

Marriage and Divorce - Part 6

by Don Courville

God's design for marriage is a beautiful and holy institution that should not be tampered with, and rebuilding marriages requires a heart that seeks after God and gratitude for His grace.

Duration: 29:52

Scripture: Psalm 16:11, Isaiah 61:3, Matthew 6:33, Romans 7:1-6, Revelation 22:18-19

Topics: "Marriage and Divorce"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the Jewish wedding ceremony as a picture of marriage designed by God. The prospective bridegroom takes the initiative and travels to the home of the prospective bride. The speaker explains that marriage serves as a depiction of various relationships, including the relationship with Israel, God's redemption of mankind, the believer's relationship to the law, and the relationship between Christ and the church. The sermon emphasizes the importance of seeking after God and having a heart that is tuned in to Him in order to rebuild and establish a strong marriage.

Transcript

What would you tell the man that's just got saved? He's already been divorced one time, got remarried, and now he's just had his second wife to divorce him. What would you tell him he should do with his life? Well, you stay tuned. We're going to cover the area of marriage and divorce and especially in the area of rebuilding marriages.

Heavenly Father, we ask that you would guide us today as we cover your word in the area of marriage and divorce. We pray for any that do not know Jesus as their Savior, that you would draw them to the Lord Jesus Christ, that they would see that before you that they are lost without Christ, that they must repent of their sins and trust the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior. That as many as received him, to them he gave the power to become the sons of God.

We commit this program to you, ask you to open up our ears that we might hear in Jesus name. Amen. David said in Psalms 32, Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.

Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, in whose spirit there is no guile. When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me, my moisture turned into the drought of summer, Selah.

I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord, and thou forgave us the iniquity of my sin. One of our biggest needs as human beings is forgiveness.

And in this area of our marriages, when we blow it, we need forgiveness. We need to deal with the guilt, but we also need to deal with the things that maybe we have done wrong in the past to help make things right. In the last few weeks, it seems like we've hit across a sensitive nerve as we've been going through different subjects.

We covered the subject of marriage and divorce, thinking only that maybe we'd stay on it a couple weeks. But it's an important subject, a subject that many pastors will not touch because of the sensitive nature, and also knowing what the Word of God says, many are afraid to teach the Word of God because they'll lose people in their churches. Well, we don't have any people to lose.

We don't have anything to lose by actually proclaiming the truth. As one evangelist friend of mine said, it's better to offend man than to offend God. But we're going to cover this area again this week and next week too, especially in the area of rebuilding a marriage.

There are some principles that are laid out in the Word of God that are very helpful in rebuilding marriages. We've got this little guide, a rebuilders supplement that it's called, that's been used to help literally thousands of people in their marriages, which is just a supplement off of a manual that's been put out. In covering this area, let me take just a few moments, not a lot of time like we did last week, but just to re-establish our foundation.

And that's this, that God intended the marriage of a man and woman together to be unto death. And we've already established that back in our first programs, that God clearly taught that they would become one flesh. Paul said in 1st Corinthians 7, 39, the wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth.

But if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will, only in the Lord. And there's many other passages that we could go to. Last week, we started out on the seven goals of a rebuilders from this supplement, and we just covered the first one.

And so today, we're going to try to go through as many as we can, just touch on that first one for a brief moment, and then move into the others. We've covered the area of why is this important. It's important because this area of marriage, it's a type of the church, and we'll cover this in these seven areas, but it's also important to preserve a seed.

God is seeking a godly seed, according to Malachi 2, 15. Matter of fact, God states there that He hates putting away, and He said that He made them one, and did not He make one? Yet had He the residue of the Spirit, and wherefore one? Why did God make them one, a man and woman, that He might seek a godly seed? And then God warned Israel, therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth. For the Lord, the God of Israel, saith that He hateth putting away.

Now, as we get into this, I'm actually responding to a letter, that one of the letters that I read on the air, was from a man. He said, I'm divorced against my will. I want to know where I stand according to the Bible.

Well, when you recognize where you stand, as many do, then you go on by grace. You just, you trust God's grace to carry you through many difficult and complicated situations arise, because of this area. The man that I started off telling you about, I'd received a phone call from Texas, from a man that didn't know him.

He called me up, and told me that this man, we'll call him Ron, had trusted Christ down in Midland, Texas. He went down there to visit, because of his being dumped by his second wife, the traumatic effect on his life, he went down to see a friend down there in Texas. While he was down there, he got saved, came back up, and this friend of his in Texas, looked up in the phone book, probably for the church that I was pastoring, called me, and told me he was coming to ask if I would work with him.

Well, I did, and I disciplined Ron for quite a while, and and tried working with him about in his marriage, and we worked through that, but there was one thing that Ron just could not do. He could not accept the standard that Scripture states. The things that I'm going to share with you, he couldn't, he just couldn't stand these things, and so he went on and tried another marriage, and he even waited, I think it was a whole 12 months before they got married.

They did that much, and I was just praying that God would show him, and they still went ahead on it, and then that marriage fell apart. I told him it wouldn't work. It fell apart, and then that was his third one, then the last time I'd heard from him, there was a fourth one, and so what do you do? What should you do? What does God direct us to do from the word in regards to our marriages? I had one man tell me one time that was married a second time.

He'd been divorced, and then he had learned what the Scripture says, and he had had children, and wife, and everything seemed to be happy, but what he said, if he had it to do over again, he wouldn't do it. He wouldn't do it. Quite a statement, and I know that many feel like this, because of the pressures that are put on children, the pressures that are put on mates.

These things are hard. Now, what do you do? If you want to go on and put your life together, like this man said, where does he stand? He stands in the Bible as a rebuilder, just like when, if you go through war, when London was bombed so bad, after it was over, then they got out their shovels, their picks, and their hammers, and they started rebuilding. First of all, though, you have to clear up the rubble.

Now, it's hard to build. I do some construction work. It's hard to build with rubble around.

Matter of fact, it's not only hard, it's dangerous, because you can trip over things. You're carrying lumber and moving equipment around, and you trip over those things. What we need to do is, as a rebuilder, remove the rubble of the past, so that we can rebuild as best we can.

Now, last week, on these goals, the first one, the very first one, is that you need to make sure that your heart is tuned up with God. That you'll have a heart that seeks after the Lord, to put Him first. Seek first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you.

God will give you grace to rebuild your marriage, and if it's impossible to rebuild that, then He will give you grace to do what you can to establish a testimony, and we're going to get into that in these seven points. But, you must have a heart that seeks after God. That's essential to go on to the next steps.

To be grateful for God's grace. Every Christian must learn to be content alone before the Lord. Someone said, every Christian must learn to be content alone before the Lord.

In the Lord, to get you, in other words, to get your strength in the Lord's, so that if you do run into something that is traumatic in your life, like a marriage, breakup, or divorce, or a loss of a mate, that you have that strength. So, if you'll learn this area before you're married, even, it will, it will give you the stability to go through anything. I really appreciate the, you young folks, one young, young person I talked to this week, who's been listening to this broadcast, made some positive remarks.

Oh, boy, how to build your marriage. Start when you're young. Start on the principles of courtship.

We, I don't know if we'll go into the area of dating, but dating is one of the most devastating things that there is to a marriage. Dating actually prepares you for divorce, and I know many of us, that we grew up, nobody told us about dating. It's sure not taught in the scripture, but it is learned from the enemy.

It's a process and a procedure of the world. God's Word gives us the guidelines. His Word is courtship.

Matter of fact, if we would go through the area of courtship, it's on one of these, these goals of a rebuild. I'll just take you through that briefly, if I can do that briefly, but anyway, it's to show you how that establishes a solid marriage. But to have a heart that seeks after God, so that you can be stable.

The scripture says, for in Him, that's in Christ, dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and ye are complete in Him. To have Christ as your Savior, to have Christ then as your security and your stability, will take you through any of the crisis of life that you might encounter. In thy presence is fullness of joy.

At thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore, David said. This, this is a personal goal that we should every day have, to secure the presence of God, to seek the mind of Christ, to know the will of God, to have the filling of the Holy Spirit, to seek the anointing of the Spirit of God for our ministry. God, you know, God encourages us to seek Him.

There's a passage in Isaiah 61 3, where he says that He'll turn, He'll give beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. And many of you say, Oh, Pastor, Oh, do I need that? I need something to lift me up. I need some beauty for these ashes of my life.

I need some joy for all these lonely hours. I need the garment of praise to replace this spirit of heaviness. Well, I'm praying right now that God will help you and encourage you, that actually He would turn your life around so that you could be a rebuild in your life, and also to help others rebuild theirs.

Now, here's the second goal of someone that's going to try to rebuild their life after a marriage and divorce tragedy. And that is, try to get built back into your life, in your mind, in your heart. What is the true picture of marriage that was in the mind of Christ? What is it that the Lord really wanted us to see? See, I'm convinced that many of us, we don't make it in our marriages because we don't even understand what Scripture teaches about marriage.

You see, God designed marriage as an object lesson of at least four relationships. And if you change the marriage, you'll change the standards that would be the stability for these four areas of life. So to change marriage standards would be to alter the truth taught by the object lesson.

And we've already gone through this many times over the last year, how dangerous it is to tamper with God's Word. Like Revelation 22, 18 and 19. Just God gave such a strong, strong warning about changing His Word.

And what we're doing by changing marriages is we're actually changing the Word. And many of these versions are changing the actual teaching of Scripture to fit in with the standard of worldliness, carnality, and the standard that you can divorce. God says, For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book.

And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life and out of the holy city and from the things which are written in this book. A very, very serious warning that God has given to us. By changing marriages, and in changing the Word of God, like we do in these other versions that are put out.

This is why I suggest you get a King James Bible and use that for your standard of God's Word. It's pure. God's Word is pure.

God's Word tells us Himself. He tells us that His Word is pure. Now, as you go into these areas, let me list these four areas that the marriage relationship gives a picture of.

It gives a relationship with Israel. You go back to the Old Testament Scriptures and even in the New Testament, Romans 11, where God established the relationship with Israel. There you have a relationship with Israel that's depicted by marriage.

Another one, it's a picture of God's redemption of mankind. And you can go through the Scriptures on that. It's a picture also of the believer's relationship to the law, Romans 7, 1 through 6. But, fourthly, it teaches a relationship, our relationship that we have with the Lord.

Actually, Christ's relationship with the church. And this is Ephesians 5, 23 through 32. By saying that there can be a divorce, you're saying that Christ will divorce you, unscriptural teaching.

So, as we understand these basic teachings of marriage that God has given to us, we begin to get the picture. Now, where are these things taught? These things are taught. The basic teaching of marriage is taught in the Jewish wedding ceremony.

Did you know that? And if you understand the Jewish wedding ceremony, it just opens up your mind to understand how important and how clear and how beautiful the marriage relationship is. And maybe what we ought to do right now, let me just take you through the Jewish wedding ceremony. Because when we can grasp the fact that the entire plan of redemption was precisely illustrated by the Jewish wedding, it shows you how holy this is and why we shouldn't tamper with it, why we shouldn't move it.

And we'll begin to see clearly that there's no place for divorce after marriage. There wasn't any place in the Jewish wedding ceremony after they got done. The only thing was death that would end that marriage.

So, let's go into these things and then we'll get on over to the other points to go as far as we can today. And then next week we'll finish up on those seven goals. By the way, I have some really interesting stories to share with you.

I won't be able to get into them today, I don't think, but I want to share these with you out of this supplement. They're powerful. I read one today, just powerful on illustrating the power of letting God have his way through his word.

Now, in the Jewish wedding ceremony, you have a picture of marriage. This is from the mind of Christ. God designed it and so he gave us this beautiful thing.

Here in the wedding, you have the prospective bridegroom. What he does is he takes the initiative and he travels from his father's house to the home of the prospective bride, the one that's been picked out. And so he goes there and isn't this what happened? Christ left his father's house, came to earth to gain a bride for himself.

And he chooses us and we will become the elect if we will choose him. You go to Ephesians 5 again for these passages. Ephesians 5 25 through 28.

And actually, I guess we could turn over there and read some of these things. We've gone through these scriptures, but Ephesians 5 25 through 28. Let me read you.

Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 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. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.

So here, Christ bought us with his precious blood. You say, now, does this bridegroom go and buy himself a bride? He sure does. He does.

Let's go to the second thing. The father of the woman will then negotiate with the prospective bridegroom the price that will have to be paid for the purchase of this bride. It's the groom's financial responsibility to purchase the bride.

Christ paid the price with his own blood for us. He purchased us. Then when the bridegroom has paid the price, they've agreed upon it, the marriage covenant is thereby established.

Now at that point, the man and the woman, as I watched this on Zola's tape on the Jewish wedding, they sat across from each other. At that point, they were regarded as husband and wife, even though no physical union had taken place. And this is the same thing with with Christ.

The church has been declared to be sanctified. We've been set apart. We're exclusively the Lord's.

But then what comes next? Then the moment the covenant was established, the bride was declared to be set apart exclusively for the bridegroom. Then the groom will present a cup before this bride and then he will drink out of it first. Then he will push the cup over there in front of her.

She can take her time. Take all the time she needs. But once she picks that cup up and drinks it, then the covenant is sealed.

And this is what happens. The groom and the bride, they will drink from that cup. And this is the betrothal benediction.

It's pronounced then at that point. This symbolizes that the covenant relationship has been established. So Christ symbolized this marriage covenant through communion at the Last Supper with his disciples.

Now after the marriage covenant was in effect, what would happen then? Would he take his bride? No. He would get up and he would leave. He would go to his home, go back home, leave the bride there with her

father.

And he would go back home to his father's house. And he would remain there for a period of many times up to a year and prepare a place. And this is what the Lord did.

He returned to his father's house following the payment of his purchase, price, and didn't he say that he had gone to prepare a place for us. During the period of separation, the bride would gather her wardrobe. She would prepare herself for the wedding feast.

You'd get ready for a married life. The groom would be preparing living accommodations. And Christ is preparing a place for us, for his bride right now.

This is a picture. And he sent pastors and teachers, the evangelists, and all of these, the gifts, the apostles, the prophets, to help to prepare the bride for the wedding. Now after the period of separation, the groom would come back with his best man and any other male escorts that he have.

And they would usually come in the night. And this would usually be a torchlight procession. And they would come to the home.

Christ is going to come for us soon. He's going to leave his father's house in heaven. He's going to be accompanied by a angelic host.

You can read John 14 3, read 1st Thessalonians 4, 16 and 17. But he's coming. And then the bride is expecting her groom to come for her.

However, she didn't know the exact time. Thus, the time of his coming would be announced by a shout. And isn't this what happened when Christ comes? It'll be, his coming will be preceded by a shout.

And we which remain, we're going to be caught up to go be with the Lord. Maybe we ought to read that passage too. In 1st Thessalonians 4, 16 and 17.

By the way, if you don't know Christ as your Savior, when Christ comes, you won't be caught up. You must have Christ as your Savior, if you're going to be caught up. Paul said, for this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

But the Lord, for the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. So shall we ever be with the Lord.

Now, the bride was expecting her groom to come for her. She didn't know the exact time. So she had to be prepared.

Are you prepared for the Savior? Then the groom received the bride with her female attendants, and they returned to the father's house. And so the lesson there is, we'll be caught up with the Lord, and we'll return with him. And then the bride and groom, they enter into the consummation of their marriage.

When they go into the bridal chamber, and they are together and become one in one flesh, then there's no way that they will ever become, not become man and wife. The only thing that will ever break that relationship then will be death. Now, if they would, if one of them would have been unfaithful before that,

there could have been a divorce.

But only before they actually came together and went into the bridal chamber could that happen. And when you talk about divorce in the Jewish custom, that was it. But they never actually came together.

Now, that's the second goal. Let's move on to a third one. That the first goal is to seek, to seek the Lord, have a heart that seeks the Lord.

The second goal is to rebuild that picture of marriage in your mind. Understand God's picture. The Jewish wedding gives you a clear picture of that.

Now, the third thing that you need to do in rebuilding your marriage, this is a very important step, is to try to rebuild communication with your former partner. This is probably where it went off track the first place. And there's a key in rebuilding communication.

A very important key that will unlock doors. You know, keys unlock doors. Over the years I've collected a lot of keys on my spiritual key ring.

These keys unlock doors. This key here on rebuilding your communication with your former partner, you must use or things won't work out. And that's this, learn what you did that offended your mate.

Find out what it was that was so offensive to them. This may be very hard on you, may cause you to have to deal with your pride. But many people divorce and remarry without ever really understanding what happened in the first place.

He'll say, I don't know what's wrong with her. All of a sudden she just divorced me. No, things just don't happen like that.

There is something done. And time, it took time to break it up, time is often needed by both the man and the woman to sort these things out, to get these things done. But you must find out where you went off the track.

And any attempt that your partner makes to explain that hurts is a, is an encouraging sign to you. Learn, no matter how inaccurate, they may be on their part. If you want to build your marriage back, you'd be willing to take a lot if you want to get it built back together.

Say if you give a phone call, or you go visit them, you make very clear your intention is not to put pressure on them to return, but you want to know what you did yourself. This is the first key, remember. You work on yourself.

You're not trying to build them back. You're trying to get yourself built back together. So whatever happens, you make sure that they understand that your purpose is trying to get yourself right.

In other words, you want to have God rebuild you. This is your process in trying to rebuild your marriage. You could even point out because of your insensitivity or something, and you could use this with others in helping them in their marriage.

Now, I realize this is a lot of words. These are a lot of words, but these are words of wisdom. These are handles.

These are practical things. For those of you, you know, we're talking about our economy being shaken. The economy is controlled.

We know that. It's controlled by those that are controlling it, that are trying to take us over, but there's somebody above them that's controlling them, and that's God's on the throne. But, uh, your marriage is in control, too.

It's under the control either of the lordship of Jesus Christ or yourself. And if yourself is in control, then you're vulnerable to Satan to get a hold in there. So what you want to do is bring yourself back under the lordship of Christ.

As you get in order, then your mate will be able to come back in order. Now, so, uh, this is a very sensitive area, building these things. You might just explain something like this out of this Rebuilder thing.

It says this, it has this quote, You've probably told me a dozen times, but I'm not grasping it. Maybe now that more time has passed and new circumstances have come into my life, I can understand more clearly how I hurt you. So, you can come at it from that viewpoint.

Another thing in this area of rebuilding your marriage is, the failure often begins when a husband or wife withdraws his or her spirit from the partner. Matter of fact, there's something I've got in the area of the woman and her spirit that we might could care, share some time if we go on. But when you, when you sense a withdrawing of a spirit, like if I do something or say something and I sense that this has wounded her spirit, I better deal with that right now.

Because if I don't deal with it right now, I'm gonna have to deal with it later. It's got to be dealt with. So what you're doing is you're coming back to deal with the times that, say, a man wounded his wife's spirit, to try to build that back up again.

The wife is really a sensitive, delicate being that God has made. And she can sense when her husband is sincere and when he's not. A wife knows whether her husband is happy with her or not.

And many times these wives go through years and years and years of being hurt until finally one day that's it. The door is just shut. They've been hurt the last time and they say, I'm leaving.

In, in doing this, you're gonna have to be repentant. Genuine repentance is basic to rebuilding in this supplement. It says genuine repentance is not being sorry for the consequences of sin, not being sorry for the consequences of your failure or your damaged reputation or whatever.

But here's what it really is. It's recognizing and turning from the cause of sin. Notice I said you recognize it and you turn.

And it's recognizing and returning from the cause of sin, wanting my own way, resisting God's grace, reserving for myself the right to make final decisions. And it's also this, godly sorrow. Godly sorrow for grieving the Holy Spirit, allowing the enemy of the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme his name, violating God's Word, damaging God's work in the lives of a partner and children.

That's what it is. Well, we're gonna have to be closing down here. We're not taking a long time on this today because there's a lot of just words here.

But I trust that God will use this as you're listening, those of you wanting to know how to rebuild your marriage. I can't take the place of your church. I can't take the place of your elders and your pastor.

But I can give you some guidelines and you can go to your pastors, go to your leaders and ask them to help you. There's some very important things here. There's some more keys.

I want to finish up on this point, but we'll have to wait till next week to do that. So until next time, I'm going to continue to pray and believe God to bless you. And would you do this? Would you, by faith, ask God to rebuild your marriage or to show you anything that's wrong in your marriage that you don't recognize that you could work on? Have faith in God to do it and he will do it.

But until next time, let the Lord bless you. He's wanting to do it.

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