



TALK IT OVER

Marriage Matters (Malachi 2:13-16)

How to use Talk It Over:

Talking through the message during the week helps you and your group turn what God is saying to you into action steps. Begin with the key questions, add any optional scriptures and questions if needed, and then wrap up by deciding on your next steps.

The Main Idea:

The health of our marriage impacts our relationship with God.

Key Questions:

- How often do you ask God for something, like the Israelites were doing in v. 13, without carefully assessing the state of your relationship with Him? Do you think there are times when God does not respond to our requests for help because he is not pleased with some area of our lives?
- If God “hates divorce” (v. 16), why did the Old Testament law permit a man to divorce his wife (Deuteronomy 24:1-4)? What is the difference between what God allows and what God desires?
- According to v. 15, what is one of God’s purposes for a healthy marriage? To what degree does the health of a marriage affect the well being of a couple’s children?
- What is the significance of Malachi referring to “the wife of your youth” in vv. 14 and 15? What changes over time in a marriage? What are the challenges a marriage faces as time passes?

Optional Questions:

If needed, include one or more of these questions to extend your conversation.

- What is the significance of referring to marriage as a “covenant” (v. 14)? What other “covenant” would the Israelites have been familiar with? Why would God want to draw a comparison between these two covenants?
- In what ways is divorce rightly compared with “violence” in v. 16?
- Why is divorce referred to as “breaking faith” (v. 16)? How is staying committed to our marriage an act of faith?

Next Steps:

What one step could you take this week to make your marriage better?

Write it here: _____.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

Read what the Bible has to say in other places about the nature and importance of marriage. Use the table of contents in the front of your Bible to locate the page number for each reading.

- Day 1 Genesis 2:18-25
- Day 2 Deuteronomy 24:1-4
- Day 3 Matthew 19:1-12
- Day 4 1 Corinthians 7:1-9
- Day 5 1 Corinthians 7:10-16
- Day 6 1 Corinthians 7:25-40 (Note in v. 25 Paul essentially says he is giving his opinion, not a commandment.)
- Day 7 Ephesians 5:21-33

Bible Reading Background

The Bible presents God’s ideal regarding marriage. The above passages reflect the ideal as it is applied if various situations or circumstances. Note the common themes about marriage in each of these passages, regardless of the particular circumstances that are being addressed. What are the overall qualities of an “ideal marriage” as presented by these texts?