

God's Marriage Proposal

by Erlo Stegen

God promises to make a new covenant with humanity, forgiving their sins and making them new, and desires a deep and intimate relationship with them.

Duration: 1:13:28

Scripture: Jeremiah 31:33-34, Ezekiel 34:25, Hosea 2:16, Hosea 2:18-20

Topics: "Betrothed"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses a passage from the Bible in which God speaks to His people. The people had previously made a covenant with God, but it ended in failure and trouble. Despite their disobedience, God promises to betroth them to Himself forever, with righteousness, justice, loving kindness, and mercy. The preacher emphasizes the importance of having a new heart and experiencing a divine operation to remove the old heart and replace it with a new one. Additionally, the preacher addresses the issue of taxi violence and encourages people to use their vote to bring about change instead of resorting to violence.

Transcript

Hosea chapter 2 from verse 16 And it shall be in that day, says the Lord, that you will call me my husband, and no longer call me my master. For I will take from her mouth the names of the Baals, and they shall be remembered by their name no more. In that day I will make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, with the birds of the air, and with the creeping things of the ground.

Bow and sword of battle, I will shatter from the earth to make them lie down safely. I will betroth you to me forever. Yes, I will betroth you to me in righteousness and justice, in loving kindness and mercy.

I will betroth you to me in faithfulness, and you shall know the Lord. We'll read thus far. This word is a marvellous one.

Indeed, how can I describe it? It is so enormous, so awesome, we can never fathom the depths. This is God Himself, He who is the Holy One, speaking to people. And you are speaking to people who continually troubled Him.

They had made a covenant beforehand, but it just ended up in a mess. He had rescued them and delivered them from Egypt, and though they were befriended together, they ended up in the wilderness,

The Bible speaks about a woman not having hair that's shorter than a man because it shows an immoral tendency. That's what the Bible says. Now there are exceptions.

It might be a very old person. Perhaps they no longer have their family with them. Not only old.

Sick. Of arthritis. Can't lift their head.

Being arthritic they cannot lift their hand. They cannot see to the hair. They need shorter hair.

Now I'm not speaking about every exception. That is an understandable thing. There are exceptions to the rule.

For such a person they are in a difficult circumstance. One can only pray, Lord, touch them, heal them. But we are in the times.

But we are in times of Sodom and Gomorrah where you'll see a girl and a boy walking along and you really don't know which one is the girl, which one is the boy. And so they act contrary to nature. Now some might ask well why do you mention whites with regards to the hair? Well that verse continues to say does not nature itself teach you? Now in the African context it is different and people are, the girls and boys, they have shorter hair.

We were very criticised when we went overseas with our choir, the Scots-Isabantic Choir, because many of the girls have shorter hair and they said how can you do it? It's against the Bible. Well they don't understand the context. What should we take a girl and give her an artificial wig? It's a pity if people only try and work things out with their mind.

Some humans are violent, walking around with guns, they shoot, they kill, they murder. Now God says I will break the bow and the sword of battle and I will make them to lie down in safety. Some do not murder with weapons, they use occult witchcraft and so they resort to sorcery.

And that is also a bestiality, that is like being a beast of the field, murdering through occult means. And then you find some animals with long noses symbolising people who are always suspicious, they sniff through their occult means as to who is to blame for our sick child. Maybe it was that person who gave us food and they are always suspicious.

Some have the disease that affects them where they are always presuming that those who are talking over there are talking about them. If it's not something in the mind then it's something demonic. Now God says I will make the beasts of the field, the animals, to lie down in safety, I will make them to lie down in protection.

Don't upset yourself regarding marriage, if God has marriage in his plan for you then he will let it happen but don't spend sleepless nights and be brainstorming all the time so that you are dizzy and confused. Leave it over to God. When God was about to give Adam a wife he put him into a very deep sleep and then when he woke up there was his wife and Adam could say flesh of my flesh, bone of my bone.

He didn't go and artificially do it and you young man as well don't artificially try and remove your rib, don't be worried about these things, don't run after this or money or whatever. You leave that over to God otherwise you will be called to account for this time that you waste before him. Now there are so many varieties of creatures, we could talk till the sun sets about the large ones, the smaller ones, the different

characteristics.

What makes me glad is that God says I will make a new covenant among them all. Because a person cannot change themselves, they cannot redeem themselves and rescue themselves, God alone can do it. There is a book called Animal Farm.

But I want to tell you about animal school. A different story, these animals got together, they held a meeting and said well brothers you can see how things have changed, we are living in a different time now. That God may work.

And those involved in taxi violence, they need to stop it completely. I spoke to one of these people complaining about the laws and regulations regarding this whole industry, the violence that goes around. I said well you voted the government into power so I say don't use guns, don't burn things, use the ballot box.

Use your register and use your vote to bring in the government that you want to vote for. Now back to the animal story. Now in this animal story they got together, they said look you can see how terrible things are.

The strife, the violence and all these things, let's start an animal school. Let's teach them civilization. There are terrible problems on earth and if we live in this type of way we have no safety, we are ill at ease.

These animals said well we've had so many problems which our forefathers didn't have but now we have all these new problems. The animals got together, they agreed and they said yes we all vote for this, we'll build a school. So in agreeing about getting a school for animals together, they then said well then we need an educational curriculum, what are we going to study? Is there going to be history, geography, what languages? So they said the first instruction will be about running.

Secondly, how to climb a tree. Thirdly, how to swim. Fourthly, to fly.

To fly being the fourth one. So they said look to make things fair and square and to equalize everything we need to do all these disciplines. So regarding running, climbing, swimming and flying it will be for all the animals.

The duck came first. And when it came to swimming it was the best, in fact this duck could swim faster than its teacher. It was excellent, 100%.

It got 100% pass. The duck was very pleased with itself. And then regarding the flying discipline the duck had a bit of a problem.

If it was already at a height it was able to make a flap or two but if it had to take off it just couldn't. They said but still, you're possible, perhaps you'll get a C. Now regarding running. Now this duck tried to run as instructed but All it could do was to waddle around to such a point that the teacher said well, you're doing so bad, you're going to fail, you'll have to stay for extra lessons after school.

They made this duck to run around, it had to run over stones and thorns and the poor thing went through a terrible time. And when it came to school, it was the best. And when it came to homework, it was the best.

But this poor duck had such a tough time that even extra lessons after school didn't help. It could still only waddle. Even homework didn't help.

Eventually even its swimming abilities became worse and it couldn't even swim properly. The second animal to come was a rabbit. When it came to running, the rabbit was fantastic.

It outran all the other animals. When it got to swimming, it failed. The rabbit couldn't even get into the water properly.

So it was said, rabbit, you're going to fail because you can't even swim. Eventually the school rabbit was so tense it had a nervous breakdown because it could not swim. You try and give a lesson or two to a rabbit on how to swim.

And then after that, the third animal was a weasel or a mongoose or a squirrel. Regarding climbing, it was brilliant. It just would climb up the trees so easily.

And it came first in that discipline. But when it was told to fly, the squirrel tried its best to try to hop and jump but it just couldn't take off, it couldn't fly. The squirrel was so desperate that it decided that maybe a flying leap would help.

So it climbed high into the tree, flung itself, but unfortunately fell to the ground. Maybe it was thinking of the rumour of Shembe. We have a rumour or legend about Shembe where he apparently said that he could fly from a mountain and he just fell to the ground and died.

Well, that rabbit was just failed. It was the worst marks it could get. And then a hawk came.

So this hawk, a type of raptor bird, it was told for first instruction, learn to climb the tree. And it just didn't work. No amount of punishment could help this hawk to climb up.

It wanted to fly up there. It said, no, you've got to learn to climb. It just could not.

Eventually, all the animals failed. One of them had high blood pressure. The other one had ulcers in the stomach.

All right? Eventually, the principal, realising what has been happening, he called his colleagues together. He said, look, we are failing. We thought we'd be able to civilise them, but it's just an awful failure.

A person who is promiscuous, sexually promiscuous, loose, you try and stop them in their type of living, they'll slip through your fingers, they'll climb out the window if necessary. Right? Try and keep a cat away from rats, it just doesn't work. Tell a dog not to be a carnivore, not to eat any meat, you'll find it even gnawing on dry bones.

Find a young person, you tell them, part from worldly ways, they just say, I can't, I'm just, I failed to do it. Yesterday, somebody that I bumped into, somebody that I met said, oh, my daughter has such terrible problems, can I send her to your school? I said, well, firstly, how old is she? Eighteen, he said. This person said, being a believer, I married in the Christian way, we did our best to bring up our children with a good, godly, biblical principle, but she just would not listen.

This Christianity would not go into her. This person said, so, pastor, will you allow her to come to your school? Please, she's in such trouble, she needs to come. I said, well, you'll have to go and speak to the school board, I'm involved in the preaching.

This desperate parent said, she listens to no one and nothing, she needs to be preached to, she needs the gospel, please allow her to come. This person said, I can't, I failed to do it. This person said, being a believer, I married in the Christian way, we did our best to bring up our children with a good, godly, biblical principle, but she just would not listen to no one and nothing, she needs to be preached to, she needs to be preached to.

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This person said, being a believer, I married in the Christian way, we did our best to bring up our children with a good, godly, biblical principle, but she just would not listen to no one and nothing, she needs to be preached to, she needs to be preached to. Now let's listen to this word, because it is a promise. Now we've had an engagement service today.

She being engaged to him and like Mary who was betrothed to Joseph. Verse 19 and three times in verse 19 I will betroth you. I am committed to you.

I betroth you to me. Yes, I will betroth you and 20 I will betroth you to me. I will betroth you.

I am committed to you. I will betroth you to me. Yes, I will betroth you to me.

Yes, I will betroth you to me. I will betroth you to me. Yes, I will betroth you to me.

Yes, I will betroth you to me. Yes, I will betroth you to me. When you see a married couple, there's fellowship, there's the desire to always be together and so too God wants fellowship with you, to be together with you.

Now, they are the earthly marriages. We do know what it is for people to be betrothed here on earth. But it speaks of a far greater marriage, the marriage, the wedding feast of the Lamb where you as the bride, you are presented to the bridegroom, to the Lord himself.

There is eternal fellowship. Now God says to you, you who behave like animals, I will make a new covenant with you. Listen to what Jeremiah 31 verse 31 has to say.

Most of the book of Jeremiah is full of lamentations and bewailing their condition and sorrow but then the morning star arises, the sun shines and the Lord says, I will make a new covenant. Behold the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. And with the house of Judah, not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day, that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt.

My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the Lord. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord. I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts and I will be their God and they shall be my people.

I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts and I will be their God and they shall be my people. No more shall every man teach his neighbor and every man his brother saying, know the Lord, for they shall all know me from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the Lord, for I will forgive their iniquity and their sin I will remember no more. No more shall every man teach his neighbor and every man his brother saying, know the Lord, for I will forgive their iniquity and their sin I will remember no more.

Isn't this marvelous? No more shall a person say, don't do this and tell the child, you're not allowed to do that. For the Lord says, I will inscribe, I will write my law right into their minds and into the innermost part of their being. Do you hear that? You cannot change yourself.

A pig cannot change itself. Try and civilize a pig. You can puff and powder it, perfume it, put socks on, teach it how to behave in the house, but the first opportunity when it's released, where will it go? Straight into the mud and it'll go headfirst.

You might be trying to tell your child, you dress the child, you tell the child how to behave in the house, but the first opportunity when it's released, where will it go? Straight into the mud and it'll go headfirst. You feed the child, but if it has the heart of a pig, it just goes for the mud, for that is its nature. A certain white man took some duck eggs and put it beneath a hen.

And so this chicken hatched these little ducklings and they went around with the hen, but then when it got close to water, the ducklings went straight into the pond and the mother hen was so flabbergasted, so upset, had high blood pressure, it didn't understand why these little things went into the water. And so these ducklings swam happily right deep into this lake and the mother hen was really getting into a flap, going up and down the shore, eventually landing on the bottom of the lake. And the mother hen was lying on her back saying, what will I do with these children? You need that divine operation where he takes out the old heart, puts in the new, and when you can say, my husband, where he says, I'm betrothed to you forever, gone are the swords and the bow and there's peace and joy forever.

Actually, we need hours. We need hours to go to describe this and to look at this matter so that you are changed from within. Do you hear this also, you young people, so that it would come from the heart where a child would even say to its mom, mom, no, not this type of garment, rather like this.

But you have no TV. I heard of some children who were so thoroughly changed by the Lord, they went to their parents and said, father, mother, can't we remove this TV from the house? It is so dreadful to have it here. That's coming from the children.

You parents who bring in the world, I don't know how you're going to stand before God one day regarding this TV in your house. But unfortunately, some years later, they brought it back. Even though the Lord promises that my covenant will be an eternal covenant, it will never change.

Such a life with God. He who has an ear, let him hear. He who doesn't, well, he'll end in hell, but he mustn't say that we haven't spoken the truth and complain about me.

Remember Spurgeon's mother when he was 15 years old and he overheard her praying in the room and he was next door. She says, Lord, if my children, my two boys, carry on in sin, it's not because of ignorance. And then on judgment day, I'll be a swift witness against them.

Are you like that, you mothers? Uncompromisingly. Say on judgment day, I'll be a swift witness. Not justifying them.

Not excusing them. I'll damn them. Is this your covenant with your children? If it isn't, I'll say, you're like an animal, a heretic.

I'll say, you're like an animal, a heretic. If it isn't, I'll say, you're like an animal, a heretic. I'll say, you're like an animal, a heretic.

He became a prince of preachers because he had a mother who stood for God and didn't go with the world and didn't compromise. It's a curse in the church, these silly women. And especially if their fathers are deaf and dumb and see them going to hell and is like a dog that cannot bark.

God is proposing to you. He says, I want to betroth you. I want to get engaged to you.

What do you say? I want to betroth you. I want to get engaged to you. What do you say? I want to get engaged to you.

What do you say? I want to betroth you. I want to get engaged to you. What do you say? I want to get engaged to you.

What do you say? I want to get engaged to you. Three times the Lord says, I want to betroth you. He says it three times, perhaps symbolizing the triune God, God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit.

I wonder, what is your reply? God will write an eternal note about what your response is. He says, I want to get engaged to you. What do you say? I want to get engaged to you.

He says, I want to get engaged to you. Can you respond to God and say, yes, Lord, put that ring on my finger. Let me be betrothed to you forever.

I divorce myself from the devil. I want to belong to you alone. Shall we pray? Lord, our God, you see the hearts of the young people, the older people, everyone here today.

Lord, you see if there are those who show you their hand and their finger of betrothal to ask for your ring to be put on. And like the prodigal returning back home where the father put that ring on his son. Amen.

I'll ask that closing choir, the one that had been announced, to come forward and to render their items. Lord, you see each and everyone, no one is hidden before you. You also hear the answer of every individual.

Lord, whether they respond to you and say, on this day of the engagement of Mr. Mwela, I say, I promise myself to you, I betroth myself to you, Lord Jesus. And as she has received that ring of promise, Lord, that we would be promised and betrothed to you in an eternal covenant, that it would never change to that heavenly marriage. Amen.

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