

FBC Small-Group Materials

Week of March 5th, 2006
Matthew 5:27-37; God's Original Intent

"Beauty is not only a wonderful thing, it is also a mysterious thing! There God and the Devil strive for mastery, and the battleground is the heart of man." Fyodor Dostoyevsky

For Small-Group Leaders

Dear Leaders,

This week's small group materials take us to an incredibly relevant section of Christ's Sermon on the Mount. Jesus, the gospelizer, stands up for marriage. He calls it sacred and worthy of our all. Perhaps at first, we think, "this is burdensome." But Jesus' aim is to protect and bless marriage. Once again, we discover that he cares about relationships. I hope your group gets a sense of Jesus' heart for us as we continue learning from him.

Blessings to you and your group,

Scott

P.S. These small group materials are available at the info table each Sunday and at www.fbcdavis.org.

Discussion Starters:

To introduce this week's discussion, begin with this marriage trivia:

- **Longest recorded engagement** – was between Octavio Guillen and Adriana Martinez who finally took the plunge after being engaged for 67 years!
- **The oldest recorded bride** – was Minnie Munro, who got hitched at a sprightly 102 years of age.
- **Longest marriage** – Sir Temulji Nariman and his wife Lady Nariman were married for a grand total of 86 years.
- **Most times married to the same person** – Richard and Carole Roble, a pair of New Yorkers, enjoyed marrying each other so much they have taken their vows an incredible 55 times. To add a little variety into proceedings, they have carried out each ceremony in different locations, including all the states in America.

Discussion Questions:

1. Read Matthew 5:27-37. Jesus, the one who fulfills the law, is bringing out the original intent of God's law. Instead of reducing the law to a list of rules and regulations, he shows us how the law was designed to bring us into "right" relationship with God and people. As you look at verses 27-30 of Matthew 5, how does Jesus "fulfill" (draw out the original intent) of the seventh commandment of the Ten Commandments ("You shall not commit adultery")?
2. A small minority have taken verses 29-30 literally as a call to self-mutilation. About these verses, John Stott says, "*It is better to be culturally deprived than to be eaten away on the inside.*" What do you think Jesus means in these verses?
3. If Jesus does not mean verses 29-30 to be taken literally, what kinds of actions is he talking about taking?
4. In verses 31-32, Jesus contrasts the world's view of marriage with God's? What is God's view of marriage?
5. Read verses 33-37. How does this section apply to marriage? How does it apply to relationships beyond marriage?
6. Throughout this section of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus is challenging a superficial view of righteousness and calls us instead; into a deeper level of righteousness. How do we go about living at this deeper level of righteousness?

Living it this Week – How would you like to apply this week's study to your life? Ask group members to pair up and share with one another.