

**Supplementary Questions for a Bible Study on Marriage, Divorce and the Covenant of God.  
For Home Groups in the week commencing 19<sup>th</sup> October 2009.**

**Text: Matthew 5:31-32**

As always, there are loads of questions here and some could keep you going all night! The leader needs to think through which are the best ones for their group, which are the most pastorally appropriate and which will help your group appreciate God's love the most.

**Welcome.**

*Q: Ask people about their personal 'pet loves and hates' about British Weddings!*

**Body.**

*Q: If you want to look these up, here are some examples of God using the metaphor of marriage for his relationship with his people: Song of Songs 4:8-12, Isa 62:5, Jer 2:2, 2 Cor 11:2, Rev 19:7, Rev 21:2, Matt 9:15.*

Although this passage focuses on Divorce I do not believe that Divorce can properly be understood except within the context of a good understanding marriage and marriage in the Bible is a covenant which echoes God's covenant relationship with us. Therefore, if this study is to be helpful, encouraging and applicable to all then we need to clearly understand God's covenant relationship with us. This then becomes the model for marriage.

**1. The Love of Christ.**

*Q: Where do people get their ideas about what love is today?*

*Q: Why do you think our culture promotes sexual attraction and romantic love as "what love is all about?"*

The love of God is seen in Christ.

*Q: From John 3:16 and from 1 John 4:9-10 what are the key elements of Christ's love for us?*

*Q: How does this contrast to Sexual Attraction and Romantic Love?*

An Indian friend once said to me "the trouble with you in the West is that you fall in love and then you work at marriage whereas we in India work at marriage and then fall in love".

*Q: What do you think of the above statement?*

*Q: If our love for someone depends upon **their** qualities then what are the implications for them?*

*Q: If our love for someone depends upon **our** qualities then what are the implications for us?*

*Q: How does this help make marriages work better?*

*Q: How does this help us understand Grace and the cost of God's love?*

**2. The Faithfulness of the Father.**

*Q: Read Deut 7:7-10. What do we learn about God and his relationship with us, his people?*

*Q: What does it mean to promise to be faithful to someone?*

*Q: In what ways is a promise “to love” different to feelings “of love”.*

*Q: Is love a feeling? (that’ll get you going 😊)*

Our relationship with God is based upon his promises to us, eg 1 John 1:9

*Q: What difference does “his love based on a promise”, as opposed to “his love based on a feeling” make to His relationship with us and our relationship with Him?*

*Q: In what ways is God faithful to us, and how does he prove His faithfulness?*

*Q: What difference should this make to marriages in our society?*

### **3. The Intimacy of the Spirit**

Marriage is about deep friendship. True friendship is about a shared passion, shared values, shared hopes etc.

*Q: How do you spot someone who could be a friend, and how do you decide whether they can be a friend?*

*Q: In what ways does friendship need to be worked at?*

We let friends behind our defensive screens.

*Q: Why?*

*Q: In what ways is God our soul mate and deepest friend?*

### **Marriage is also about a union.**

*Q: In what ways does our society see sex as a ‘Consumer Sport?’*

*Q: If sex is designed to be placed with a context of intimate trust, faithful promise, and sacrificial love. What are the dangers of getting this wrong? How is this seen in our society?*

### **Marriages can Fail.**

*Q: In what ways do you think divorce is like an amputation?*

Whether we are married, single or divorced, our understanding of love, our ability to be faithful, our expressions of intimacy fall so very short of the target that God would have for us. We all make mistakes. Nevertheless we all need to know that He loves you unconditionally; that **He** will never leave you or forsake you; and that He will live in you, fill the voids, and give you fullness of life

*Q: God’s desire is to be “one with us, just as he is one”. See John 17:20-26. What does this mean for us now – and for us when we go to heaven?*