

Unfiltered – Week 4 Small Group Questions

Opening Prayer

Ice Breaker

1. Are you more of a glass-half-full or glass-half-empty person generally? Or, like Pastor Jeff's friend, "cautiously optimistic"?

Discuss

Main Scriptures: Matthew 5:31-32, Matthew 19:3-12

1. Jesus said divorce "was not what God originally intended," and Malachi even records God saying, "I hate divorce." Pastor Jeff pointed out that God never says He hates the divorced person, just the pain and brokenness divorce causes. Why do you think that distinction matters?
2. In Jesus' day, one popular teacher (Hillel) said a man could divorce his wife for almost any reason, even bad cooking. Jesus responded by pointing all the way back to Genesis and God's original design for marriage as two becoming one. Why do you think Jesus went back to creation instead of just answering the Pharisees' immediate question?
3. Jesus said Moses allowed divorce "only as a concession to your hard hearts." Pastor Jeff said, "Hard hearts are the reason for no-fault divorce, not soft hearts." What do you think it looks like practically to approach conflict in marriage (or any close relationship) with a soft heart instead of a hard one?
4. Kutter Callaway said, "Marriage was not made for divorce." In other words, marriage was never designed with an exit ramp built in. How does that shift the way we should think about commitment going into a marriage?
5. Pastor Jeff was careful to say that Jesus' teaching doesn't mean someone should stay in an abusive or dangerous situation. Why do you think it's important to hold both truths at once — God's high value for marriage, and the reality that some situations require protection and safety?
6. Jesus used the unusual example of eunuchs to say that some people are called to singleness for the sake of the Kingdom, and that's just as valuable as marriage. Pastor Jeff said this elevated singleness "to an equal place of

value and worth." Does our culture (or even the church) tend to treat single adults as if something's missing? Why do you think that is?

7. The disciples reacted to Jesus' teaching by saying, "It is better not to marry!" Jesus responded that this way of life is only possible for those "whom God helps." Pastor Jeff said, "Jesus never lowers the standard because it is hard. He offers help because it is hard." Where else in life have you experienced God's help making something possible that felt impossible on your own?
8. Jesus met the woman at the well in John 4 — a woman who had been divorced five times and was currently living with a man who wasn't her husband. Pastor Jeff said, "He tells the truth, but He comes close. He names the sin, but He does not shame the sinner." What does that combination of truth and closeness teach us about how we should treat people carrying painful stories, including our own?

Practice

If you're walking through the pain of divorce, separation, or a hard marriage right now, take one step toward healing this week — whether that's reaching out to a counselor, a trusted friend, or simply sitting with God in prayer. If you're not personally walking through this, think of someone who is, and reach out to encourage them without judgment this week.