



STUDY GUIDE

November 20, 2022

Message Series:

Family Matters

Message Title:

Healing from Divorce

Teaching Pastor:

Brian Hughes

Warm-up/Icebreaker: (10 min)

Would You Rather- Thanksgiving edition:

1. Go Black Friday shopping or watch Thanksgiving Football?
2. Have been a Native American or Pilgrim on the first Thanksgiving?
3. Eat turkey for breakfast, lunch and dinner for a week after Thanksgiving or go to work in a turkey costume for a week?

Pray:

Dear Lord, we acknowledge our need for You. We are grateful to turn together toward You for wisdom and discernment surrounding our life challenges, our sinful heart conditions, and our aching brokenness. Help us to be open, willing, and receptive to Your guidance as we grow in understanding of Your power. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Get Started: (20 min.)

- Nearly everyone is affected by divorce in some way. What is your closest experience with divorce?

Read Psalm 56:8.

- What does this verse mean to you as you struggle or watch others struggle with pain and brokenness?

“So pervasive was the dysfunction inside of me that it took a mental meltdown to expose it. And after months of tears through hundreds of hours of counseling, 1 hour at a time, I finally sobbed these words out loud: I feel like such a child! And that’s when Dr. Graham sat forward in his chair, looked me in the eye and said, ‘You ARE a child. You are a 9 year old child who made sense of it the best way you could. Now we have to rewire the way you see the world.’” -Pastor Brian Hughes

Watch and Discuss Video: (running time 14 min./20 min. discussion)

“Whether you are the one who is divorced or part of the family that was close to it, an examination of your heart is critical for healing. I’m not talking about an autopsy on the deceased marriage. That’s where people determine the cause of death so that they can blame someone. I’m talking about YOU. Your heart. Because whatever your proximity to the divorce, you had some shrapnel come your way. An autopsy is for something dead...but you are not. You need an exam. Of your heart. And here’s the shocking, painful truth: My refusal to allow that examination to happen created new pain *that I caused* on my own family. My parents divorce was not my fault. But the unwillingness to deal with it was.” -Pastor Brian Hughes

Pastor Brian shared how healing began to take place after years of pain, once he worked through the following process:

1. **Allow the Examination** - This is best assisted by a third party.
2. **Expose the Withhold** - You don't talk about them, you go to the person. The point of this is to simply get out the withhold, not to convince the other person in any way.
3. **Grant Forgiveness** - Both a decision you make, a point in time and a process you go through, a requirement of God, forgiveness is release from debt.
 - What experience do you have with these steps whether through a divorce or due to a strained relationship? What do you find most difficult?

Read Matthew 18:21–35.

- What is your reaction to this parable? Is there anyone you need to forgive?

Reflect and Commit: (15 min.)

“Forgiveness is both a decision and a process. Both are required. Both take time. But neither happens by accident. It requires intent. It's hard, for sure. But people around you will thank you because true forgiveness doesn't coexist with bitterness. It replaces it. And everyone wins.” - Pastor Brian Hughes

Read Ephesians 4:20 – 5:2. As you read, hone in on the word or phrase that speaks the most to you.

- What stood out personally to you? What may God be asking you to change, do differently, repent of, pray about, as a result of engaging with this passage?

Gather prayer requests and pray. (5-10 min.)

But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.”
2 Corinthians 12:9

Pray:

Dear Lord, help us to understand that You meet the totality of our needs and we do not have to fear suffering whether through divorce or any other life struggle. We are weak in our own strength but Your power is made perfect in our weakness. We ask for Your forgiveness when we are prideful and hurt others and help us to freely extend that forgiveness to others, knowing You require this in our faith journey. We are grateful to receive Your grace that You long to give and hopeful that Your Plan B is, has been, or will be revealed. Help us to remain humble and dependent on You, trusting You will guide and heal. We pray in our Savior's name Jesus. Amen.

For further study:

Mark 11:25

Matthew 5:23-24

Matthew 18:15-20