

(clip) Your Marriage Is Worth the Work

by John Piper

This sermon uses the analogy of a grassy field to describe marriage, where the initial beauty and hope can be overshadowed by challenges and flaws (cow pies) that arise in the relationship. The act of shoveling these 'cow pies' into a compost pile symbolizes forgiveness, forbearance, and acknowledging imperfections in each other. The importance of not dwelling on the negatives but focusing on the beauty of the field and choosing to only visit the compost pile when necessary is emphasized as a gift of grace in marriage.

Scripture: Ephesians 4:32, Colossians 3:13, 1 Peter 4:8, Proverbs 10:12, 1 Corinthians 13:7

Topics: "Forgiveness in Marriage", "Embracing Imperfections"

Description

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Transcript

Picture your marriage as a grassy field, and you enter at the beginning full of hope and joy and you look out on the field and you see beautiful flowers and grass stretching and rolling hills and trees and it is beautiful. You want to walk in this all your days. The grass, the flowers, the hills, the sky, the warm breeze is not what happens to you, it's the relationship.

That's the analogy. I'm interpreting it for you. I'm describing your relationship and on the wedding day, I want this woman and I want this man and we want to be together and walk in the beautiful fields of green grass and spring flowers and trees and hills and bright sunshine and cool breezes.

That's the way it's going to be. And before long, you step in a cow pile and in some seasons of your marriage, they seem to be everywhere. This is not grass, this is just manure.

Late at night, they become especially prevalent when there's no sleep. There are more cow piles when you don't get enough sleep. These are sins, flaws, idiosyncrasies, weaknesses, annoying habits in your spouse and you try to forgive them and you try to forbear and the problem is, they can tend to dominate the relationship.

Everywhere you step, it smells. May not be true that they're everywhere, it just feels that way. I think the combination of forbearance and forgiveness leads to the creation of a compost pile.

Here at the compost pile, you and your wife, husband, you begin to shovel cow pies into this pile and you put a fence around it, hold them in and you shovel them in and you look at each other and you simply admit that there are a lot of cow pies. You just say, there are a lot of cow pies in this field. You and I bring a lot of cow pies to this relationship.

So you start shoveling them into this fenced in compost pile and you say to each other, you know, we got to do this because we're losing sight of the fact that we keep focusing on these cow pies. That's all we're thinking about. I mean, we're looking for them to step in.

So let's get them and throw them in one place. Let's throw them in a pile, compost pile. Compost can do some good.

So let's throw them there. And when we have to, we'll go there. We'll go there and we'll smell it and we'll feel bad and we'll deal with it as best we can.

Then we'll walk away from the pile. We'll walk away from it and we'll set our eyes on the rest of the field. This is right at the heart of what I'm trying to say.

Satan and our flesh can begin to take a few disappointments, a few frustrations and multiply them so out of proportion that we think there's no green grass anywhere. There are no flowers anywhere. There are no trees.

There are no hills. There's no sunshine, which is an absolute lie. And then we say to each other, we're going to walk away from that pile, set our eyes on the rest of the field and we're going to pick some of our favorite paths and hills that we know are not strewn with cow pies and we're going to be thankful that that part of the field, that part of the field is sweet.

Might be a small part now, but that part is sweet. Our hands may be dirty and our backs may ache from all this shoveling, but we know one thing. We will not pitch our tent by the compost pile.

We will go there when we must. This is the gift of grace that we will give each other again and again and again. We will only go there when we must.

We won't go live there. We won't retreat there. We won't lick our wounds there.

We won't pitch our tent there. We will only go there when we must. And that gift we will give to each other again and again and again.

Why? Because you and I are chosen and holy and loved.

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