KINGDOM of HEAVEN

A SERIES IN THE BOOK OF MATTHEW

Community Group Material

Matthew 19:1-15

Week of Sunday 12th May

Marriage and Singleness in the Kingdom

Leader Preparation

- Read through the passage, and through pages 11-13 of the notes.

This week we are going to be speaking about God's ideal of marriage, singleness, and children in his kingdom. This is a difficult topic for many people, as there are so many different experiences of these situations. We would like people to come away

- God's intention and hope for us
- God's discipleship of us in these relationships

Group Time:

https://tinyurl.com/RUCCG1 (this is a printable pdf file)

https://tinyurl.com/RUCCG2 (this is a powerpoint file that can be projected)

Find a way to share around the photographs in the attached document – either by printing them or projecting them for the group. Ask each person to choose a picture that expresses something significant to them about marriage or singleness and what it means to them. Try to allow them to express their view of what the picture symbolizes, whether positive or negative. You might want to ask some questions:

- What do you think about when you see this picture?
- If it is something difficult or negative, how would you hope it would be different?
- If it is something positive, is it like this all the time? How come some people get to experience this?







Exploring the Passage

READ Matthew 19:1-15

Read through the passage as a group and then work through some questions:

Marriage and Divorce

Verses 3-9

- Who is asking the questions here? What "sources" do they rely on in their discussion?
  [See Deuteronomy 24:1-4]

- Does Jesus answer them directly? What "sources" does he refer to?
  [See Genesis 1:27, Genesis 2:24]

- How does Jesus want us to view marriage? How would you explain to a younger person (or perhaps your younger self) what God wants them to experience in marriage?

- Is this different from what you see people experiencing in the world around you? In what ways?

- What do you think is the most difficult aspect of being married?

- What are some reasons that people have for divorce in Johannesburg in 2024?
  - What would the courts say about these reasons?
  - What would God say?

- What reasons did Moses say were acceptable for divorce? Why does Jesus say God allowed this? What standard would you like to set in your relationships in terms of this?

- How should Christians respond to people in the church who
  - Are considering getting married?
  - Are married and struggling in their relationship?
  - Are divorced?

Singleness

Verses 10-12

> In literal terms, a eunuch was a man who had his reproductive organs removed, usually so that he could serve in the royal courts without being a threat to the women there.
>
> Jesus is using the term to refer to people who for physical or practical reasons, or by choice, remain single.

- What are some of the attitudes of society to people who remain single or celibate. Do we as the church show better or worse opinions?

- What are some of the hardest things about remaining single?

- How can we better love and include those who – for any reason – are not married?

Children

Verses 13-15

- At the beginning of chapter 18, Jesus pointed us to some characteristics of children, telling us to become like “little ones”. What characteristics were we told to model?
- Now Jesus points to actual children, making space for them to access him, and stopping his disciples from turning them away. What lessons does Jesus want us to learn about the place of children in our lives?
- How can we better encourage the presence and growth of children in places like church, social settings and our everyday life activities?

Prayer

Divide into groups of 2 or 3, or into men and women in your group. Pray for one another, in the areas of marriage or singleness, that God would enable us to live in a Godly way, honouring him with whichever roles we have.
