

A Marriage Gone Sour

by Chuck Smith

The sermon explores the biblical principles of marriage, emphasizing love, respect, and the consequences of communication breakdowns through the story of David and Michal.

Duration: 48:46

Scripture: 2 Samuel 6:14-23, Ephesians 5:19-23, Ephesians 5:25-28, Ephesians 5:31-33

Topics: "Marriage"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the topic of marriage and the challenges that many marriages face in today's society. He begins by praying for guidance and asks for God's wisdom in understanding His commandments for a happy and lasting marriage. The preacher then delves into the story of David bringing the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem and highlights David's joyful and humble worship before the Lord. He emphasizes the importance of husbands loving their wives unconditionally and being faithful to them, while also stressing the need for wives to respect and honor their husbands. The sermon concludes with a cautionary tale of David's wife, Michal, who allowed bitterness and resentment to destroy their relationship, highlighting the importance of communication and mutual respect in a marriage.

Transcript

Let's turn now in our Bibles to Ephesians chapter 5. We'll begin our scripture reading at verse 19. I'll read the 19th and the outnumbered verses and we ask you to join with Pastor Brian in the reading of the even-numbered verses until we stand as we read God's Word. 1. Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.

2. Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. 3. Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. 4. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands as unto the Lord.

5. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church, and he is the Savior of the body. 6. Therefore, as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. 7. Husbands, love your wives even as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it.

8. That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word. 9. That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish. 10.

So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. 11.

For no man yet ever hated his own flesh, but nourished and cherisheth it even as the Lord the church. 12.
For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

13. For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they too shall become one flesh. 14.

This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. 15. Nevertheless, let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself, and the wife see that she reverence her husband.

Let's pray. Father, we thank you for the clear, simple instruction from the word. The commandments that you have given to us, whereby we can have a happy, lasting, wonderful marriage.

And Lord, we just pray that today, that our hearts will be very open to hear your word. And we ask that you would speak to us through your word today. Lord, we're living in a day and age in which many marriages are going through difficult times.

Many marriages are breaking up. Lord, we ask that you would help us now as we turn to the word to find your answers, Lord. In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen. You may be seated. Tonight we will be reviewing 2 Samuel chapters 4 through 6 as we journey through the word of God.

This morning we'd like to draw your attention to the 6th chapter beginning with verse 14. As David is bringing the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem to place it in the tabernacle that he has made, David danced before the Lord with all of his might. And David was girded with a linen ephod.

So David and all of the house of Israel brought up the ark of the Lord with shouting and with the sound of trumpet. And the ark of the Lord came into the city of David. And Michal, Saul's daughter, looked through a window and she saw King David leaping and dancing before the Lord.

And she despised him in her heart. In the beginning of David and Michal's relationship, it had all of the makings of a fairy tale. She is a beautiful princess.

She's in love with a young man who is a pauper, but he has become a national hero. He is daring, he is dashing, he is valiant. And her teenage heart is captivated by him.

Her father seeing her love for him and realizing that the young man that she's in love with is only a commoner and a pauper, decides that he will not accept the regular dowry of money, knowing that the young man has none, but instead says that he desires for his dowry a very brave heroic act by this young man. Which he is more than happy to accomplish. And so they are married.

And they have this glorious, wonderful love shared between them. But because it is not a fairy tale, but it is real life, as often happens in real life, the story doesn't end and they lived happily ever after. There came a breach in this relationship.

A breach that was so great. Bitterness that was so deep that she looked out the window and when she saw him celebrating, she despised him in her heart. She then used her tongue to cut him to pieces and he ignored her the rest of her life.

The sad ending to a beautiful romance. In the beginning, her love for David was demonstrated in a very practical way. Her father King Saul had become obsessed with jealousy of David.

Because of David's great popularity, he felt that David was a threat to the throne. And so he decided that he would kill David. And he sent and ordered messengers to go down to the house of David and to bring him up to the palace that David might be put to death.

Michelle, hearing of this desire and conspiracy to kill David, said to her husband, David, you better get out of here or my dad is going to kill you. And so she let him out through a window and she put a bolster in the bed that looked like the form of a man. So when the messengers came to arrest David and to take him to the palace, she said, oh, he is so sick he can't get out of bed.

And they looked and saw the form there in the bed and they went back and reported to the king, he's too sick to come. He said, I don't care how sick he is. Carry him, carry him in his bed.

I want him brought here. And so when they went back to bring by force, carrying him in his bed, they discovered the ruse that it wasn't David. It was just a bolster that was there in the blankets.

And so her father was angry with her. And she was willing to bear the blunt of her father's fierce anger in order to save her husband, whom she loved. David was then pursued by her father for several years.

He finally found refuge in moving over to the Philistines and living among them. And in those years that Saul was pursuing David, her father gave her in marriage to another man. And of course, in the meantime, David had married other women.

The years have passed by, almost 20 years. Her father is now dead and her brother has been acclaimed king over the 11 northern tribes, while David has been acclaimed king over the tribe of Judah and is now living in Hebron. But those people in the northern kingdom realize that her brother is not a worthy monarch.

And seeing how God has blessed David in the reign over Judah, they send messages to David desiring to come and to meet with him, to turn the entire kingdom over to David. David sent back a message and said, you will not see my face unless you bring Mashal with you. Now I think that this was a mistake on David's part.

I think that David, in requiring that Mashal be brought, is seeking to avenge himself this thing that his father-in-law had done in giving her to another man. And it is David's pride that has been injured, and it is David who is seeking to heal the injury to his pride by demanding that Mashal be taken from her husband and brought to him to become a part of his harem. It seems that Mashal had found true love in her new relationship.

But now she's being forced to leave this man who loves her dearly. We read that he follows along for a ways, weeping after her until the general tells him to go home. In the meantime, David has taken several wives.

He's no longer that young, dashing youth that had swept her off of her feet. He's now a seasoned veteran of wars. He's a sophisticated man.

And I think that Mashal, in her heart, resented being taken and being forced to become a part of David's harem. The scripture never condones polygamy. In fact, quite the opposite.

The scripture definitely teaches monogamy. One man for one woman for life. The Bible says, for this cause a man shall leave his mother and father and shall cleave to his wife.

And they too, not three, four, five, shall become one flesh. They too. And God in his foreknowledge and foreseeing that the nation of Israel would one day reject God from reigning over them and would demand that they have a king, 400 years before there was a monarchy, God in the law spoke to the king and gave definite commandments to the king in that day when a monarchy would be established in Israel.

Deuteronomy 17 beginning with verse 14, God gives instructions for the king. When you have come into the land which Jehovah your God has given to you, you're possessing it and you say, I will set a king over me like all the nations that are about me. You shall not set a king over you who has not been chosen by Jehovah your God.

For God shall choose from among your brothers one that he has set for your king. And he shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt for the purpose of multiplying horses. Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away.

And neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold. And it shall be that when he sits upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write a copy of this law in a book before the priest, the Levites. And he shall read it all of the days of his life, that he might learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes to do them.

That his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment to the right or to the left, to the end that he might prolong the days of his kingdom." So David, I believe, kept the portion of the law that demanded that the kings with their own hand copy and make a copy for themselves of the Pentateuch, the law, the first five books of the Bible. This was to be done under the tutelage and correction of the priest and the scribes to make sure that he had made an exact copy of the law. And then he was required that he was to read this every day.

He was to read a portion of the law in order that he might walk in a way that pleases God so that he could prolong his days as king. David thus was very familiar with the commandment of God that the kings were not to multiply their wives. And yet David was guilty of that sin.

David speaks of his meditating in the law of the Lord day and night, and the blessings of meditating in the law. But as Paul said, it is not the hearers of the law that are justified before God, but the doers of the law. And though David read and studied the law, if you are not a doer of the law, you cannot be justified before God.

David's disobedience to the law brought consequences of difficulty in its own. You see, the law of the Lord is perfect. It guides us into perfect relationships.

It leads you into happiness. The word blessed is the Hebrew word for happy. Happy is the man who meditates in the law of the Lord day and night.

And it tells about the blessings that will come. They're God's rules for a happy, wonderful life, good relationship with God, good relationship with fellow men. That happens to those who will follow the law.

David, in not keeping the law, brought a lot of misery on himself, as is the consequence of breaking the law of God. You're just bringing a lot of misery to yourself. Later on, the half brother, half sisters created a lot of problems for David.

One of the sons killed another son, and then he sought to usurp the throne from David. There was constantly bickering and fighting within the home, because David had disobeyed the commandment of God and was suffering, as always is the case, the consequences of not doing what God knows to be best to do. Now, David has been established as the king in Jerusalem over all of the tribes.

He has built a tabernacle for worship. He wants Jerusalem to become the center of worship for the nation. And so, having built the tabernacle, he now decides to bring the Ark of the Covenant, who, after its return from the Philistines, have been kept at Kirgizhirim, and he decides to bring the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem to place it in the tabernacle.

It is a good move. It is a good idea. It is a good thing.

But he is doing a good thing in a wrong way. When the Philistines had sent the Ark of the Covenant back to Israel, they had put it on a cart, allowing two cows to draw it. And so David had a cart, and he put the Ark of the Covenant on the cart, and the oxen were drawing it back to Jerusalem.

When the cart hit a bump and started to tilt as the Ark was sliding, Uzzah, one of the cart drivers, put his hand to steady the Ark of the Covenant, and in so doing was slain of the Lord. David became upset. He stopped the whole movement.

He said, I can't live with this thing. Keep it here. And David went back to Jerusalem, and they put the Ark of the Covenant there in the house of Obed-Edom that was nearby.

He was trying to do the right thing, but he was doing it in the wrong way. It's important that we do the right thing, but it's also important that we do it in the right way. So after a couple of months, reports come of how Obed-Edom is just being blessed by God, because of the Ark of the Covenant being there.

And so David again decides that once more he'll attempt to bring the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem. But this time he inquires of the priest as to just how the Ark of the Covenant is to be transported. And they tell him that it is to be borne on the staves between the men, the priests, who were to bear it.

And so David went with the priest, and they took the Ark of the Covenant, and David led the procession of people back to Jerusalem. Every once in a while they'd stop and offer a sacrifice and worship the Lord, and then they'd continue the journey to Jerusalem, until finally coming within the city of Jerusalem. David, leading this procession of celebrating people, dances before the Lord with all of his might, dressed in just commoners' linen ephods.

No, he put aside his royal robes, and he is now just honoring God and blessing God. And the people are rejoicing. They offer burnt offering and peace offerings, and they have the great feast.

And people, and David distributes to the people bread, and wine, and meat. And they go to their homes rejoicing. And David, just blessed with the success, and with all of this, just really lifted, and he's returning to the palace.

And now he's going to bless his family. But before he can get into the house, Michal meets him. And she said, didn't you look great out there, uncovering yourself before all of those handmaidens.

What a ridiculous thing. She used her tongue to cut him down. You know, the tongue is capable of cutting deeply, hurting, harming.

It can bring such great pain. And what a cutting remark for her to make, with all of the sarcasm. And it was such an inappropriate moment.

David was so high and excited, and now he's just been cut. The tongue is used too often to cut people, to take them from the heights and bring them to the depths. Solomon his son said, death and life are in the power of the tongue.

Tongue can build a marriage, or your tongue can destroy a marriage. Solomon said of a virtuous woman, the law of kindness is in her tongue. Jane said, a small spark can set a whole forest on fire.

The tongue is a fire and is filled with iniquity. It can be like the fire of hell, defiling our whole body. It is an unruly evil and filled with deadly poison.

In the same token, the tongue can be used to heal. It can be used to soothe the pain. It can be used to comfort the troubled soul.

It can be used to lift those that are downcast. The tongue can be used as a blessing, or the tongue can be used for cursing. Michelle has used her tongue as a sword against David to cut him down.

And have you ever noticed how that when one person uses their tongue as a sword to cut another, that that person usually will then immediately seek to use their tongue to cut back? It's like a sword. It's been used to cut. And so the other person draws their sword and they begin to cut back with their tongue.

How quickly marriage, which God intended to be a duet, the two shall become one, becomes a duel and you are using your tongues as swords to cut each other to pieces. David responded to her nasty remark with a nasty remark of his own. He drew his own sword.

David said to Michelle, I was dancing before Jehovah who chose me above your father and above all of his house. He appointed me the ruler over the people of Jehovah, over Israel. And therefore I'll play before the Lord and I'll be even more vile than this.

And I'll be base in my own sight and of the maidens of which you have spoken, they'll hold me in honor. Now David didn't have to be nasty. He could have just said to Michelle, oh Michelle, you misunderstood.

I was dancing before the Lord. I was just seeking to honor him and worship him. And he could have just left it there.

But he had to add, the Lord who chose me above your father and all of his house. That's you too. Solomon said, an offended brother is harder to be one than a strong city.

You can say that about an offended wife or a offended husband. You know, so often in the heat of a relationship, when one has cut the other and the other then seeks to strike back, it explodes. And you say things that later on you wish you had never said.

You rue the things that were spoken, the things that cut, the things that hurt. But you see, the problem is you can't take them back. You might say, I'm sorry, but you said it.

And out of the mouth come the issues of the heart. And you've exposed. And all of the apologizing in the world, all of the seized candy in the world, can't win back or take back the cutting words that were said.

The sad ending to the story is that Michal, the daughter of Saul, had no child until the day of her death. It appears that David remained completely aloof from her. Never again was he intimate with her.

He ignored her and just had nothing to do with her. Having many other wives, he felt no pressure to make up with her again. But what do you suppose prompted Michal to make such a cutting remark to David? There must have been something that was simmering below the surface.

Possibly the fact that she had to share her husband with so many other women. When they were first married, she was it. David had eyes for no one but her.

There was just that beautiful love between them. But now, years later, things have changed and she's just one of many. She realizes that.

She knows that. She had been taken from a man who really loved her exclusively and now brought into the harem of a man who shows the love occasionally but shares his love with many other women. That is hard on a woman.

That creates resentment in her heart. That creates bitterness in her heart. When a man is not faithful in his love to his wife, when he is attracted by other women, she feels insecure and threatened.

And bitterness is bound to begin simmering in her heart. And this is no doubt what happened to Michal. It was the bitterness that had been simmering suddenly just explodes on him as she cuts him down for his actions of being out there like a commoner and dancing with the other maidens that were there.

Fellas, your wives need to know that you're not attracted by any other woman. Nor are you looking for another woman. Either on the pages of a magazine or on a video or whatever, that you are not looking at another woman with desire.

They need to know that. And if they don't know that, it can create a simmering within that one day might explode as she walks out of the house and says, I'm through with you. And you sit there wondering what happened.

She needs to know that you love her supremely. God has given just two rules for a success, two, I might say commands for a perfect marriage, for a successful marriage, a lasting marriage. One command is to the husband.

The other command is to the wife. To the husband, God said, husbands, love your wives even as Christ loved the church and gave himself for it. That is love her with a total self-sacrificing, giving love.

Now, when God gave that commandment and note, it is a commandment, not a suggestion. When God gave that commandment, He knew the nature of the woman. He knew that her greatest need is to know that she is loved supremely by her husband. She needs the security that comes from that knowledge.

When Eve sinned in the garden and God pronounced upon her the consequence of her sin, as a part of the consequence, He said, your desire shall be to your husband. That is the greatest need you'll have is to know that your husband just loves you supremely and completely. That there is not another woman in the world that he is interested in nor could be interested in.

Being the weaker vessel, she looks to her husband for protection and for provision and finds that security in his strength. I don't know if you can assure her too much of your love. There's always, it seems, that desire in the woman's heart to have her husband's love expressed to her verbally or by gifts, little things.

But the constant need of the security of knowing that she's loved. And so if she walks out of the room ready to go with you, say to dinner, and she says, do I look all right, honey? You've already missed it, guys. It's too late.

The fact that she had to ask the question, you failed. When she walks out of the room, you need to say, wow, do you ever look gorgeous? You're so beautiful, you know. And I'll tell you what, she'll blossom.

She'll blossom. For the wife, God gives a command, and that is to submit yourself unto your own husband as unto the Lord. Now when God gave that command to the wife, God was considering man's greatest need, and that is the loving approval of his wife.

Her trust in him to be able to make the right decisions and to guide the home. Here Michelle is striking at the very core of the relationship. When David came in, high, elevated, excited, pumped up, had she said, oh David, I looked out the window and I saw what was happening.

Oh that was just the most wonderful thing, David, for you to bring the Ark of the Covenant. Oh what a wonderful idea, David, you are so smart and you are so wonderful. He would have said, come here, sweetheart.

And he would have felt the freedom to demonstrate and to show his love. But when she draws the sword and says, now didn't you look great out there, dancing like a stupid fool with all of those women. I mean, you see where it started the duel, cutting each other, striking back, a very sad and tragic thing.

David responds to her with coldness, with aloofness. It appears that that was never healed. And oftentimes that is the response of a husband who feels rebuffed by his wife, coldness and aloofness.

But you see, that only creates a bigger problem. When he becomes cold and aloof, then she feels insecure and then feels that she must challenge him all the more. And the more she challenges, the more he feels, you know, aloof and I don't need you and I can get along without you.

And this is exactly what David was showing to Michelle. He had no more intimate relationships with her. What came first, the chicken or the egg? I don't know.

You can, you know, go back. Well, the egg came from the chicken, chicken came from the egg, you know. What started this disintegration of the marriage relationship? Was it the husband's failing to assure the wife of his love or was it her challenging him that caused him to become aloof? That's not important.

What is important is that you break that cycle because if you don't, it can break your marriage. What is important is that, fellows, you begin to show your wife and demonstrate to your wife that you love her supremely. And if there are things, others that she's concerned about, you need to be very careful and not

to give any cause for her to think that you would at all be interested in anybody else.

That she is the princess of your life and that you love her supremely and you have no interest in any others. This week Kay is down at the retreat with 560 other wives of many of you fellows. They'll be coming home this afternoon, all pumped up from the retreat.

Now, if you haven't been, you know, doing it, be careful. You don't want to do too much at once. They'll get suspicious.

But let her know that you missed her, that the house wasn't the same without her, that there was a vital element missing in the house while she was gone. You're glad that she made it home safely. Trust that she had a great time.

But, oh, what a joy to have her back. You'd be amazed how transformed a woman can become when she's loved so totally and so completely. On the kitchen sink, Kay has had a transvaal daisy for several weeks.

It died this past week. But she loves flowers there on the kitchen sink. And I noticed that Friday the transvaal daisy had been placed outside.

The flowers are dead. So I made a special trip to the store yesterday to get a new plant for the sink, to put it in that little fenced kind of a thing that she has. So that when she comes home, when she goes into the kitchen and sees that new plant, it will be just a little message to her that says, honey, I was thinking of you while you were gone and I love you.

Just those little things by which you say, you're in my mind, you're in my heart, I love you. And when the wife feels that kind of love, when she has the security of that kind of love, then she'll feel free to say, well, honey, if you feel that you want to do that, I trust your wisdom. You're the smartest man in the world.

So you do what you feel is right, sweetheart. And you'll say, oh, you angel doll, come here, honey, I know. And marriages that have been pushed apart by the dueling, by the swords and the cutting, can be healed and brought together.

And marriage can become what God intended it to be. The closest thing to heaven you'll experience on earth. The wonderful love, the two become one.

One in Christ Jesus. With Michal and David, it didn't end like a fairy tale. Unfortunately, they didn't live happily ever after.

But that need not be the case with you. If you will obey the commandments of God, you'll receive the results that come through obedience. Father, we thank you for marriage, and we thank you for our wives.

And we thank you, Lord, for the blessings that come to us through marriage. This wonderful relationship, Lord, that you've ordained, whereby two can become one. The most intimate, lasting relationship that we can experience on this human level.

Lord, we realize that there are marriages here represented today that are almost on the rocks. It seems like a lot of blood has flown from the cuttings by the tongue. Wives are wounded, husbands are wounded, as they have been dueling with each other.

But Lord, we know that you came to make the wrongs right. You came to give us the oil of joy for sorrow. You came to give us beauty for ashes.

And where some marriages, Lord, are almost ashes, we ask that out of the ashes you would bring forth beauty and a restoration. And the kind of a relationship, Lord, that will honor you and bring joy to each other. Heal, Lord, from the cuts.

Heal the relationships and restore, Lord, in Jesus' name. Amen. Shall we stand? The pastors are down here at the front today to pray for you, and especially for your marriages.

If your marriage is in trouble, if indeed you've sort of been driven apart, there's a lot of hurt, a lot of pain, I would encourage you to come down and let them pray for you and pray for your marriage. God can heal it. Maybe you are here today as a couple and you're going through some real rough water as far as the marriage is concerned.

And you're wondering, is it worthwhile to go on? I would encourage you to come down and again, let them pray for you. God wants to heal your marriage. God hates divorce.

Now, I recognize and God recognizes, sometimes that's necessary. When they asked Jesus, then why did Moses say, give her right in divorce? But Jesus said, because of the hardness of your heart. But don't let that be.

Don't let your heart be hard. But let the Lord work in your heart this day. God wants to work in your marriage and God wants to heal and restore.

And He will help. If you call upon Him, He's there to help you. May the Lord be with you and watch and keep you in these days of terrorism and uncertainty.

May you find His protection, His love, His strength. In Jesus' name. The Lord bless thee and keep thee.

The Lord make His face to shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee and be gracious unto thee. The Lord lift up His countenance upon thee and give thee peace.

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