

TAKEAWAY

Real Life Church

MARRIAGE, RELATIONSHIPS AND DIVORCE

Sunday 7th April 2019

INTRODUCTION

This Sunday, we discussed marriage, divorce and relationships. Before looking at the passage, it's good to note that this is not an academic exercise – discussions around these subjects are personal, and we should listen before we speak as we think these things through. The Bible sometimes says things that are very difficult to hear, but God loves us and we're wise to think deeply about why He says what He says. And sometimes the Bible seems, at first glance, to be saying something that it is not. We must remember that the New Testament was written in Greek, in a certain context, and it is not always easy to translate. This is why it's good to read the Bible 'in community' with other people and using the resources available to us.

READ

1 Corinthians 7:8-16

EXPLAIN

Some helpful things to consider when grappling with this passage:

1. Paul is not against marriage. But he is also very positive about the benefits of singleness in a way that our culture often is not.

2. Paul told the Corinthians not to leave their wives or husbands because it was something they were in danger of doing for the wrong reasons. Elsewhere, Jesus (speaking to a

Jewish audience) permits divorce in certain circumstances (i.e. unfaithfulness – not just sexual adultery but abuse, neglect etc.) While the Bible never promotes or commands divorce, it does permit it in certain situations. But reconciliation, if possible, is always preferable.

3. Some people in Corinth thought that 'the body' was spiritually irrelevant – and that marriage of any sort was in some way 'dirty'. Paul wants to counter this view.

4. Others thought that if a Christian was married to someone

who wasn't a Christian, the marriage was defiling to the Christian. Paul also wants to counter this view. (That's why he makes it clear that children born into a mixed Christian/non-Christian marriage are not 'unclean').

5. 'Sanctified' is an odd word. Sanctification is generally about Christians becoming more like Jesus. Here, sanctified is about a marriage being pleasing to God.

DISCUSS

1. What do you find difficult in this passage? What do you appreciate?



2. What are the advantages of being married? What are the advantages of remaining single? What are the potential disadvantages of each?
3. What are the principles for good marriages and relationships that come out of this text?
4. This passage is very much about the dynamics of human relationships. How do you see God in it?
5. What advice would you give to a Christian

friend who was looking to marry someone who was not a Christian? If they did get married, how would you support them?

6. How can the church better support a) people who are married and b) people who are single?

7. How can your group better support a) people who are married and b) people who are single?

8. What do you need to take away from this?

PRAY

That your group, and the church, would be a place where everyone can belong, no matter their marital status.

If you found yesterday's subject challenging, and you'd like to talk to someone and pray about it further, you can email Matt or Bekah at:

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