

ONE STORY

SMALL GROUP LEADER GUIDE

WEEK 21
Marriage at Its Best

REDEEMING MARRIAGE

BEFORE THE SESSION:

- Look over the suggested questions to the right. Ask God to guide you to the ones that will work best for your group.
- Be prepared to get the discussion going in your group if they're not feeling it today.
- Don't feel like you have to know all there is to know about scripture. Use this week's study notes to prepare yourself. But, if something arises that you can't answer, tell your group, "That's a great question. I'll research that and get back with you." Then, email eddie.mosley@lifepointchurch.org for help.
- Ask someone else to lead the icebreaker next week.

THIS WEEK'S BIG IDEA

Passion paves the way to intimacy in marriage.

TO PREPARE FOR NEXT WEEK:

Read 1 Chronicles 26-29; 2 Chronicles 1; 1 Kings 1-4; Song of Solomon; Psalms 37, 71-72, 94, 111-119, 127.

AS YOU READ...

... Consider the things you value in this life.

CONNECT

(10 min.)

Choose one of the following questions to begin your time together as a group. If your group has been together longer, you may want to skip question 1 in favor of question 2.

1. **When did you start being interested in the opposite sex?**
2. **Why do you think God would include a book about sex in the Bible?**

EXPLORE

(40 min.)

Say something like, "Today we are discussing the amazing gift called sex that God gives to us." Then guide your group through these questions.

3. **If you attended worship this week, what statement or experience stood out to you? What stood out during last week's reading?**

Play the video for Redeeming Marriage Session 4. Then guide your group through the following questions.

4. **All through Song of Solomon we see Solomon complimenting his wife's beauty. Wives, what would it feel like to have your husbands compliment your beauty like this? What difference would it make if he complimented you to others?**
5. **Eddie said marriage must be a priority above everything else. What are some practical things you can do to assure your marriage is indeed a priority?**
6. **What were Eddie's four teaching points? Which one stood out to you? Why? Recall each one and discuss how you can practically improve on each one.**
7. **Why do you think having a weekly date night with your spouse is so important? Share ideas about how you can help each other dedicate time for this.**
8. **How can you live out Ephesians 4:26?**
9. **Eddie mentioned that much can be learned about the heart of God by reading Song of Solomon. How do you often view God? As a wise old man? A dictator? Read Song of Solomon 5:10. When you see Him as the lover in this passage, how does this expand your view of who He is?**

TRANSFORM

(10 min.)

Recall a few key ideas for your group. Close your time together by asking couples to face each other, hold hands and pray together as a couple. This may be a bit uncomfortable for some groups. If yours is one, that's okay. Ask your apprentice to pray for each family by name.

This Week's Study Notes:

Why is the Song of Solomon in the Bible?

That's a great question. Song of Solomon was first understood by early Jewish interpreters as an allegory of God's love for Israel, and then, through many centuries of Christian interpretation, as primarily an allegory of Christ's love for the church, or as Christ's love for the soul. In contrast to this, most Christian interpreters since the 19th century have understood the Song of Solomon as a beautifully crafted love poem describing either: (1) the relationship between King Solomon and his Shulammitte bride, (2) the relationship between a simple shepherd and the Shulammitte shepherdess, or (3) a three-character relationship involving Solomon, a shepherd boy, and the Shulammitte shepherdess. Still many others, since the beginning of the 20th century, have understood Song of Solomon as simply a collection of sensuous love poems on a common theme, rather than the unfolding of a single poetic love story.

Key Themes in the Song of Solomon

1. God's covenant, which commands sexual purity, provides just the right framework (marriage) within which His people may properly enjoy the gift of sexual intimacy (cf. Genesis 2:23–24). Thus God's people honor Him and commend Him to the world when they demonstrate with their lives that obedience in such matters brings genuine delight.

2. Marriage is a gift from God, and is to be founded on loyalty and commitment (see Genesis 2:24, "hold fast"), which allows delight to flourish. As such, it is a fitting image for God's relationship with His people, in both the Old Testament and the New Testament.

Leader Tips

AS YOU READ THIS WEEK...

- Think about and pray for each member of your small group.
- Think through the following questions:
 1. Whom does God bring to mind as I read these verses? Why?
 2. What needs to change in my own life as a result of what I'm reading?
 3. Whom do I need to tell about these verses?

FOR ADDITIONAL STUDY WE RECOMMEND...

- Bible Commentary: Bible.org
- Bible Commentary: DesiringGod.org
- Pronouncing Biblical Words: Netministries.org/Bbasics/bwords.htm

* Study notes taken from From ESV Study Bible Introduction to Song of Solomon

** Questions adapted from Serendipity Bible for Groups (1998 Zondervan and Serendipity House Publishing)

