Water of Life Community Church

Marriage Matters : Part IV

Week #**4:**

DEALING WITH THE DEVASTATION OF DIVORCE

LEADER GUIDE

(LEADERS: Ice Breaker example and any sample prayers are only visible to the leader on the Leader Notes. Feel free to change the Ice Breaker)

Ice Breaker

If you could instantly become an expert in any hobby, what would it be and why?

Worship

Prayer

(LEADER: The prayer below is provided as a guide. Please feel free to change it as the Spirit leads you.)

Heavenly Father,

We thank You for the gift of relationships. Lord, we ask for Your wisdom and strength as we navigate the complexities of our lives. Help us to love one another as You have loved us, and to extend grace and compassion to those who are hurting. May Your peace, which surpasses all understanding, guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. In Your holy name, we pray.

Amen.

Sermon Rewind

In the sermon "Marriage Matters Part IV: Dealing with the Devastation of Divorce," Pastor tackles the sensitive topic of divorce, offering guidance to Christians facing failed relationships. Highlighting the alarming rise in divorce rates, Pastor emphasizes the need for compassion and support for those affected. Drawing from biblical teachings, he explores the complexities of divorce and its profound impact on individuals and families. He calls for the church community to extend love and healing to those experiencing the pain of divorce, emphasizing the potential for restoration and growth.

Key Verses

Malachi 2:13-16 (NLT): “Here is another thing you do. You cover the LORD’s altar with tears, weeping and groaning because he pays no attention to your offerings and doesn’t accept them with pleasure. You cry out, “Why doesn’t the LORD accept my worship?” I’ll tell you why! Because the LORD witnessed the vows you and your wife made when you were young. But you

have been unfaithful to her, though she remained your faithful partner, the wife of your marriage vows. Didn't the LORD make you one with your wife? In body and spirit you are his. And what does he want? Godly children from your union. So guard your heart; remain loyal to the wife of your youth. "For I hate divorce!" says the LORD, the God of Israel. "To divorce your wife is to overwhelm her with cruelty," says the LORD of Heaven's Armies. "So guard your heart; do not be unfaithful to your wife."

Matthew 19:6 (NLT): "Since they are no longer two but one, let no one split apart what God has joined together."

1 Corinthians 7:15 (NLT): "But if the husband or wife who isn't a believer insists on leaving, let them go. In such cases the believing husband or wife is no longer bound to the other, for God has called you to live in peace."

Romans 5:20 (NLT): "God's law was given so that all people could see how sinful they were. But as people sinned more and more, God's wonderful grace became more abundant."

Galatians 6:2 (NLT): "Share each other's burdens, and in this way obey the law of Christ."

Discussion Questions

1. During the sermon, Pastor mentioned death, adultery, and desertion as the three biblical reasons for divorce.

a. How can we better understand the three biblical reasons for divorce?

b. Have you ever encountered a situation where any of these reasons were justified, and how did you offer support?

2. Pastor emphasized the importance of ministries such as divorce recovery and called for the church to step up and provide healing and help.

a. How can the church community help support those who have gone through a divorce?

b. What practical steps can your small group take to make sure members feel supported during this traumatic time in their lives?

3. The sermon mentioned the need for healing from anger, rejection, and depression caused by past experiences/divorce.

a. Why do you think the failure rates for subsequent marriages after divorce are concerning according to the sermon?

b. What steps can one take to ensure growth and healing after a divorce, before entering into another relationship?

4. Pastor mentioned the emotional, spiritual, physical, and mental pain caused by divorce, and the various difficulties faced by affected children.

a. In what ways have you seen or experienced divorce having long-lasting effects on individuals and their families, particularly children?

5. A passage was referenced to emphasize that marriage was intended to be permanent.

a. How does Malachi 2:13-16 relate to the subject of divorce and its consequences?

b. How can we apply this understanding of marriage commitment to our own relationships, and encourage others in their marriages as well?

Dive Deeper

Personal Reflection: Take a deep breath and read…

Pastor mentioned that a husband should always remain loyal to their spouse as scripture (God) tells us. This applies to both the husband and wife.

1. In the workplace, in your neighborhood, or through media, do you guard yourself from forming overly intimate or "friendly" relationships with the opposite sex that should be reserved for your spouse? If you're not married, do you set appropriate boundaries in your relationships to honor the commitments you've made or the values you hold?

2. Do you keep secrets from your spouse or those close to you? Why?

3. Are you faithful in your actions, in your mind, and in your heart to your spouse, or, if unmarried, to the principles and promises you've made in your relationships?

Prayer

(LEADER: The following prayer is provided as a guide. Please feel free to change it as the Spirit leads you.)

Father,

Lord, we lift up those who are hurting from separation or divorce. Surround them with Your comfort and peace, and heal their wounds with Your boundless love. Help us as a community to be a source of support and encouragement, reflecting Your compassion and grace.

Guide us all in our relationships, that we may honor You in our actions and words. May Your love be the foundation upon which we build our lives.

In Jesus' name, we pray.

Amen.

- Ask God to bring healing to those affected by divorce.
- Seek wisdom in showing grace and compassion to those experiencing relational hardships.
- Pray for the church's role in supporting and encouraging those going through difficult times.