

We are excited that you are interested in High Desert Church's Pre-Marital Class. Please take the time to read through and complete this packet. When it is complete either mail it or hand submit it to the church office. If there is a particular pastor on our staff that you have asked to marry you or you would like to have interview you, please indicate that when you return your completed packet.

Once we have received your completed packet the pastor will review the information and then call you to make an appointment to meet with him. (If you have any questions about this process, you can call the church office at 760-245-2415 x 219 or e-mail Dona Jean at dbetz@highdesertchurch.com.) Your appointment with the pastor must be made before the class begins. The deadline for class registration is usually one week prior to the first class.

After being invited to attend the class by a pastor, you can call our office at 760-245-2415 x 219 to find out the next class schedule and be placed on the contact list. *Only couples invited by a pastor can attend the class.* The classes will be approximately ninety minutes long and will run for six weeks. There is a \$50.00 registration fee (per couple) that will be collected at the first session.

Again, thank you for your interest and we look forward to getting to know you better.

Sincerely,

George Beardsley
Managing Associate Pastor



What you need to do:

1. **Complete** this packet (read through the material carefully).
You keep the following:
 - ◆ Divorce & Remarriage Policy
 - ◆ Wedding Policy
 - ◆ Contact Information/Availability
2. **Return** all other materials in the packet to the church office (mail or hand deliver). Indicate which pastor(s) you would like to interview with when you return the completed packet. Please note that your registration for the class is not complete until you interview with a pastor. *Class registration ends approx one week prior to the start of a class.*
3. Have an **interview** with one of HDC's pastors before class registration ends.
4. After your interview, the pastor will issue the invitation to attend the class.
5. **Contact** the office to get info on the next class: 760-245-2415 x 219 / dbetz@highdesertchurch.com.
6. **RSVP** to 760-245-2415 x 219 / dbetz@highdesertchurch.com. Please let us know if you will or will not be attending the class.
7. **Attend** the six-week class: registration fee is \$50 per couple to be paid at the first class.

Pastoral Staff

The use of HDC's pastoral staff is limited to their availability and compliance with HDC's Policies and Philosophies of Ministry.

Wedding Coordinator

All weddings at HDC must be coordinated through the HDC wedding coordinator and use an HDC hostess.

Pre-Marital Counseling

All couples being married at HDC or using an HDC pastor, must go through the pre-marital counseling process as outlined by the pastoral staff. This can be waived if the couple is going through a comparable, alternative process approved by HDC's pastoral staff.

Facility Use

The use of the facility for weddings will only be allowed for members or regular attenders of HDC. In order to use the facility, the couple will need to have met the pre-marital counseling requirement as stated above. Use of a pastor not on staff at HDC must be approved by HDC's pastoral staff.

The use of the facility for receptions is limited to members of HDC. Smoking in the buildings is not allowed and alcoholic beverages are not allowed anywhere on the HDC campus. HDC does not allow dancing at HDC's campus.

Wedding Fees

All wedding fees will be calculated with the Event Fee Schedule maintained by the facilities department secretary and approved by the Senior Management Team. Fees must be paid prior to the wedding.

Wedding Fee Schedule**Victorville Campus:**

Fireside Room	\$75
Chapel	\$100
Gym	\$125
Powell Auditorium	\$250

The above fees are waived for members

Custodial Fireside Room	\$50
Custodial Chapel	\$75
Custodial Gym	\$75
Custodial Powell Auditorium	\$75

Wedding Coordinator	\$50
Wedding Hostess	\$200
Wedding Assistant*	\$100
Sound Technician	\$75

Wedding Day > 6 Hours additional \$50 per person

* Assistant is required for Auditorium

Contacts

Pre-Marital Class Information	Dona Betz	245.2415 ext. 219
Pre-Marital Class Leader	George Beardsley	245.2415 ext. 219
Wedding Coordinator	Tammie Dailey	245.2415 ext. 203 (call first)
	Tammie Dailey	947-5062 (home)
Audio Information	Jacob Barbour	245.2415 ext. 265

Wedding Availability Times**Auditorium**

Thursday Night Rehearsal	5:00 PM to 6:00 PM
Friday Night Rehearsal	5:00 PM to 6:00 PM
Friday Night Weddings	Open
Saturday Weddings	Stage must be cleared by 1:15 PM

Chapel

Friday Night Rehearsal	5:00 PM to 6:00 PM
Friday Night Weddings	Open
Saturday Weddings	Stage must be cleared by 2:30 PM

Gym

Friday Night Rehearsal	5:00 PM to 6:00 PM
Friday Night Weddings	Open
Saturday Weddings	Stage must be cleared by 1:00 PM

Receptions are limited to HDC members only and must conclude by the times listed above.

DIVORCE & REMARRIAGE

HDC's Philosophy of Ministry

Adopted 9/7/08

As more marriages within the Christian community end in divorce, the role of the church becomes an increasingly precarious one. The church's obligation to believers has always included (1) preparing them to carry on Christ's mission of worldchange, (2) holding them accountable to the standard of Scripture, (3) ministering to those who are hurting and (4) redeeming those who have fallen. No issue requires a greater convergence of all of those operations than does the prospect of divorce.

1. How does the Bible define marriage?

It is important to understand the purpose of marriage and how it interfaces with a believer's role as a worldchanger. The Bible defines marriage as a relationship between a man and woman, who have equal value but distinct functional roles (Genesis 1-2), coming together as one to provide a clear picture of God to their oikos. (1 Corinthians 11:3)

We believe that marriage, although legally recognized by the state, had already been established by God to provide a healthy and safe environment for personal and spiritual growth. We believe that the Bible defines marriage as a lifelong union between one man and one woman and is the only context for biblical sexual expression.

Therefore, HDC does not conduct homosexual weddings; does not condone homosexual marriage or sexual relationships (Romans 1:20-27); does not condone heterosexual sexual relationships outside of the institution of marriage; and does not encourage marriage between a man or a woman who do not share similar spiritual goals. (Ephesians 5:21-31)

2. What does God think of divorce?

Nowhere in Scripture does God recommend divorce as a solution to marital conflict. His attitude toward divorce is probably best summed up in Malachi 2:16- He hates it. Jesus reaffirms that disdain in Matthew 19:3-6, when He says "What God has joined together, let no man separate." He went on to say, in verse 8, that "Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But it was not this way from the beginning." In other words, throughout the Old and New Testaments, God never thought much of divorce as a way to resolve family problems.

Under the Old Covenant, God gave one reason to terminate a marriage- adultery. And the marriage was terminated because the adulterer was executed. (Deuteronomy 22) Seeking to avoid the death penalty, many people would restrict their sexual immorality to activities just short of actual adultery. Deuteronomy 24 clearly states that men would divorce their wives for such an "indecency". And, since she could not be lawfully executed, she became "defiled" in any future marriage, in that there was no legitimacy for the divorce in the first place. The intent of that passage is not to condone divorce, but to prohibit remarrying an illegitimately divorced person.

At some point in time, however, execution was replaced by divorce as an acceptable way of dealing with adultery. It seems as though the adulterer or adulteress were simply treated as if he or she were dead, insofar as the marriage was concerned.

Jesus' teaching on divorce supports such a concept. He states that divorce is never acceptable unless one's spouse is guilty of sexual immorality. (Matthew 5:32) Notice this exception to God's ideal of "one man, one woman, for life" is simply permitted, not recommended or commanded. It is also important to note that the type of sexual immorality that Jesus discussed was an immoral physical sexual act between two people. Pornography is addictive, destructive and should never be considered as appropriate behavior, but lust is not portrayed in Scripture as a divorceable offense.

Paul's teaching on divorce allows one more exception to this no-divorce policy in situations where one spouse is a Christian and the other is not. He contends that if an unbelieving spouse leaves, the believer should not feel obligated to pursue him/her, but to "let him do so. A believing man or woman is not bound in such circumstances." (1 Corinthians 7:12-16) However, as that passage clearly states, no exception is allowed if the non-believing partner wants to remain in the marriage.

3. What about remarriage?

God's Word indicates that a believer has a right to remarry when the divorce transpired under one of three sets of circumstances.

1- When a divorce occurred prior to salvation. Paul says that "if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come." (2 Corinthians 5:17) The old life with its old sins are, through the grace of Christ, removed completely.

2- When a divorce occurred because one's spouse is guilty of sexual immorality and is unwilling to repent and live faithfully with the marriage partner. In Matthew 5:32, Jesus indicates that both permissible divorce and remarriage revolves around the immorality issue.

3- When a divorce occurred as a result of Paul's 1 Corinthians 7 exception- when a non-believing spouse willfully and permanently deserts the believing partner. The believer is "not bound in such circumstances," and remarriage is not a violation of God's Word.

4. What conclusions can we draw?

1- If you've never been married, don't get married until you're sure you've found God's choice for a life partner. Use your head, not just your heart. Understanding God's intolerance for divorce, except in these few specific circumstances, should cause you to choose a spouse carefully. A lengthy courtship, where both of you prayerfully seek to understand each other in light of God's Word is the best strategy.

2- If yours is a troubled marriage and your difficulty is not the result of adultery, take your time and prayerfully seek God's will for your future. Marriage is perhaps the best laboratory for developing Christian character. Most Christians who seek divorce do so as the result of an emotional decision, not a thoughtful one. Studying the Scriptures, continually acknowledging our dependence on God in prayer, and seeking the encouragement and counsel of Christian friends and church leaders, allows us to turn marital conflict into an arena for personal and family growth.

Being human and therefore equipped with the uncanny ability to rationalize, you may be tempted to search for a way out rather than a way through, which would only lead to further frustration rather than your long desired resolution. Remember, both the Old Testament and the teaching of Christ

clearly shows that divorce and subsequent remarriage can lead to a proliferation of adultery in God's eyes in future relationships. (Deuteronomy 24, Matthew 5:32)

However, if remaining in your relationship poses a threat to your children's or your physical safety, do not feel obligated to remain in that environment. Separation in such circumstances may become necessary. But, as is the case with any separation, praying for and working toward individual rehabilitation and eventual reconciliation should continue to be your focus.

3- If you do have a biblical reason to terminate the marriage, still take your time and seek God's leading. If your partner is an adulterer, don't assume that God wants you to seek a divorce. If your spouse desires forgiveness, even though you've been deeply hurt, your job is to forgive and work toward complete healing in your relationship. Often times it takes time to discern God's leading so, before you begin divorce proceedings, be sure you're not short-circuiting a healing of God that is still in progress.

4- If your divorce qualifies as biblical and you're considering remarriage, be extremely cautious. Only remarry another committed believer (1 Corinthians 7:39) and take whatever time is required to insure your new marriage will have the best possible chance for success. Remember, in our society, 75% of second marriages and 85% of third marriages end in divorce. So carefully identify what shortcomings led to the tragedy of your first divorce and prepare to avoid them in the future.

5- If you've experienced divorce for unbiblical reasons and you and your former spouse are Christians and have still not remarried, you should pray for and work toward reconciliation. God loves to work miracles, so give Him the chance. Submit yourself to the counsel of God's Word, mature Christian friends and church leaders, and then pray that the Holy Spirit would grant you both a fresh attitude of forgiveness and healing.

6- If your divorce was for unbiblical reasons and you've since remarried, stay put. Don't leave your present marriage or try to break up your former spouse's present marriage. As one author put it, "You can't unscramble an egg." Humbly admit your mistake, confess your sin, stay in your present marriage and seek to honor God from now on.

5. What about HDC's role in it all?

God designed the church to help stimulate believers to holy living. (Hebrews 10:24-25) Our hope is that God's people will want to live in obedience to His Word, even when their emotions tell them something else. To knowingly reject God's direction is frighteningly arrogant. God promises to resist such pride but give grace to the humble. (James 4:6)

However, as was the case in Moses' day, believers' hearts can still harden to the Spirit of God and teaching of His Word. When that happens, HDC's leaders will respond in a way that is consistent with the Scriptures and our core values. We will continue to pray for and encourage those involved, but we will also take a firm stand on Biblical principles. Should a participant of HDC's ministry pursue a divorce for reasons that have no biblical validity, he/she will be asked to resign any position of visible leadership or authority, but would be allowed to continue in fellowship. Our prayer is that the ministry of the Word and encouragement of the Body of Christ would give corrective direction and prevent further damage. However, should the tragedy of a failed marriage lead to a proliferation of adultery through remarriage, then the church discipline process, outlined both in Matthew 18 and HDC's Constitution, will go into effect.

Class Registration

Bride

Name _____

Address _____

Home Phone (____) _____ Cell Phone (____) _____

E-Mail Address _____

Groom

Name _____

Address _____

Home Phone (____) _____ Cell Phone (____) _____

E-Mail Address _____

Wedding Date _____ Wedding Time _____

Wedding Location _____

Reception Location _____

Officiating Pastor _____

I have met with the above named couple on _____
and have invited them to attend the next Pre-Marital Class.

Pastor's Signature _____

Counseling Covenant

We realize that our premarital counseling is a vital part of the marriage preparation process. Our objective is not to simply comply with the expectations of the counselor and teacher, or to fulfill the requirements of the church for weddings.

We sincerely want to know God's will for our lives regarding our future together. Therefore, we see the counseling process as a way to deal with many of the practical issues in marriage before they are problematic.

We realize that God wants us to maximize our joy and abundance in marriage. Therefore, we will search God's Word together to really understand what His design for us as a husband and wife is.

We realize that it is inconsistent to be engaged in sin at the same time we are trying to discern God's will for our lives. Inasmuch as sexual intimacy outside of marriage is disobedience to His Word and will keep us from focusing on those issues that are vital to our growth together, we will abstain from (or continue to abstain from) sexual intimacy during this period of courtship.

We realize that it is possible that we have misread the signs of God's direction in our lives to this point. Should it become apparent to us through the counseling process that we should postpone our wedding plans to allow for more time to discern God's perfect will for us, or even break off our engagement, we will be willing to consider those options.

Realizing, again, that our premarital counseling is a vital part of the marriage preparation process, we will do our best to be faithful in giving that process the priority it deserves by attending the counseling sessions and completing assigned work on time.

Signed,

_____ and _____

_____ and _____

Please print names

Date

Pre-Marital Survey- Bride

Date _____

- Personal Information

Name _____ Age _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Ph # (Hm) _____ (Wk) _____ (Cell) _____

Vocation _____

Are you engaged? Yes No

If so, what is your anticipated wedding date? _____

- History of the Relationship

1. How did you meet? How long have you been dating each other?

2. Briefly tell about your families.

• Are your parents still alive?
Yes No Yes No
Mom- Dad-

• Do you have brothers or sisters? How many?

Brothers _____ Sisters _____

Are any of your brothers or sisters already married?

• Do you have any children? _____ If so how many & ages.

3. How would you evaluate your parents' marriage?

4. How well have you gotten to know your fiancé's family families?

5. How do your family and friends feel about your relationship?

6. Have you ever broken off your relationship?

Why did this happen?

Why did you get back together?

7. Why did you decide to marry each other? (OR: Why are you considering marriage?)

8. Why do you think this marriage will work?

9. What preparation for marriage have you had?

10. What do you hope to receive from this pre-marriage preparation course?

11. What concerns or problems do you feel need to be worked through in your relationship?

-Previous Marriages

12. Have you been married before? If so, were you widowed or divorced?

If you were divorced...

- How did it end?

- When was your divorce finalized?

- Has your previous partner remarried?

- Can you identify any failings that contributed to the break-down of your previous marriage?

- What have you done to resolve those issues?

- Do you have any children from this previous marriage?

- What is the custody arrangement?

- Spiritual Background

1. Tell me about your church and spiritual background.

2. Why do you think Jesus Christ came to earth?

3. What effect has Jesus Christ had on your life?

- How would you describe your relationship with Jesus Christ right now?

- Is He your personal Savior and Lord?

4. What part has Jesus Christ played in your dating relationship?

5. What part do you expect Christ to play in your marriage?

- Moral Guidelines

1. As couples grow closer to each other emotionally and spiritually, the natural response is to move closer to each other physically. God intends this area of our lives to be enjoyed to the fullest, but within the context of marriage (see Hebrews 13:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8). In fact, we devote an entire session of the course to this topic.

Why do you think God would design sex to be enjoyed only within the context of marriage? Do you see any benefits to waiting?

2. Because the Scriptures are our authority and blueprint, because we care about you and because of the normal sexual pressures you face, we will ask you at different times in the weeks ahead how you are doing in this area. We sincerely want to see you build a strong foundation from the start in your marriage. How do you feel about this?

3. Are you willing to abstain from sexual involvement until your marriage?

4. What boundaries have you put in place in order to remain physically pure?

5. Are you living together? Yes No

Pre-Marital Survey- Groom

Date _____

- Personal Information

Name _____ Age _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Ph # (Hm) _____ (Wk) _____ (Cell) _____

Vocation _____

Are you engaged? Yes No

If so, what is your anticipated wedding date? _____

- History of the Relationship

13. How did you meet? How long have you been dating each other?

14. Briefly tell about your families.

• Are your parents still alive?
Yes No Yes No
Mom- Dad-

• Do you have brothers or sisters? How many?

Brothers _____ Sisters _____

Are any of your brothers or sisters already married?

• Do you have any children? _____ If so how many & ages.

15. How would you evaluate your parents' marriage?

16. How well have you gotten to know your fiancé's family families?

17. How do your family and friends feel about your relationship?

18. Have you ever broken off your relationship?

Why did this happen?

Why did you get back together?

19. Why did you decide to marry each other? (OR: Why are you considering marriage?)

20. Why do you think this marriage will work?

21. What preparation for marriage have you had?

22. What do you hope to receive from this pre-marriage preparation course?

23. What concerns or problems do you feel need to be worked through in your relationship?

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24. Have you been married before? If so, were you widowed or divorced?

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