

MOOREBANK – HAMMONDVILLE ANGLICAN CHURCHES

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION OR REFLECTION

Matthew 5:31-32

1. It's been said that divorce is the worst kind of pain, even worse than death. Do you agree? What makes it so painful?
2. What was the Old Testament punishment for adultery? Choose two of the following verses to see the affect of adultery on your marriage under the Old Testament law:
3. Read v 31. The Jewish certificate of divorce contained the provision 'you are free to marry again'. What did the divorce certificate clarify?
4. Read Matthew 5:32. To help understand the logic of Jesus words, cover over the words 'except for marital unfaithfulness / sexual immorality'. Now read v32 again. If it is assumed that the divorced person(s) will remarry, why does divorce cause adultery?
5. What does this reveal about the intended permanence of marriage? How is this reflected in traditional marriage vows? How does it contrast with contemporary alternatives you may have heard?
6. How is Jesus' teaching different from the 'no fault divorce' common today?
7. Read Matthew 19:4-7. How does this help us to understand God's purposes in marriage? Does the passage Jesus quotes from come before the first sin or after it? Why is this important?
8. Read Matthew 5:32 'Except for marital unfaithfulness (NIV) / sexual immorality (ESV)'. How does sexual activity outside of marriage break God's intended purpose for marriage? In this instance, what reality does divorce recognise?
9. Choose one of the following to discuss together:
 - For those who are married – what option does Jesus remove from his followers (19:6)? What impact does this have on your relationship with your spouse?
 - Read Matthew 19:6 again. How does it help to know that God is the one who has joined you to your spouse? What does that imply about God's ongoing involvement and assistance in your marriage?
 - How can you encourage your Christian brothers and sisters to invest in and strengthen their marriage?

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SERMON OUTLINE –6 March 2016
Matthew 5:31-32 ~ Divorce

Talking about the worst kind of pain

1. With one exception, Jesus says divorce is adultery

2. Divorce is adultery except for marital unfaithfulness

3. Five thoughts on divorce and marriage

- i. Abuse in marriage
- ii. Adultery is not the unforgivable sin
- iii. Difficult marriages and the resources of God
- iv. Building strong marriages takes family modeling and encouragement
- v. The grass is always greener...