

## Marriage Life Group Questions - Jun 11, 2022 through June 18, 2022

1. *The designer is the definer.* Use as directed. We tend to follow the directions when it comes to the medications we put into our bodies and the fuel we put into our cars. When it comes to intimate relationships, there are many competing opinions. Who you listen to determines the directions you follow. In our culture today, what are some popular opinions about relationships? (i.e. what you can and can't do?) Who are the authorities offering those directions? What happens when we ignore the designer's directions when it comes to our medications? When it comes to our cars? When it comes to our marriages? In your life, how have you seen the importance of following God's directions in your intimate relationships?
2. *Marriage is vertical, not merely horizontal.* 1 in 2 marriages end in divorce. But only 1 in 1,500 marriages end in divorce when the couple prays together every day. The couple that prays together, stays together. What are some things that keep married couples from daily prayer, together? When it comes to your intimate relationships, have you noticed a connection between the vertical and horizontal? Please share what you've noticed.
3. *According to the Bible, marriage is heterosexual, not homosexual.* On June 1, 2022, an Axios headline read, "Support for same-sex marriage at record high, poll finds." The Gallup poll revealed 71% of Americans support same-sex marriage. The Biblical position on marriage is becoming less popular. Nevertheless, 70% of those who attend church nearly weekly or monthly also support same-sex marriage. 40% of weekly church attenders also support same-sex marriage. What do you think about these statistics? What kinds of challenges do they present? What kinds of opportunities? Do you think it's important for us to keep teaching what the Bible has to say about it? Why or why not? How have you seen the importance of this for people that you know?
4. *Marriage is exclusive because it involves two becoming one.* How important is this exclusivity? Since it is exclusive, it is not polygamous (more than 2 married), polyamorous ( more than 2 **un**married) or pornographic (Matt. 5:28). If ignoring a stop sign can cause deadly traffic accidents, what kind of deadly relational accidents can happen when people ignore the exclusivity of marriage? Without naming names, can you share any cautionary tales?
5. *Marriage is covenantal, not merely contractual.* Marriage licenses are important documents. But marriage is more than that contract. How is the marriage covenant more than the marriage license? When we elevate our view of marriage from contractual to covenantal, it matters. What kind of a difference does this make?

6. *Marriage is lifelong, not disposable.* Traditional marriage vows include this phrase, "Until death do you part." What difference does that make day to day? Each side of this marriage octagon provides us with some safety. How does this statement help to keep us safe: Marriage is lifelong, not disposable. If we ignore it, we might experience some pain. How have you seen this to be true?
7. *Marriage is procreative, not merely pleasurable.* Be fruitful and multiply. Praise God for the pleasure we experience in the marriage relationship. But it's more than pleasurable, it's procreative. Three sons of Adam and Eve are named in the Bible: Cain, Abel and Seth. What kind of pleasure and pain did Adam and Eve experience through their obedience to the procreative purpose of marriage? What kind of pleasure and pain have you experienced through the procreative purpose of marriage? How might God be using that pain to conform you to the image of Jesus? (Hint: Our holiness matters to God at least as much as our happiness.)
8. *Marriage illustrates the relationship between Christ and the church.* Paul says this mystery is great. How might these earthly marriages reflect that heavenly relationship? How might this reality encourage the marriage relationship? How might it provide a healthy challenge? What's one of the healthiest marriages that you have seen? In what ways does that marriage reflect Christ and the church?
9. *Marriage is intimate, not abstinent.* "And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed," (Genesis 2:25). If we were to follow the designer's design in this area of marriage, what kind of sexual shame would it prevent? Use sex as directed by reserving it for marriage and practicing it in marriage. How might we neglect those directions? What are the consequences?
10. Putting it all together: *Biblical marriage is an exclusive, lifelong, vertical, covenantal, heterosexual, illustrative, procreative and intimate relationship reflective of Christ and the church.* Take some time to pray for the eight sides of this biblical definition of marriage for the members of your life group. Invite them to reflect privately on which of those eight lines most urgently needs their attention (i.e. the line isn't solid, but dotted, blurry or completely erased).

#### **WEEKLY MINISTRY PRAYER HIGHLIGHT:**

Please be in prayer for your fellow Table Rock friends who will be joining a team with Helping Hands International to build a home for a family in need in Mexico, June 19-25. Prayers for safety, health, team unity, humility and effectiveness in displaying the love of Christ in all they say and do will be greatly appreciated and warmly felt by team members Cathy and Chris Miller, Kent Miller, Hannah Gettman, Dennis and Lori Vail.