

# Gods Design for Marriage

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 03 August 2025

Preacher: Wayne Thiessen

- [ 0 : 00 ]     Good morning. Welcome to the house of the Lord. Welcome to the service this morning.
- ! Are we glad to be here?! It is a privilege for us to be gathered.! I enjoyed the singing and I was reminded, you know, our hope as believers is the eternal one.
- It's not here on earth. And Philippians 3, verse 20 and 21, stated very well. Just read that for us. Philippians 3, 20 and 21.
- For our citizenship is in heaven, one from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that I may be conformed to his glorious body, according to the working by which he is able even to subdue all things to himself.
- The hope of the believer. Jesus will come and he will transform us.
- [ 1 : 28 ]     And he will make us into a heavenly being. And so that is what we long for. As we give thought to that, what are some of the things that we're looking forward to regarding heaven?
- Regarding the coming of Jesus Christ? Maybe some of the children have an answer.
- What do we look forward towards heaven? No more pain. No more sin. Peace.
- Peace. To laugh and to play. To be with Jesus.
- We had someone over here. No death. How true. To live forever with Jesus.
- [ 2 : 45 ]     Eternal joy. Sorry, Wyatt.
- No hatred. No darkness. All true answers.
- How about some more from the adults? We had a couple from adults, but what's some more from adults? Just to be in his presence.
- We'll be reward. No more fears or worries. They're done. As we'll be in his presence, right?
- Amen. Amen. To know him as he is. Yeah. Okay.
- [ 3 : 53 ]     Justice. At his coming. Yeah. Yeah. Now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face.
- Unending joy. Unending joy. Yeah. Continuous.
- Yeah. Continuous joy. It's hard to imagine, right? Yeah. Yeah. Yeah, absolutely. Absolutely. Yeah.
- Yeah. One of the biggest ones in my heart is that the struggle with our fallen nature will cease.
- Will be wiped away. And we will be perfected to be like him. And what a day that will be.
- [ 4 : 58 ]     But all the answers, of course, were correct and right and good. And we, so as God's children, we need to have that in focus.
- It's always to be in front of us. This is what's before us. This is God's plan for his children. And how great it is.

This past week or two, I like to go back to Israel.

But this past week or two, as we see Trump and Netanyahu put pressure on Hamas to make peace, to give up the hostages, what did we see out of that?

We saw the world, many countries in the world, including Canada, rally around Hamas and say, we're with you.

[ 6 : 04 ] We support what you're doing. We stand for a two-state solution. And thereby, we're contradicting what God has ordained.

As God has said, Israel will inherit. And thus, we see Hamas getting momentum out of that.

And they're mocking the world by displaying these hostages in a very demeaning manner. And so, we have, like never before, the world at large calling evil good and good evil.

And when I see that, I long for heaven, for justice to be done. And the day is coming.

God knows. He is in control. And so, it will come. We need to wait on the Lord. We take courage from that.

[ 7 : 19 ] Let's go to our passage in Corinthians. As we continue from two Sundays ago, the message titled, God's Design for Marriage.

We'll just continue in that in chapter 7 of 1 Corinthians. And as Paul writes to the Corinthians in response to their questions regarding marriage, concerning the things which you wrote to me, it's not good for a man to touch a woman.

And so, again, the background is, the church is young. It's the first century. In fact, it's the first 30 years of the church, of the life of the church.

And already, there is a teaching that it is not good for believers to be married. They should be devoted to God alone.

And that's the background here. And Paul writes to answer that. And we took the first seven verses. But before we go on with that, I want to turn to Timothy, 2 Timothy.

[ 8 : 50 ] Turn with me if you want. Sorry, 1 Timothy. 1 Timothy 4.

Just a reminder for us. 1 Timothy 4. A few verses, starting in verse 1. Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times, some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies and hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.

So Paul, writing to Timothy here, to the church, identifies two doctrines of demons, demonic. One of them is that we forbid marriage to Christians.

And secondly, to abstain from certain foods which God has created for us. He calls them doctrines of devils. And we see, as different groups have practiced these things, the harm, the damage it has done.

And so Paul is correcting the Corinthians in this, and he is saying that marriage is God-ordained, even though Paul, in the first verses, says, I wish that you were all like me, single, able to serve, and yet because of immorality, get married if you need to.

[ 10 : 45 ] And the expression that to not be married as an adult is a gift from God in celibacy, to remain a part.

And that's kind of where we ended off last time. And so Paul identifies three groups of people here in his next teaching on marriage.

And I'm just going to back up a little bit to verse 8. But I say to the unmarried and to the widows, it is good for them if they remain even as I am, but if they cannot exercise self-control, let them marry, for it is better to marry than to burn with passion.

So the first people group that Paul identifies here is to the unmarried, to the singles, and to the widows.

And it's safe to include widowers as well in this category, those that have been married, but their partner has passed on.

[ 12 : 03 ] And so he identifies them, and Paul says, it is good for them to remain as they are, single.

And yet, if they cannot exercise self-control, then let them marry. It is better to marry than to burn with passion.

For when we are burning with passion in the physical sense, we are no good to God. it needs to be released in a marriage relationship.

And so, the first people group is very, very straightforward. Paul's desire is, if you're not married, in his opinion, don't seek marriage.

Rather, serve God. But, if you're struggling with your hormones, get married. And to the widows and the widowers, likewise.

[ 13 : 11 ] The same message. Quite clear to the point. There's no guessing here. That's how he lays it out.

The second group of people that's identified here, and we're going to take some more time, this is to the married in verse 10. And this is to believers that are married.

So, a husband and a wife, both in the faith. Now, to the married, I command, yet not I, but the Lord, a wife is not to depart from her husband, but even if she does depart, let her remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband, and a husband is not to divorce his wife.

And, and we have, of course, a lot of controversy and emotions around this subject matter in churches, in society, and so on.

And yet, Paul, Paul has two verses here where he summarizes. For, for Christian, for a Christian couple, they are not to consider divorce.

[ 14 : 36 ] And, if there are issues to a degree that they cannot remain together, then let them separate.

but not with the mindset of finding a new partner. And, if you cannot control your passions, then you are to go back and reconcile with your partner.

For that is the message of the Spirit of God, unity. unity. See, every Christian has the Holy Spirit.

And, when we cannot work through as two believers, it means we're walking in the flesh. We're walking in the flesh.

This is the second group of people, and I'm going to expound on it. Just briefly, the third group of people, which will go at the end of the message, is where there's two unbelievers married, and one of them comes to the faith.

[ 15 : 53 ] How do we treat that? In light of their question. So, we're going to put that aside for ten minutes from now or so.

So, as we look at marriage and believers, let's look at some of the teaching of Jesus Christ. And, we have in three of the Gospels, and we're going to take the time to go there.

And, let's start in Matthew chapter 5. If you have your Bibles, turn with me. It's good for us to see this. Matthew 5, 32, 31 and 32.

The words of Jesus himself. this is the Sermon on the Mount where Jesus lays out the requirements for holiness.

And, he is actually, with chapters 5, 6, and 7, he is challenging the Jewish people in his teaching that if you want to enter heaven on your own merit, this is what you have to meet.

[ 17 : 25 ] That's the fullness of it. And so, this is the reflection of God's holiness. So, verse 31, moreover, it has been said, whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.

But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality causes her to commit adultery, and whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery.

And so, the Jews are thinking that there are certain reasons why we may divorce and remarry.

And Jesus cuts through and says, no, there are not. And the background of that is actually in Deuteronomy, and I want us to turn there as well.

Deuteronomy 24. Deuteronomy 24, and the first four verses.

[ 18 : 49 ] And so, Deuteronomy is Moses reviewing the law with the children of Israel just before they cross the Jordan to go into the land of Canaan.

So, Moses is reviewing, and he's reminding them. As the old generation has died off, and it's the new one that is going to go in. He says, when a man takes a man takes a wife and marries her, and it happens that she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some uncleanness in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce, and puts it in her hand, and sends her out of his house, when she has departed from his house, and goes and becomes another man's wife.

If the latter husband detests her and writes her a certificate of divorce, puts her in her hand and sends her out of his house, or if the latter husband dies, who took her as his wife, then her former husband who divorced her must not take her back to be his wife.

After she has been defiled, for that is an abomination before the Lord, you shall not bring sin on the land which the Lord your God has given you as an inheritance.

So here in Deuteronomy 1400 years before Jesus Christ came, Moses authorized that there is such a thing that you can write a certificate of divorce if you find uncleanness in your partner.

[ 20 : 27 ] And my understanding of uncleanness there would be impurity sexually. the Jews took that way out of hand and they had much teaching on that and so even in Jesus' day they took that way further that Moses allowed.

And there was basically two lines of thought two rabbis teachings on that and Shammai one of their rabbis he was a very strict interpretation only when there was unfaithfulness or sexual immorality.

That was his interpretation of what Deuteronomy meant. That's the only way a husband could divorce his wife. Now in Deuteronomy God set parameters because a wife that was sent out of the home in their culture was like homeless.

A wife could not earn a living back then. It's a very different picture than today. A wife without a husband a man in her life to look after her was in trouble.

If she could go back to her parents it would be one thing. And so by Moses issuing or authorizing a certificate of divorce it allowed for the woman to get remarried and therefore be taken care of.

[ 22 : 22 ] That was the purpose back in Deuteronomy. Okay? So that's a little bit of background. So Shammai one of their rabbis would agree with that.

Another rabbi Hillel Rabbi Hillel he was a very liberal rabbi and he taught the Jewish people that for any dislike at all about your wife gives you the right to put her away.

And so now you have two views put out by two teachers of the law. We can imagine what that will do to the Jewish nation.

And because of our sinful nature many will gravitate to the second. And thus the divorce rate among Jews was significant as well.

And so Jesus says whoever divorces his wife let him give her a certificate of divorce but I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality causes her to commit adultery whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery.

[ 23 : 51 ] This is God's standard. This is his design that there is not to be divorce.

There is not to be separation in his people. And as the church we are his people. Let's turn as well to Matthew 19 19 and just pick up the teaching of Jesus.

And I read part of this last my last message. So with the background of the two rabbis starting in verse 3 in Matthew 19 the Pharisees also came to him testing him and saying to him is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for just any reason.

So they're putting Jesus to the test or so they think. So which rabbi are you going to agree with is basically what they're saying.

and Jesus answers and said to them have you not read that he who made them at the beginning made them male and female and said for this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife and the two shall become one flesh.

[ 25 : 23 ] So then they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together let not man separate.

Jesus expounds here and they answer why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce and to put her away going back to Deuteronomy the Jews are asking so why did Moses allow it Jesus says Moses because of the hardness of your hearts permitted you to divorce your wives but from the beginning it was not so and I say to you whoever divorces his wife except for sexual immorality and marries another commits adultery and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery very clear language for the most part here Moses because of the hardness of your hearts have we ever run into divorce or separation or we know people that there isn't a hardness involved always always there's lots of different scenarios but it hardens the heart because there's a relationship that's breaking apart and it produces hardness that does not mean that cannot be reversed as we turn to the Lord it can and has been many times but it's a hardness that leads to the thought of divorce so in the

Christian circle should our hearts be hard that we would consider something like that there are circumstances where there is one partner claiming to be a believer that is hardening his heart or her heart there are circumstances out of our control sometimes but in general it takes two and there's two hard hearts in a general sense and so Moses allowed it and I believe from the Old Testament standard it was a protection for the woman that she was not out on the streets that she could fend for herself by finding a new partner and therefore be cared for but it was never

God's design just like multiplying wives was never God's design and yet we see kings and some of God's people doing that very thing and it got them in trouble it wasn't God's will it wasn't his desire and so we have this Jesus here in Matthew both in Matthew 5 and 19 puts in what we call an exception clause and he says except for sexual immorality that is the only cause for divorce and remarriage according to Matthew now I want to I want to expound on this a little bit further in in our secondary doctrines within a conference this passage has been interpreted to speak of the

Jewish betrothal stage and I don't have the full background of this but the reasoning behind it is it's only mentioned in the book of Matthew twice the book of Luke and Mark there's no exception Jesus says whoever divorces his wife is guilty of adultery and so on but in Matthew there's an exception except for sexual immorality the word is pornea which often is translated fornication which means sexual relations before marriage but not always and and so the thinking in our doctrinal our secondary doctrine we call it is that that it pertains to the

[ 31 : 09 ] Jewish custom that once they were betrothed like Mary was to Joseph they were considered a couple and if during the betrothal stage one of them was found to be unfaithful it was grounds to break up to separate and so that's that's the reasoning behind where our conference has their doctrinal statement because of that and they would use that even in Matthew 1 where Mary is expecting and Joseph wants to put her away secretly privately and angel comes to Joseph and says take Mary your wife unto yourself and the wording there is your wife even though they have not consummated their marriage they're only betrothed now so having said that many evangelical churches interpret this sexual immorality this exception clause as meaning any immorality any cheating in marriage is grounds for divorce and when I dig back some of the writings of our forefathers from the reformation it seems that's what they have held to is that any immorality is grounds for separation for divorce and so it's something we can maybe weigh through or think through but ultimately

God hates divorce because of the hardness of your hearts and so that's where that is at except for sexual immorality and marries another commits adultery and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery this is a like I said before a teaching that is much debated our emotions get involved when relationships are sour truth does not want to prevail and we'd like to make scripture mean things that are in my favor yet we need to treat it as truth as truth here

I want to as we finish this part of it turn to Malachi Malachi!

Malachi chapter 2 chapter 2 and so this is written roughly 400 years before Jesus Christ came in the flesh and the Jews have been back in the land of Canaan for a while and they're guilty and this is the second thing you do in verse 13 of Malachi 2 this is the second thing you do you cover the altar of the Lord with tears with weeping and crying so he does not regard the offering anymore nor receive it with goodwill from your hands so the

Jews are crying unto God why aren't you blessing us what's going on and they're saying or God says yet you say for what reason because the Lord has been witness between you and the wife of your youth with whom you have dealt treacherously yet she is your companion and your wife by covenant so it talks about treacherous treatment of a spouse what does the word treacherous mean anyone treacherous when you're on a treacherous path what's it like dangerous yep usually a treacherous path there's danger of falling off the side or down the mountain or whatever it's dangerous so you've been treating your spouse dangerously ungodly so

[ 36 : 29 ] I'm going to continue reading there in verse 14 the Lord the Lord has been witness between you and the wife of your youth with whom you have dealt treacherously dangerously yet she is your companion and your wife by covenant but did God not make them one having a remnant of the spirit and why one he seeks godly offspring therefore take heed to your spirit and let none deal treacherously with the wife of his youth does God not make us one when we are joined together it's a covenant before God and so it's God that joins us together verse 16 for the Lord God of Israel says that he hates divorce for it covers one's garment with violence says the

Lord of hosts therefore take heed to your spirit that you do not deal treacherously when we are joined together and it's physically bodies joining together in the marriage bed that we are in that physical sense made one and we are to honor that and as we had in chapter six of Corinthians that we are the temple of the Holy Spirit and we have been joined in union with our partner if we then join with another person we are bringing God into an unholy union and it's treachery and

God says I hate it so let's go back to Matthew I'll reread from verse eight he said to them Moses because of the hardness of your hearts permitted you to divorce your wives but from the beginning it was not so and I say to you whoever divorces his wife except for sexual immorality and marries another commits adultery and whoever marries her who is divorced commits!

adultery and guess what the disciples answer his disciples said to him if such is the case of the man with his wife it is better not to marry if we cannot choose to do away with our spouse at our pleasing if there's no way out then we should consider singleness and Jesus then answers he says all cannot accept this saying but only to those whom it has been granted given and then he goes on about celibacy being a eunuch and he says only those to whom it has been granted whom the father has gifted with the gift of celibacy the rest of us when we marry we need to face

God's parameters we have many many young people here this morning and you will likely get married one day Lord willing and these teachings need to be present in your hearts that we understand God's parameters so as believers getting married it's it's a covenant before God not before man before God and to take in on that level of seriousness you know I feel like stopping opening up for questions

[ 41 : 26 ] I'm not we might go for a few hours but this is stuff to think about stuff to think about let's go back to 1st Corinthians and I want to quickly cover the third group of people and I'll reread verses 10 and 11 to summarize again so it's Paul now to the married I command yet not I but the Lord a wife is not to depart from her husband so he's repeating the words of Jesus himself but even if she does depart let her remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband and a husband is not to divorce his wife and and then and then the third category but to the rest

I not the Lord say and so this does not mean that Paul came up with this this means he is not quoting Jesus but he is still inspired by the Holy Spirit to say what he's saying because Jesus never addressed a marriage where one is a believer and one isn't and he says in verse 12 if any brother has a wife who does not believe and she is willing to live with him let him not divorce her and a woman who has a husband who does not believe if he is willing to live with her let her not divorce him for the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband otherwise your children would be unclean but now they are holy or sanctified but if the unbeliever departs let him depart a brother or sister is not under bondage in such cases but God has called us to peace and so here the third group of people like I mentioned before one partner turns to faith and so the church age has begun in the time of writing and of course that will happen it still happens today all the time unbelievers get married one partner accepts

Jesus Christ as their personal savior the question the Corinthians have what then what do we do then and the answer is the believer is to stay with the unbelieving partner whether it's husband or wife as long as the unbelieving partner is willing to live with them that's Paul's clear teaching here why because the believer has the Holy Spirit and therefore brings the influence of godliness upon their partner and their children and that's what it means that they are sanctified they are under the influence of the godly living of that spouse and there is a big benefit advantage to that even though there is never a guarantee that the believer will win their unbelieving spouse but we are to live with a godly example and allow

God to work so that the grace of God fills that home and the unbelieving partner gets the benefits of that as do the children and and this is Paul instructing us in that case but if the unbeliever says I am done I want nothing about your Jesus get out of here then the believer is commanded to depart and you are not under bondage the marriage bond in such situations and he says we are called to peace so if the unbelieving spouse does not want to live with us then we are free to get out of that marriage many scholars believe potentially

Paul is an example of this and I mentioned that last time we have no concrete evidence of it but there is a likelihood that Paul may have been married as a young scholar and when he turned to Christ his wife was gone and we can't we have to take that as we don't know for sure but it's possible Paul writes here with conviction about this if the unbeliever departs let him depart a brother or sister is not under bondage in such cases but God has called us to peace the discrepancy that now comes into the picture what does it mean is not under bondage and it's argued on both sides that not under bondage on one side means you're released from your marriage duty to that partner that's it if the unbeliever kicks you out you're going to be single the rest of your life the other side says not under bondage you've been released from your marriage vows you are free to remarry if the

[ 47 : 54 ] Lord leads you that way but only in the Lord and from from the word the bondage word there it is it is very difficult or impossible to with with full certainty say which way because the word bondage there doulo means simply to enslave to give myself wholly to one's needs and service to make myself a bond person to them it's to serve my spouse and so we're not we're freed from that how far does it go we cannot say with definite certainty that that marriage remarriage was in view here if we if we turn to the end of chapter seven verse 39 a wife is bound by law as long as her husband lives but if her husband dies she is at liberty to be married to whom she wishes only in the

Lord now we have bondage and bound they're slightly different but the roots are similar here and there upon death the bounding is released and so in verse 17 15 does bondage release from bondage mean that as well so I will not I cannot say that with a definite it's this way or that way because I don't know because I don't know there's many scholars that believe if an unbeliever asks their partner their believing partner to leave and they are burning with passion they are free to marry in fact most scholars that I would read would be on that side but regardless the

Lord needs to be in that picture to guide you so this is this is teaching that that is critical it's important it's foundational as it's the marriage is the foundation of our society it's the building block the family and God took it serious when he designed it Lord willing we'll we'll finish the rest of the chapter next time we'll stop there but I trust I trust this helps us to be grounded in that and if you have comments or questions I would love to hear from you and to discuss further let's pray in closing!

Father we are grateful that you as our designer our creator have created us in your image and within that the ability the need to be in relationships and then Father you ordained marriage as the principal relationship after our relationship with you thank you for giving us the guidelines that you have for marriage may we take them earnestly seriously!

as the word of God and may they govern our hearts as we walk with you so I just thank you Father for the opportunity to present your word this morning in Jesus name Amen