



*designed
to flourish*

GENDER IDENTITY IN LIGHT OF GOSPEL IDENTITY

STUDY
GUIDE

WEEK 8: DIVORCE

MATTHEW 5:31-32; 19:3-9;

1 CORINTHIANS 7:13-15

Marriage is not only an integral part of the created order that God is redeeming, but it also plays a key role in that redemption. It is no wonder, therefore, that what God has designed so that His creation can flourish is under attack like never before.

So how do we deal with divorce? In the same way, and with the same heart, that God intended for us – redemptively. Upholding the biblical standards that divorce was never God's intent, that marriage be held in honour by all, that God actually hates divorce, the reality of divorce means that real people, with real families who have real feelings and emotions are hurting from the wounds caused by the hardness of human hearts.

And that means that, in the midst of imperfection — sin, offence and unforgiveness — grace, truth, love and forgiveness must pave the way for God's redeeming plan to continue to unfold among the humanity He came to save. When the Apostle Paul speaks of the ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:18), broken marriages and the context and reality of divorce are not exempt. Jesus brings reconciliation to every area of our lives.

MEMORY VERSE

Matthew 19:4-6

He answered, "Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate."

BIBLE READING PLAN

MONDAY	GENESIS 2:18-25 DEUTERONOMY 24:1-4
TUESDAY	MALACHI 2:10-16
WEDNESDAY	ROMANS 7:1-6
THURSDAY	1 CORINTHIANS 7:1-16
FRIDAY	MATTHEW 5:27-32
SATURDAY	MATTHEW 19:3-9

POST SUNDAY STUDY CONTENT

1. Ice Breaker: Share stories of someone breaking an agreement or contract.

2. Has divorce affected you in any way? How so?

3. Summarize what God says about divorce. Are there situations in which divorce is permitted? What does God say about remarrying after divorce?

4. Read Malachi 2:10-16. Why does God “feel” so strongly about divorce? Is marriage a contract? Why or why not?

5. Sadly, divorce often creates enemies – with children as “collateral damage”. How is the truth of the gospel relevant in this reality?

6. Read Romans 5:1-11 and Corinthians 5:11-21 and discuss some practical aspects of the “ministry of reconciliation” that God has given us. How can you be a minister of reconciliation to those who have been, or are being, impacted by divorce?

7. Read Hebrews 13:4. What are some ways that your group can fulfill God’s command to honour marriage?

8. Make a list of all those you know who have been impacted by the reality of divorce.

Now read Isaiah 50:1-10 and spend time praying for the redemption and restoration of broken marriages and lives.

