

# THE **crossing** small groups

## Marriage Myths | Genesis 2:18-25 Sermon Discussion Leader's Guide

**Purpose of Discussion:** To contrast what the Bible says about marriage with cultural myths about marriage.

**Sermon Refresher:** Keith's sermon explored a number of "marriage myths" Christians believe. We will focus on three. First, "Marriage is a contract between two people." Second, "If I find the right person, then I will have a happy marriage." Third, "Marriage is designed to make you happy."

**Icebreaker:** God said that it's not good to be alone. This statement expands beyond marriage to encompass *all* human relationships (family, friends, coworkers, fellow Christians, etc.). God could have put each of us on our own islands to live blissfully ignorant of one another. Why do you think God chose not to do this? Why did God make us to be in a variety of relationships? Why isn't it good to be alone? What does this tell you about what it means to be human?

### Discussion:

1. Read Genesis 2:18-25.

#### Genesis 2:23-25

**23** The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man." **24** That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh. **25.** Adam and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.

In this passage Adam and Eve make a "covenant." This is different than a "contract." In a contract, two parties make a *conditional* agreement. In a Covenant, two parties make an *unconditional* agreement. The Bible is clear that in extreme circumstances a Covenant can be broken. Sexual infidelity, abuse, and abandonment are examples of such extreme circumstances. But in today's culture we add many other conditions under which someone is allowed to end a marriage. What *conditions* are we tempted to put add to our marriage covenants? (Think: I will only stay married to you, if \_\_\_\_\_).

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2. How would you advise a friend struggling with a serious challenge in their marriage? (I don't love him/her anymore, all we ever do is fight, we can't agree on how to spend money, there's no more passion, I'm not happy).
3. Our culture often promises that "If I find the right person, I will be happy in marriage." How do shows like the bachelor, and modern technology like dating apps call this premise in to question?
4. How does this myth negatively affect married people? What about single people?
5. Keith quoted a friend who said, "My wife's been married to five different men, and they're all me." People change in marriage. So even if you managed to marry "the right person," they will become "the wrong person" before you know it. The true challenge of marriage is choosing to love your partner and work out your conflicts as you *both* change. If you're married, share ways you've seen yourself change. How might that be difficult for your spouse? If you're not married and want to be married, how might this change what you're looking for in a partner? If you're not married and plan to stay celibate, how might this change how you advise your friends?
6. Another common cultural myth is "Marriage is designed to make me happy." But the Bible says that marriage is designed to make us holy (Eph. 5:21-33). Compare and contrast these two different views.
7. How does God use marriage, and other close relationships to make us more holy?

**Sharing and Prayer:** In small groups with **single people**, pair off into groups of 2-3. Share some of the positive ways God's used your singleness to bring him glory. Share some ways you may be experiencing hurt or loneliness as a result of your singleness. Pray for God's presence in each other's lives.

In small groups with **married people**, pair into groups of 2 or 3. Which of the three myths do you find yourself most believing today? (First, "Marriage is a contract between two people." Second, "If I find the right person, then I will have a happy marriage." Third, "Marriage is designed to make you happy."). Share one practical way you want to fight against that belief in your life.