

Marriage and Divorce - Part 7

by Don Courville

Rebuilding a marriage requires a heart after God, genuine communication, and a willingness to seek forgiveness and reconciliation.

Duration: 28:47

Scripture: Psalm 51:5, Proverbs 3:5-6, Matthew 6:21, John 8:11, Romans 6:23, Romans 10:13, Ephesians 4:31

Topics: "Marriage and Divorce"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the importance of rebuilding one's life after going through a tragedy. He emphasizes that our lives are a message, and when we experience the grace of God, it becomes a testimony of His power. The first step in building a life message is to deal with guilt, as it can hinder our spiritual growth and relationships. The speaker also highlights the need to conquer bitterness and invest in the life of our partner. Overall, the sermon provides seven goals for rebuilding one's life, including seeking after God, understanding the true picture of marriage, and rebuilding the original marriage when possible.

Transcript

David said, Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy lovingkindness, according unto the multitude of Thy tender mercies. Blot out my transgressions, wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.

Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight, that Thou mightest be justified when Thou speakest, and be clear when Thou judgest. Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. Behold, Thou desirest truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden part Thou shalt make me to know wisdom." Heavenly Father, thank You for Your Word, as we have the word of David crying out to You after he had failed You, committing the sins of murder and adultery.

And Lord, we just pray that You would use this passage today to encourage us that there is forgiveness at the cross of Calvary. We pray for any that do not know Jesus as their Savior, that they would be broken for their sin, repentant, and turn to Jesus, and cry out to Him to save them. Lord, You said, Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

You tell us the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Father, I just lift up any that do not know Jesus as their Savior, that they would call upon You right now, repent of their sins, and call out to You to save them. And now also that You would help us to understand

Your Word, the teaching of it, in the area of marriage and divorce, in Jesus' name.

Amen. Well we continue on today with a series that's been started up on marriage and divorce, a series that's probably very important for this reason. The marriage relationship is a foundational relationship.

God established the home, and He established the church. If you destroy these two things, you can destroy society, but especially the home. You destroy the home, and you can destroy a nation.

A church can keep rebuilding and keep growing as people get saved, but when a nation is destroyed, a land is destroyed, then God has to destroy that land because it becomes so wicked. Because if you do not follow the standards of one man and one woman, then you follow the standards of Satan, of anything goes. Men would men, women would women, and then you get into worse areas there.

Now, as we've been covering this area, we established a foundation, if you haven't been with us and you just caught us today, that God intended the man and the woman, when they got married, to be man and wife till death parts them. By the way, the Scripture says this, it teaches this, if somebody teaches you otherwise, there's scriptures that say this, the wife is bound by the law as long as her husband live it. But if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will, only in the Lord.

Now, last week we started off on a series, actually our second week, on what do you do, or how can you help others. Either this would be for you to rebuild your marriage, or how can you help others rebuild their marriage. And that's where you stand.

If you've had a crash in your life, and your marriage has not worked out, maybe you've been divorced against your will, as one man wrote me in a letter, it was not his will, and sometimes things just, they go bad, and they get out of control. What do you do? How do you stand? He said, where do I stand? You stand by the grace of God as a rebuilders. And there are seven areas that we were talking about to rebuild in your life.

Last week I didn't mention the seven areas, I probably should have. I'm using a supplement out of a manual, a marriage manual, actually it's a rebuilders manual that is just a tremendous manual for helping people to put their lives back together. And I'm using a supplement out of that.

But these seven areas, actually seven goals that you should have in your life, will help you to reestablish your marriage, will help you to help somebody else. The first one is to have a heart that seeks after God. The second one is to get back into your mind, a true picture of marriage, and we covered that one last week, how the Jewish wedding was that picture.

The third is to rebuild communications with your former partner, which is the one we left off on last week, and we'll start up on today. And the fourth one, as we get into it today, will be to rebuild your original marriage when scripturally possible. And I recognize that sometimes you can't do it.

The fifth one is to rebuild a teaching relationship with your children. How these things affect our children is just devastating. The sixth goal will be to rebuild standards in your church, and this is where you can have a ministry.

Many, they cannot have levels of leadership ministry because of their relationship. God has established that, for instance, the pastor and the deacons are to only be married one time. The only time that they could get married again is if their first mate dies, and that's only in the Lord.

But so you rebuild standards in your church. You can do that. You can be a great asset to your church as a rebuild.

Then the seventh one is to rebuild a life message to strengthen your marriage, and this is a powerful area. How out of your life God can exhibit his grace of what he can do with someone that's failed, and that's where we started off this morning with David. David is a testimony of the grace of God.

The law demanded that he be stoned, and God sent the prophet Nathan and said, Thou art the man, and God exhibited grace to him. And this is what Jesus did with a woman that was brought before the Lord, taken in adultery. He exhibited grace.

He said, Neither do I condemn thee. Now he paid for the price for her sin as well as ours. That doesn't give us license to sin, but it gives us grace to accept forgiveness and then to go on without sin because he said, Go and sin no more.

Now I'm not going to go back over and review what I did last week. I'm going to pick up on rebuilding your communication with your pharma partner. If you want to get in on this series, this is the sixth week that we've covered this.

You could write to me or call and ask for the tapes. We can make you a copy. But in leaving off where we left off with last week, we left off with the area of genuine repentance.

If you're going to rebuild your marriage, first seek that heart after God. Second, get your mind clear on what God's pattern is for marriage. And then third, start rebuilding your communication with your pharma partner by going back and getting some suggestions about yourself, where you went wrong.

And you must have a repentant heart about this, a true brokenness. Any phony business isn't going to work. Say if you're a man and you left your wife, she can read you.

Women, God's given them a special sensitivity to read things. And so it's got to be real. True repentance goes beyond human reasoning, someone said.

It must so affect our spirits that our motives are cleansed and we purpose to bring glory to God, whatever the cost to our own pride. And because we're so delicate a being, an offended husband or wife will usually try to discern the motives. What's he want now? What's he up to now? What's she want now? And so, but the reason they're doing this is to determine whether that person is doing something because of guilt, or are they pressured or have some kind of obligation, or do they want something in return, what are they trying to get out of me now? Are they just concerned about their reputation, how they look? Are somebody else telling them to do this? You know, or whatever.

So you must have a genuine heart. And they're going to read, you're going to get a negative reaction if there's not a humble humility there that's sensed. And why is this? Here's why.

The Bible says in Proverbs 18, 19 that a brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city. And their contentions are like the bars of a castle. Proverbs 18, 19.

A brother, you could say a former mate, former partner, is offended is harder to be won than a strong city. They've got their defenses way up, doubled up, and they're really watching. And there are three ways, actually, if you want to get a city, get into a city.

The first, you climb over the wall, you want to get it, and you can have a bloody fight. The second is you can lay siege to the city and wait, just surround it, wait them out. But the third is you wait for an opportunity.

That's the way, when I lived over in Turkey, one time I went out to the ruins where Sardis was, you know, the seven churches. And that place was supposed to be unconquerable. Sardis, if you go there, you can see a couple columns there, you can see the spot where the altar was for the human sacrifices.

Whenever the enemy would come, they would go up on this high plateau above the place, and they would stick it out. They couldn't be conquered. But the enemy got there one day, and they waited for that opportunity.

And one day while they were watching, somebody saw a soldier drop his helmet down the cliff, and they watched him carefully go down a path, pick up his helmet, and go back up this hidden path. So that's what you have to do. You have to wait until God gives you an opportunity to go in and begin to try to open this door up.

In other words, you have to wait until God gives you an opportunity to go in and begin to try to open this door up. And you have to do this while you're waiting. You're waiting for this opportunity.

You be faithful in, if you're a husband, in paying your alimony, you have to do that, in visiting your children, fulfilling your financial responsibilities to the family. And then one day, you'll get an opportunity. This is what happened to one man.

One day, a problem developed with one of the children, and that resulted in him being able to work out his marriage, get his wife back, as he waited and was faithful in doing what he could. There's another key in this area of building your communication with your former, and that's it. Build love for your partner by voluntarily investing things of value in your partner's life.

Someone said this in the supplement, with no motive for personal gain. You know, the scripture says, if any man will sue thee at law, take away thy coat, let him have thy coat also. Go the extra mile.

That speaks a lot. And this voluntary action that you will have will help you. And it's a key.

Remember, keys unlock doors. It will help you in conquering bitterness that's been built up against you, and also help to build up love. Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

If you want to spend a hundred dollars just on yourself, but you take that hundred dollars and go spend it on your mate, who is offended against you, bitter against you, and if you haven't, if she hasn't been remarried yet, or if he hasn't been remarried yet, there is hope to bring that marriage back together. And that's the goal of rebuilding. The ultimate goal is to bring back that marriage together.

I think one of the things that's very important to do is also build up your communication with the parents-in-law, because they've been hurt. Go back and ask their forgiveness. Humble yourself.

Bring the children to their home during times of hesitation, so they can have times with the children too. Just show, any way you can, your sincerity. One reason for doing this is that well-meaning parents-in-law, many times they'll destroy your chances of getting your marriage back together, because they've taken up an offense for their daughter, or for their son, and so you need to build up a relationship there.

Something else. Don't date somebody else. This is an obvious thing, but I need to say it, because it may not be obvious to you.

Don't date somebody else. Make it known that you do not intend to date anybody else. That you're not even interested in looking around, because all dating does is it just confirms to your former partner that you really didn't love them after all.

So be careful. 1 Corinthians 13. Follow the guidelines in 1 Corinthians 13.

Dating just may permanently damage the possibility of restoring your first marriage. Don't throw blame. Don't go around telling others, well, she did this or he did that.

It's going to get back. This blame and this accusation stuff doesn't build. Here's three vital don'ts from this supplement I'm using.

1. Do not date anyone while you're separated or divorced. 2. Do not blame your former partner for anything. 3. Do not pressure your former partner to return to you.

Here's two do's. Do more than what is required of you toward your former partner. Do everything to make your ways pleasing to the Lord.

And so probably one of the most effective ways to rebuild communication with a former partner is to learn and to exercise this last thing, prayer. Fervent prayer. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

Believe God to do it. That's why I need to get back to this story that I have to share with you. Probably next week we'll finish these goals up today.

If possible, they're sort of long. But I want to share this story with you. Fantastic story of how our marriage was put back together.

Just shows the power of God in working. Okay. Fourth area in rebuilding your marriage is to rebuild it to the original state as far as possible.

If a divorced woman marries another man, she's forbidden to return to that first husband even if her second husband divorces or dies. So you have the standards of Deuteronomy 24.4. This is just another crucial reason why a divorced woman should not remarry as long as her first husband is living. Because if her second one would die, she can't go back to the first one according to Scripture.

The Scripture says her former husband which sent her away may not take her again to be his wife after that she is defiled for that is abomination before the Lord and thou shall not cause the land to sin which the Lord thy God giveth thee. You see, our land is being so polluted. Our churches are being so polluted today.

We don't recognize it. The leaders, the pastors, the teachers in the schools are helping to pollute the land and pollute our churches by teaching unscriptural theology or scriptural teaching. It's not scriptural.

It's man's traditions, the way man has interpreted according to his ways to fit his lifestyle. This is how we started off under this. We can't change Scripture to fit our culture.

Now, you know what God wants? He wants the children to see that marriage problems, no matter how critical, can be used for good. So instead of getting a divorce, let God use that to show your children that you can work out every problem in life. If two people are Christians, they're both Christians, there's actually no excuse.

Matter of fact, if you get a divorce, you have to go to law against your mate and that's not right either. But God wants the children to get an example of working things out. And so if you're having trouble right now, give God the opportunity to work it out.

Here's a key in this area of rebuilding a marriage, and that's to involve other believing family members in there with you. Multitude of counselors, there's wisdom. Brothers, sisters, fathers, mothers, get all the counsel you can.

You may need to open yourself up on the communication area. What am I doing wrong? What do you see? And they'll say, well, brother, let me tell you what I see. All right, sister, here's what I see.

And oh, wow, wow, I didn't know I was doing that. And you can't react in anger or you'll shut them off from speaking to you. They won't want to speak in the mouth of a fool.

One of the most important ways for the extended family to be involved in rebuilding a marriage is to probably set aside a special time of fasting and prayer for your problem. You know, many of us don't have answers to our problems, major problems, because we do not include our spiritual family to fast and pray with us on these things. Have you ever fasted for somebody on something? We do, occasionally, and then to just stick in there and pray.

Many times what I'll do is I'll fast the way they're fasting. I'll find out how they're fasting, and we'll fast that way too. My wife and I will fast with them until they stop or a point is made.

Now, another thing is another, maybe this one other key, and this is an important key in rebuilding the first marriage, is for the partner who has custody of the children to teach them how to be loyal and loving and grateful to the other partner. Because we know that there's sides are chose. One mate will work on it.

Oh, you know, your dad, he just does this and does that. But if you're trying to rebuild your marriage, don't use your children in any way to get back at your mate if you're trying to rebuild. In other words, just use them as an encouragement.

And as it says in the supplement here, is the first marriage is for the partner who has custody of the children is to teach them to be loyal. So you teach them to be loyal and loving and grateful. Those three things to the other partner.

You know, even if there's some serious character flaws and things in there, just look over those. That's what the Lord does with you and me, isn't it? He overlooks those things. Fifth thing, fifth area, fifth goal is to rebuild a teaching relationship with your children.

Your first responsibility is to clear your conscience. Remember, we covered that with your former spouse. Then ask your children to forgive you for your offenses.

And you can't you can't play games with them either. They can see and they've been deeply hurt. And you must not place any blame on your former spouse with them.

Remember, explain to your children how God has been teaching you and humbling you and discipling you by the reproofs of life. So you have to win their confidence if you're going to rebuild. And you can use these things in helping counsel with your friends, your loved ones.

There's probably not a family that's represented, that's listening to this program that has not been affected somehow by marriage and divorce. It's been, it's been, it's affected my family. There's, there's been relationships in some of our relatives and it brings out some tense tense times.

So we need these things. We need this wisdom. Expect God to work.

Use praise instead of criticism. And so when your children would criticize the other mate, or even a step-parent, or anyway, help them to see things from, from, from both sides of the picture. Something else in the area of rebuilding a teaching relationship is to, to encourage the children to show you when you exhibit a negative character trait or anger, that it do something to them.

Wow, dad never did that before. He really is changing. Mom never did that before.

She really must be serious on getting dad back together or mom back together. And so if, if you're angry or impatient or they sense some deception or ungratefulness, have them pointed out to you that it'll help you in that area. And when you go get together with them, like we said, to watch for those opportunities.

Make sure every visit counts. That you'll have a learner spirit. That this actually should create some curiosity in their lives to, as they begin to see some faint flickers of Christ in your life.

Begin to even keep records. Be patient. Tell them what God's doing in your life.

Learn to listen. And use these things. There's a sixth goal in rebuilding your life.

And this one's very important. And that is to rebuild some standards in your church. Many of you, your pastors need all the help they can get.

The others are just overburdened sometimes with problems. But you could be a great encouragement as your testimony of God rebuilding in your life is used. One of the greatest tragedies probably in the church today is occurring in the wrong teaching and counsel on divorce and remarriage.

Just, I'm sure it grieves the Spirit of God. I remember back when it first started on this and I shared the story how my folks pastor changed his view. He'd been taught through his generations, his father and his grandfather had held what the Scripture teaches.

And because of the pressure, he changed. He said he was going to marry divorced people. And it just dropped the standard in his church.

It brought tragedy in his own family. And ultimately, I believe, led to a great fall in the church. We're developing actually a theology of personal convenience today.

By teaching through a lot of these other versions. They're just a personal convenience version. Because we don't like God teaching on hell, so we'll go get us an NIV or an NASV that doesn't teach on hell.

We don't like the blood of Christ, so we'll go get us a Revised Standard version or a new Revised Standard, whatever that doesn't have the blood of Christ in it so much. It's a convenience for us. But it's

destroying America.

We're actually arriving at truth by consensus. That's what this pastor did by changing the standard, the pressure of consensus, rather than thorough spiritual discernment, sticking by the Word of God. Many pastors, I'll tell you, they just will not talk about what I'm talking about.

It's too touchy, too dangerous. They might get kicked out. It's just too, it's a bomb that's already exploded.

And it's like a runaway horse. But they will, they just will not teach the Scriptures. And if they will not teach what God has showed them, and you do not encourage them, then they actually weaken their own power and their own testimony.

And it just opens up for more areas of compromise. Remember I said something back a couple, three weeks ago, that compromise is the path to weakness. You'll have a weak testimony, you have weak children, you have a weak church, you have a weak life.

We have a weak country, and that's where we're at. A weak country cannot stand. You don't have a defense if you have weakness.

And that's why we're being destroyed as a nation. We turn from God's Word. We turn from God Himself.

Many divorced people desire, they really do want to see some benefit come out of the heartache of their past marriage failures. And that's why as a rebuilders, if you will be serious, God can use this in your life to be a testimony to the passion. Go to the pastor and say, I want to share what God has taught me.

I've never said these things to anybody. And he might say, wow, I never would have dreamed that about you. I didn't know that much tragedy and hurt and bitterness that was in your life.

Would you share this testimony? I have 10 couples that are wanting to get married. Maybe you're in a large church. Would you share your testimony? And you may save 10 couples a lot of trouble.

Those of you, as this one letter, one man wrote in, that people will listen to him. That's true. I haven't gone through this.

You've got experience and wisdom in this area that I don't have, because I haven't gone through a marriage and divorce situation. But those who have experienced the grief of divorce, you should inform your church leaders. Be open with them.

I know that one friend shared with me that the thing that I shared with you earlier, and that was great counsel and wisdom to me to tuck away, to use to encourage others in this area. So be available. We should learn from the mistakes that we have for each other.

And you know what? You may even be used to God to establish some policies in your church. I believe these two policies should be in every church. First of all, that in view of God's command, and this is in this supplement, to honor and to obey parents, and not to forsake their counsel as they get older.

We will not marry a couple unless the parents on both sides are in full harmony with the marriage. Don't have time to get into that, but there's great wisdom. You see, our parents have insights and cautions that we need to listen to.

And if we don't have faith in God to change things and get things around in the area of a marriage, then you're going to not have faith in God to make your marriage go and stay together if you won't listen to the counsel that God will give you before you get married. And then the second thing, in view of the scriptural meaning and the message of marriage which the church is committed to preserve, and in view of the vows which a married person has made, vowing to death, we will not marry a divorced person whose former partner is still living. Very wise decisions these two would be.

The seventh thing, in closing up, the seventh goal is to rebuild your life. Your life as a message. Actually, each of us, our life is a message of some kind.

But if you've gone through this tragedy, your life can actually be a message of the grace of God. And any time the grace of God is exerted in our life, it's always a testimony of God's power. A life message is really an explanation of how God has taken your weakness, my weakness, and transforming us into the character of Jesus Christ.

Like David, in spite of what he went through, God was able to take him and rebuild him up. And God can do that. The first step in building a life message, you know what that is? Take care of that guilt.

Whatever's in your mind that's been bugging you, that you can't get rid of, take care of that guilt. Guilt will dull your spiritual life. It will slow down your capacity to love God and others.

It'll decrease your ability to know when you do offend. It'll distort your ability to understand the truth. You must deal with guilt.

The second thing in rebuilding your life message is to conquer all bitterness. In the revival ministry, this one you have to pound on all the time. Bitterness must be confessed as sin and cleansed by the blood of Christ.

A further step in conquering bitterness is to invest voluntarily in the life of the partner. This is why I talked about doing those extra things. Doing those extra things for where your treasure is.

Then your reward will be also. Well, we're going to be closing down now. Those seven goals.

I trust that they'll help you. Next week I'm going to come back and share with you a story. I'm going to read you the story, so I hope you're not bored with that story.

But I don't want to tell it and leave out some things. But until next week, would you pray that God would give you a heart to search things out in your own marriage? Spend some time with the Lord. Get off two or three hours this week and just look at your life in relation to your marriage and your children.

Or ask God to give you wisdom to know how to help that friend or their loved one, that brother or that sister, or your mom and dad or whatever that's having struggles in their life. Heavenly Father, I pray that you would help us in this area of our marriages. Help our churches to come back to the Bible and not to change the word, not to use Bibles that have changed the word, but to use your word that you've given to us today in the King James Version, where you've taught us the clear teaching, the standards.

And Father, I pray that you would bless everyone that's listening today as they obey you, in Jesus' name. Amen.

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