

2. Jesus affirms God's intention.

'and the two will become one flesh.'

"For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church.

Ephesians 5:31-32

Marriage looked upon from above is God creating a new communion between two people, so that through that visible and tangible communion a new sign will be present in the world to point people toward God's love.

—Henri Nouwen, *Here and Now*

3. Jesus leads them to healing and redemption.

"Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate."

"He himself bore our sins" in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; "by his wounds you have been healed." **1 Peter 2:24**

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

Romans 8:28

We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves. Each of us should please our neighbors for their good, to build them up. **Romans 15:1-2**

MESSAGE OUTLINE

FEBRUARY 10, 2019

Jesus>Me...On the Way With Jesus—Examining Our Hearts

Jesus then left that place and went into the region of Judea and across the Jordan. Again crowds of people came to him, and as was his custom, he taught them. ²Some Pharisees came and tested him by asking, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?" ³"What did Moses command you?" he replied. ⁴They said, "Moses permitted a man to write a certificate of divorce and send her away." ⁵"It was because your hearts were hard that Moses wrote you this law," Jesus replied. ⁶"But at the beginning of creation God 'made them male and female.' ⁷'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, ⁸and the two will become one flesh.' So they are no longer two, but one flesh. ⁹Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate." ¹⁰When they were in the house again, the disciples asked Jesus about this. ¹¹He answered, "Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against her. ¹²And if she divorces her husband and marries another man, she commits adultery." **Mark 10:1-12**

Key idea: Disciples examine their hearts to follow Jesus.

Context: Jesus' Four Audiences

1. Jesus reframes the question to examine their hearts.

"What did Moses command you?" ... "Moses permitted a man to send her away."

"Do not harden your hearts as you did at Meribah, as you did that day at Massah in the wilderness..." **Psalms 95:8**

But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality... **Matthew 5:32**

But if the unbeliever leaves, let it be so. The brother or the sister is not bound in such circumstances; God has called us to live in peace.

1 Corinthians 7:15

(Message Outline continued on the back panel.)

Small Group Discussion Questions • Week of February 10, 2019 *Jesus>Me...On the Way With Jesus • Examining Our Hearts*

CONNECT

- What is idealism? What does it look like in the context of relationships? How could idealism trip us up in our lives?
- Community Serve Day: Are there any details we need to discuss? Does everyone have a place to serve?
- Don't Delay: Take the REVEAL Spiritual Life Survey now! The survey is only open for two more weeks and we want everyone included. This survey will give SBPC a snapshot of where we are right now and areas where we can grow as disciples moving forward.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

Since the beginning, God made covenants with his people reflecting his love and faithfulness. Jesus spoke of the New Covenant that is available to all people because of his death and resurrection. A covenant is a chosen relationship in which two parties make binding promises to each other. Throughout scripture, marriage is used as a reflection of the kind of love and faithfulness God has for the church and us. Regardless of whether we are married or not, the promises of God apply to each of us.

Pray: Take a moment to become quiet and then pray together...

In our time of reflection, keep us, Jesus, in your way. Show us your love and faithfulness here and now. Draw us close to you, enliven and guide us by your Holy Spirit.

Listen to the promises of God: Circle the words or phrases that stand out to you.

- **Reader #1 (Gen 17:7):** I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you.
- **Reader #2 (Jeremiah 29:13):** You will seek me and you will find me when you seek me with all your heart.
- **Reader #3 (Matt 26:27-28):** Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the New Covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.
- **Reader #4 (Hebrews 13:5):** God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you."
- **Reader #5 (Matt 28:20):** (Jesus says) "And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Individual Reflection: Which of these promises do you most resonate with today? Why? Ask God for whatever you desire or long for (i.e., an increase in faith, a restored relationship, softening of your heart, etc.). What might you need to let go of to soften your heart?

Group Debrief: What does this reflection elicit in you? What can you do to become more attentive to reflecting God's love and faithfulness in your relationships this week?

SCRIPTURE REFLECTION

- Read Mark 10:1-12. Reflect on what you learned from this week's scripture or message.
- Why do you think the crowds continue to be attracted to Jesus? Why are the Pharisees so intent on trapping Jesus? For each group, how might their intention reveal the condition of their hearts?
- How would the Pharisees' question put Jesus on the spot? How did Jesus deal with their test?
- Jesus goes deeper than the surface question about divorce to address the meaning of marriage and the central theological issue at stake. Why do you think Jesus referred back to the beginning of creation in this debate? How would you describe God's ideal for marriage?
- What are the natural consequences of breaking God's ideal? How have you personally experienced these consequences causing pain and suffering in yourself or those around you?
- How can Christian marriage be a demonstration of God's Covenant of love and faithfulness with us? How can it be an effective witness to the culture (or not)?
- To clarify Jesus words, the disciples asked Jesus' more questions. What would you have wanted to ask Jesus? What is the tension you feel in reading this passage?
- What is God's remedy to the repeated inability of humanity to live out God's ideal in all areas of life? How does this give you hope for your own life and those you love?

PRAYER and BENECTION

Share your requests: Are there personal challenges the group can pray for this week?

Pray for one another: Thank God for what you have learned and ask God for wisdom to apply it this week.

Close by reading God's promise in Ezekiel 36:25-28:

I will put a new Spirit within you. I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. A new heart I will give you and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will remove from your body the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. I will put my spirit within you, and make you follow my statutes... Then you shall live in the land that I gave to your ancestors; and you shall be my people, and I will be your God. In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen

AT HOME CHALLENGE

Take the REVEAL Spiritual Life Survey! Read or listen to the weekly passage via audio on your SBPC APP. Spend time listening to God's promptings in your heart. What is Jesus revealing to you? How will you respond?