just a contract.
- Marriage is not Velcro—it's not meant to be easily separated.

Discussion Questions:

- What does it mean that marriage is a covenant and not a contract?
- In what ways does the creation account demonstrate God's intentional design for marriage?
- How does understanding marriage as "one flesh" change the way we view commitment?

Follow-Up Prompt:

What area of your marriage or perspective on marriage needs to be re-rooted in God's covenant design?

4. Relationship red flags should not be ignored: Matthew 19:6; Psalms 34:18

- A lack of honesty
- A lack of intimacy
- A lack of energy
- A lack of responsibility
- A lack of integrity

Discussion Questions:

- Why is it important to address problems early before they lead to separation?
- How does God's closeness to the brokenhearted bring hope to struggling marriages?

Follow-Up Prompt:

Is there a red flag you need to address in your own life or support someone else in addressing?

5. Four observations on marriage from Matthew 19: Matthew 19:6

1. God's definition of marriage does not change.
2. Marriage is a divinely created gift from God.
3. Perseverance is key to marriage.
4. God wants to bless our marriages so we can be a blessing to one another.

Discussion Questions:

- Why do people often take marriage for granted even though it's a God-given gift?
- What role does perseverance play in a healthy marriage or long-term relationship?
- How can a marriage become a blessing not only to the couple but to others?

Follow-Up Prompt:

What is one way you can actively honor marriage—your own or others—as a gift from God this week?

Key Takeaways

- Marriage and sexuality are defined by God, not culture.
- Scripture must guide our understanding of marriage.
- Marriage is a divinely designed covenant for a lifetime.
- Healthy marriages require honesty, integrity, intimacy, effort, and responsibility.
- Perseverance and God's blessing enable marriages to be a witness and blessing to others.

Reflection

Take a moment to reflect:

- What truth from this message challenged you most?
- Where do you need God's help to align with His design for marriage—whether you are single, married, widowed, or divorced?
- How can you support healthy marriages within your community?

Prayer

Lord, thank You for creating marriage and giving us Your Word as our guide. Help us to honor Your design, walk in integrity, and pursue covenant love. Restore what is broken, strengthen what is weak, and bless every marriage represented here so that we may reflect Your love and truth. Amen.