

# Making your Spouse your Priority

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[ 0 : 00 ] Well, take your Bibles if you would and turn with me to the book of Genesis chapter 29. We're going to talk about making your spouse your priority. Making your spouse your priority.

Sometimes I preach like this morning when it's just straight what the Bible says. And this time I just want you to examine a marriage relationship and see if you see any principles that you can apply in your marriage.

I really want us to have strong marriages. If you do, say amen. I think one of the strongest testimonies you can have to the world about Jesus is loving your wife and honoring your wife and continuing to have a strong marriage that lasts a long, long time.

A friend of mine lost his wife last night. He was a student in our Christian school in Cartersville back when I was there. In 1977 we started. 1978 we started school.

They were less than 50 years of age. She died last night. Dwayne Earwood, a missionary with Macedonia and a pastor. And I thought to myself how tragic that would feel to me.

[ 1 : 15 ] I don't mind being the one that checks out of here. I don't want her to be the one that checks out. I don't want the Lord to let me go first. Amen. She's tougher than I am anyway. And so she can handle it. So we want to build strong marriages until Jesus comes and takes us.

Amen. So if you would look in Genesis chapter 29 and verse 7. And I'm not going to read this. I'm going to tell you the story so that we can get into the story just a little bit.

But Jacob has been sent by his dad to find a wife. And he comes upon this place and he has no idea that these people are actually kin to him. And he shows up there and in verse 9 this girl named Rachel came out with her father's sheep.

And she was the one that took care of her father's sheep. And in verse 10 Jacob saw Rachel. If you kind of underline your Bible you ought to underline that. It's kind of interesting. Jacob saw Rachel. And he went near.

She was bringing her sheep. She couldn't get the lid off the well so she could water her sheep. So he got nearby and took the rock off the. It's amazing how you flex your muscles when a pretty girl comes around.

[ 2 : 19 ] And you're a young guy looking for a girlfriend. And then when you're my age you're just glad you flexed your muscles because you couldn't do it anymore. But I did a long time ago. And he saw her and then she found out who he was.

She found out who he was and he goes in verse 11 and he kisses her. And in verse 12 that's a kiss not like a husband and wife kiss. It's like a greeting kiss.

If you were in South America most everybody in the church the women would kiss you. They would not shake your hand. They just lean in lay their cheek against your cheek and they make a kissing sound as they do.

You just do that so you're not touching lips to lips. If you're in Argentina you'd even do that with a man. The fact is if you were in Argentina and you walked up and stuck your hand out they'd be like either he don't like me or he's not from here.

Because when you're in Argentina you just walk up and you go in for the kiss. And so as you go around sometimes Jeff had people in his church that needed a shave. I'm just going to say if it had got a little longer it wouldn't have hurt.

[ 3 : 21 ] Or if it had been a lot shorter it wouldn't have hurt. But I mean it was just the right length. It would be like a porcupine in the side of my cheek. And I praise God that we didn't have to do that here because of that. So she kissed him. Or he kissed her.

And he told her that he was her father's brother. Chapter 29 and verse 12. And it came to pass when Laban heard the tidings that Jacob was his sister's son that he ran out and he met him.

And so Jacob just told Laban the whole story about why he's there. And he hung around for about a month. And so he's there. He's working. And in verse 15 Laban said to Jacob, Look buddy you shouldn't have to work for nothing.

I ought to pay you something. What should I pay you? And so Laban had two daughters. And the older one was Leah. And the younger one was Rachel. And Rachel might have had cute eyes.

But Leah might have had cute eyes. But Rachel was a really beautiful, well favored. I mean she had it all. And Jacob looked at her and said that's the one I like. And in verse 18 Jacob loved Rachel.

[ 4 : 23 ] And he said to his father-in-law, I will serve thee seven years for Rachel, thy younger daughter. I read that. I thought of Tyler Ellis.

What did he say? I don't know if he's ever served. You love me Tyler?

I do. Okay. I will serve thee seven years for Rachel, thy younger daughter. And Laban said, Well it would be better me give her to you than it would to anybody else.

I mean I know you. You're part of the family. And 20, Jacob served seven years for Rachel. But he loved her so much, it seemed like just a few days to him. I ain't never thought seven years felt like a few days.

I mean I'd love my wife. But I believe if my father-in-law told me seven years, I'd have been like seven years toodalo. I'm out of here. I'll find somewhere else. But he did. Sorry baby, I love you.

[ 5 : 27 ] I love you, but I don't know if I could have taken seven years. Right Tyler? Well if you'd work a little it might help time fast.

So I want you to take your Bible. I'm going to give you four things to write down I think that I see taking place in just a little, it's like marriage retreat here. Some things I think ought to happen.

Number one, meet the needs of your spouse whether they meet yours or not. Meet the need of your spouse whether they meet yours or not. You know if you really want to, I said that and two guys got up and ran.

Like I ain't meeting anybody's needs. All right, they're both single and you know why. Buddy, you need to sit down and work seven years too there, Graham. In Genesis chapter 29 and verse 10, Jacob saw Rachel, the daughter of Laban, his mother's brother, the daughter of Laban, his mother's brother, and the sheep of Laban, his mother's brother, that Jacob went near and rolled the stone from the well's mouth and he watered the flock of Laban, his mother's brother.

So here's the story. Now this is just the Bible story. I'm going to show you where I get the principle. Old Jacob shows up and Rachel can't feed her sheep because the stone that covers the well where they need to get the water from is too large.

- [ 6 : 53 ] And so she has to show up there and she has to wait until somebody else comes along and moves the rock. And when they get through feeding their sheep or watering their sheep, she'll be able to get the water for her sheep. And so she shows up and she's unable to take care of it.
- Well, Jacob, I'm sure, just wanting to show off his muscles, he shows up and Jacob says, you know what, I'm going to meet your needs. I'm going to meet your needs. I want you to just realize he's going to help her.
- So I'm going to give you some words. I think you ought to write down if you want to help your marriage. You need to be attentive. You need to be watching, paying attention, and ready to serve.
- Now in the story that I'm going to show you tonight, Jacob's going to help her, but she can't give Jacob what Jacob wants. He's going to help her, but she can't give him what he wants.
- But he loves her. In marriage, it doesn't take long until you get to a point where you're not that concerned about what's going on with your wife. You're like taking advantage of her.
- [ 7 : 50 ] She ought to be fixing food for you. She ought to be washing clothes. She ought to be taking care of the house. She ought to be raising kids. He ought to be bringing home the money. He ought to be. He ought to be. And we get that attitude, and we have forgotten that we're supposed to be loving our spouse.
- That we have forgotten that we ought to be. And the word is attentive. We ought to pay attention. We ought to notice what our spouse needs before they ever say. There's not one mention in the story that Rachel said, Hey, big man, with them big muscles, if you don't mind, if you could move this rock, I could water my sheep, and we could get to the house, and we could watch Days of Our Lives on TV.
- We get back to the tent. That didn't happen in the story. In the story, he saw her. He saw her need, and he met that. I'm afraid when I deal with marriage counseling, which I tend to do more than I enjoy doing, you know what?
- Most of the time, people come in there, and it's like, she's not meeting my needs. He's not meeting my needs. But in this story, it's not a command. It's not God telling you to do it.
- But in the story, where they're going to fall deeply in love, he's not worried about whether or not she'll meet his needs. He's meeting her needs. And I could say to you right now, Jesus didn't save you for you to meet his needs.
- [ 9 : 07 ] He didn't come and look for you because you were worth something to him. He saved you because he is a good God. Do you anticipate his or her needs before they ever mention them?
- When we were dating, we did. Do you remember those days? Do you remember that? You know, I mean, it was like 50 years ago for me. But anyway, do you remember those days? It really was 46. Do you remember those days?
- Man, I wanted that pretty girl. I saw Betty. She was dating my friend Rick. He had a 1947 Plymouth. He was the coolest man on the campus. He could play the guitar.
- He was good looking. I was gangly and ugly and pimple-faced and a Tennessee hillbilly. Not too good of things going for me. But I thought she was pretty neat. One night he got out of the car and let everybody get out of the car.
- I stole the car and the girl and drove away. And she looked at me like I was crazy, so I drove her back. But anyway, you know, when you're dating, you want to please. But when you get married, you want to be pleased.
- [ 10 : 06 ] When you're dating, you want to please. But when you get married, you want to be pleased. Are you attentive, watchful, and caring? Let me just tell you that biblically, that story is pretty clear that God's done that with us.

You know, he's the one that came up with the plan of salvation. He is the author and the finisher of our salvation. He didn't come along and say, I'll save you. I'll rescue you from sin. And I'll give you new life.

But you carry it on out. I'll get you started. He came along and said, I'll just do it all. That's what grace was. And when I get married, I am to love my wife like Christ loved the church.

And when Christ loved the church, Christ said, I am the author and the finisher. Hebrews chapter 12 and verse 2. He is the author and the finisher of our faith.

I want to take you with me to Genesis chapter 29 and verse 20. Genesis chapter 29 and verse 20. I think we show our spouse their importance by the investment of time.

[11:05] By the investment of time. Oh, by the way, I told you she couldn't meet his needs. And I'll show you this in just a minute. You know that she won't be able to have babies. You know what a man wanted in a wife in those days?

He wanted children. And he marries her and she can't have children. She can't have children. But he keeps on loving her anyway. It wasn't I love you if you meet my needs.

It was I love you whether you do or not. You know, you can have a pretty strong marriage if you just make up your mind. I'm going to do my part. I'm going to do my part. Some people think marriage is a 50-50 relationship.

But in all honesty, it's 100% 100% relationship. It is I'll just do my part whether you do yours or not. I want to build this marriage. Go with me if you would to Genesis chapter 29 and verse 20.

Number two, investment of time. Meet the needs. Be attentive. Number two, invest time. This is the craziest Bible story of all. If you want to be honest, I don't think most of you would put up with seven years.

[12:06] I don't think most of you would put up with seven years. In Genesis 29, 20, Jacob served seven years for Rachel. And they seemed unto him but a few days for the love he had for her.

He invests seven years of his life to marry that girl. He walked in the room and said, I'd like to marry her. And seven years of his life is invested.

And it says he loved her so much that the time flew by. Flew by. And if you'll look at the verse, it says, they seemed to him but a few days.

She was worth the wait. Would your family feel that they are a priority because of the way you manage your time?

And I have to admit, when I preach this and look at this, I realize, you know what? We don't, I don't know if we men invest enough time in our families. I have missionaries that are on their own without me asking.

[13:09] They send me their weekly schedule and what they've done all week long. I didn't ask them to. They just do. And it says, hey, I worked this many hours this week. And the one guy who started doing that, he sent it to me, 98 hours.

I wrote back and I said, well, you're a jerk of a husband, man. Next week, 82 hours. You're still a jerk. This week he wrote back and it was only like 66. I said, well, it looks like you're doing better.

He said it was an accident. And I said, well, you need to work on that. You know, we need to invest time in our marriage. Oh, I remember going up and spending the afternoon with Betty and we were dating.

We're in the dorms. And on Sunday afternoon, the dorm door had to be open, but the guys could go visit the girls' dorms. Man, Lord help me. I was in her dorm room. And she had, there were two single beds and we took a, oh, Betty, come on.

Betty does not want this out. She laid on one bed. I laid on the other. Thank you. Door was wide open, but I thought this, I need a second in the world. Just being in the same room with her.

[ 14 : 14 ] Just being in the same room with her. But after you've been married a while, if you're not careful, you don't even want to do that. If you got any extra time, you'll spend it in your hobbies. You'll spend it in other things and you will not spend time with your wife.

And one of the ways we show love is investing our time. Is it possible you need to rearrange your schedule? I'm going to keep working with this missionary until he gets his workload down to about 60 hours a week, counting everything he does, church and everything.

And he has some time for his spouse. He ought to have some time for his spouse. It's possible you ought to drop some commitments. Because the biggest commitment you have is your spouse.

And I don't know if you realize this, but I've been doing life a long time. And I can give everything I have to people. But, you know, in 1977, I started the first church.

In 1973, I started working in my first church. I happened to come across pictures and everything from back at that church just this week. I looked at them. You know, those people don't know me. I bet if I showed up at that church and walked in the door, the young people, the pastor was one of my young people.

[ 15 : 21 ] He's the pastor of the church. The church treasurer was one of my young people. I mean, I looked at them like, good night, I taught every one of those people. I don't know if they'd hardly know who I am. But we definitely don't talk. There's nothing in common.

There's only one person still hanging around with me from back in 1973 at the Dykes Creek Baptist Church. And her name's Betty. And yet, you're not willing to work at spending time with your wife.

Maybe you should rearrange your schedule. Drop some commitments. Change your lifestyle. Do an inventory and decide if your priorities show she's important to you.

That he is important to you. We ought to have some rituals that we build into our life. Some time rituals. Things that we do that take some time. Like eating together.

We're going to eat. There's a book that businessmen, missionaries, and others read. It says, never eat alone. Always find somebody to eat with.

[ 16 : 18 ] Not your wife, though, huh? Never eat alone. Hold hands every chance you get. You know, you come to church, guys. When I got to Peru and I started getting adults saved, people my age and older, I couldn't figure out who went with who.

Because they got to church and the men sat in one place and the women sat in another place. And when they walked in, she walked two steps behind him. Or he walked five steps behind her. And I had to say to them, man, we need to show a little affection on occasion.

Can I get an amen right there? You ought to be affectionate to your wife. You don't have to be obscene in public. But holding hands will be all right. You can kiss after you pray.

You can have family devotions. That's time. It would do a good deal for us if you said, I want to sit down with my kids and read them the Bible. One day, they're going to be old.

And one day, they're going to remember if you spent time with them. We ought to kiss coming and going. We ought to kiss coming and going. I'm not that good at it.

[ 17 : 22 ] I wake up. And all I got in mind is all I got to do. And so I get up and I head for the door and I say, hey, see you later. And here she comes. Been running after me for 45 years. She runs the door. And I said, I'll be back in 30 minutes.

She said, what if you don't make it back? So we got to have that one kiss because I just might not make it back from the corner store. Kiss coming and going. Have dates. Have dates.

Go out and spend some romantic, sweet time together. Say you love each other. Hug. Touch. Be expressive. Write some sweet notes. Be gross.

You know, I love you. You're a doll, baby. When your kids find a note, they ought to go, oh, gag. But they ought to know you love each other. In Peru, I often ask the young people if they knew their parents loved each other.

And they say they only kiss on Mother's Day, Father's Day, birthday, Christmas. They hardly ever kiss. They don't ever touch each other. Do you do anything?

[ 18 : 22 ] By the way, do you know, can I just say this? Anybody you love, you give time to. Do you hear that? Anybody you love, you give time to.

So can I just stop here because I am a preacher and know I'm talking about family. How much time are you giving him? God. See, if you love somebody you spend time with, you don't have to tell Nate Wilkerson this.

I mean, if anything, you've got to say, Nate, calm down. You're in public. Amen. I have. Don't worry. I'm helping him. I want to get him not quite as cold and dead as you are, but almost.

Amen. But let me ask you a question. When you love somebody, you spend time with them. When's the last time you spent real time with God? Do you clock him in for 10 minutes a day, 5 minutes a day, 2 minutes a day?

How much is God occupying? He ought to be the first person you seek every day. It is my personal opinion that you ought to tell him you love him when you wake up in the morning.

[ 19 : 29 ] Before I ever roll out of bed, I usually try to say to him, man, I love you. I want to serve you. When I go to bed at night, I try to say good night. You see, you don't have to tell God good night. He ain't going to sleep. No, but I am.

And I really do. I wake up, go to the bathroom at night. I say, hey, Lord, help me tomorrow. I mean, he ought to be on your mind all the time. Could I get an amen right there?

I mean, you see, when you love somebody, you invest time with them in prayer and worship service and Bible reading. I think that when it comes down to the end of it, everybody who loves me and knows me well should say, man, Betty was number one with Austin.

He always thought about her and he loved her and he chased her and he wanted her to be his wife all his life. He thought about her. That's one thing I think you ought to think about me. I think you ought to think about you and your spouse too. Amen. But I'll tell you another one I think you ought to think.

I think you ought to think, man, Austin loved God. He loved reading the Bible. He loved talking about Jesus. If you talked to him, some Bible would slip out when he didn't even want it to. It ought to be obvious God's your priority.

[ 20 : 31 ] It ought to be obvious God's your. When your kids talk about you someday, are they going to say, and by the way, can I just tell you, I work with young people.

I just did. I work with young people. So I said, tell me about your family. Tell me about your parents. What kind of homes you grew up in? Yeah, well, they're Christians. You know, they say they are.

Really? Yeah. Well, were they dedicated? Well, they don't miss church, but they don't do nothing else. They just go to church, sit on a bench, read their Bible. Well, I never saw them read their Bible. They'll tell me that.

I never seen them read their Bible. They're watching us. Say old me if you can't say amen. Your kids know if you love Jesus. Your kids know if you're praying.

Your kids know if you're seeking him. So do you need to rearrange your schedule for the Lord? Do you need to drop some commitments so you could be faithful to God? Do you need to change your lifestyle to show God he's first?

[ 21 : 32 ] And to show your kids he's first? Years ago, my oldest son and his wife were arguing. And I was uneasy about it.

Just to be honest with you, I marry a lot of people. I've seen people I've married break up, get a divorce, have affairs. I mean, you've married dozens, scores and a lot of stuff.

And they were fussing and fighting. And I said, son, can we talk? I said, man, you calm us down. Good night, y'all. What are y'all fighting for? Is everything going to be all right? And he said, good night, Daddy. You fight as bad as we do.

I said, that's different. He said, well, you mean it's different? I said, me and you both know I'm sticking with your mama. I don't know about you and your wife yet. I said, you do this 20 years from now, I'll believe you.

What do you kids believe about you? I mean, really? We're building a testimony. You ought to develop rituals in your life with God.

[ 22 : 32 ] You know, we don't want to be legalistic, so we're just flat loose and liberal. We wouldn't want to be legalistic, so we're not going to read our Bible every day. We wouldn't want to be legalistic, so we won't even come to church every Sunday. We don't want to be legalistic, so we're just going to, man, if my wife got like that with me, I'd be like, we got problems.

Say amen. Betty said, well, I love you, honey, but I think I'll spend night over at this other place tonight. But I'll be thinking about you. I'd be like, excuse me? You need to be expressive about your love for Jesus.

You need to talk about him so much. You need to worship him. Third thing. Don't allow obstacles to hinder your love. This is the craziest story in the world, isn't it?

He has, the first thing you notice right there, he has met her needs. He has been attentive to her. He's invested time.

Now there's a big problem. Now there's a big problem. In Genesis chapter 29 and verse 30, they get married. And he really thinks he married Rachel.

[ 23 : 39 ] When they wore a veil, they wore a veil. And so he's like, glory to God, there comes my beautiful Rachel, all covered up in that burka or whatever she'd have been wearing back in. And she comes in and he climbs in the bed with her.

And they get to talking. And he says, boy, you got the voice of Leah, the fae, Leah, the ugly girl. You ain't my girl. And the next day he goes in and says, hey, money back, money back guarantee here.

I paid seven years for the other girl. And you done gave me the one I didn't want. He said, well, it wouldn't have been right to let the young girl get married before the older girl. He said, but I'll tell you what I'll do. If you work seven more years, you can have them both.

I'd have been like, excuse me, we're going to war here. But old Jacob says, I'll just go ahead and do it.

And he put in 14 years. You hear that? Brother Jeff, you should be biblical. I think at the age of 40, y'all could get married.

[ 24 : 40 ] All right. Change the subject, right? Setbacks, problems, adversity mess up your marriage.

But the reason it messes up your marriage is you're focused on the wrong thing. You know why Jacob could work for her seven years and then an additional seven? Because he wasn't focused on him.

He was focused on her. He was like, she is so valuable. It wouldn't matter what I had to pay to get her. We ought to be focused on our spouse.

She ought to be, he ought to be your focus. So just let me throw a few things at you. Don't criticize him or allow others to do so. In all the years I've been in ministry, which has been a while, I don't know how many times I've heard prayer requests and I thought to myself, if that guy ever shows up, he wouldn't want to come to church here after what we've been praying for.

I mean, she comes in and said, my husband's a bum, won't pay the bills, he's a drunk. I'm like, lady, could you keep that prayer request to yourself? Just say, let's pray for your husband and drop it there. If he ever comes to you, we don't need him to be already with a black mark on his name.

[ 25 : 54 ] Don't criticize your husband. Don't criticize your wife. By the way, if you married a dud, it's because you was a dud and couldn't figure out what to do for you, did it? Huh?

I mean, I married her myself. If there's anything wrong with Betty, I'm the dingbat that picked her. And Jacob married her, he put 14 years into this deal. I'd hate to wake up to 14 years and say, I did the wrong thing.

Setbacks. Things go wrong. When you fight, fight fair. You're probably going to fight. Fight. You're going to have some words on a cake.

Now, when I say fight, I mean verbal. No hitting. Say amen. No hitting, no throwing. But you know, you're going to say some stuff, but you ought to never say stuff. You can't hurt each other.

Because tomorrow I'm going to have to be back with her. I can say it. I need to say stuff. I can still have time with her. Don't be selfish in your relationship.

[ 26 : 51 ] I think it's amazing to me that we get married and we let our spouse become. I got to finish up quickly. But we let our spouse become.

I chase her. I chase her. I chase her. You men, we got a problem with this. Just being honest. Men like to chase a woman until they get her. Plant their flag. And it's like, I got you. That's all I need.

Now I'm working on some other project. When you married her, you married her to be your project for the next hundred years. You cannot. You cannot act like she's some trophy you put on the case and now you're trying to get a different trophy.

So don't let problems mess up the love that you have. Let me give you the last one. Love, regardless of what your spouse can do for you. It's never about what you can get in marriage.

The King James Bible uses a weird word for love in 1 Corinthians 13. And we're tempted to say this word is charity and it's not a good word.

[ 27 : 50 ] Love's a good word. But they use the word charity because charity is a love where you expect nothing in return. So when you do charity, what you do is you walk up to someone and you say to someone, I'm giving this to you with no thought in return.

And so when God wanted to describe love, the Greek word behind it even, but that word means I didn't do this to get from you. I'm not giving you this so you'll give me that.

It's not me loving you so you'll love me. It is I love you. It's a one direction thing. And you're, you know, if you're in your marriage expecting it to come back. In Genesis 29, 31, Rachel was barren.



Rachel was barren. She couldn't have children. We know how that feels to a woman, by the way, in the Bible, because in 1 Samuel chapter 1 and verse 8, Hannah couldn't have children.

And she is begging God and weeping and she wouldn't eat. And her heart was broken. And Elkanah goes to her and says, Lady, am I not better to you than 10 sons?

[ 28 : 54 ] I don't care whether you have a baby or not. I love you. I love you. If you never have a baby, I love you. I know her other wife or two wives there.

I know she may pick on you, but I love you. Rachel, I love you. So accept your spouse as they are. Accept your, you know, we don't get married to change our spouse. We married her.

We're glad to have our spouse or a man or a woman. Learn to think on good things about your family. This is my honest opinion. And I really believe that the reason in Spanish they have a phrase, when you say a cuss word or something or say something ugly to your spouse, the phrase is, se me escapó.

It's like the words were running around in my mouth, and when I wasn't paying attention, they just jumped out. They wouldn't mean it that way. They mean it, but I didn't mean to say it. But the truth is, I love the way it sounds in Spanish because it's like, well, what are they doing running around in your mouth in the first place?

And here's what happens is alone in your room, your house, you're thinking to yourself, she ought to be doing this, and she's not doing this, and he's not doing this, and he didn't cut the grass, and he hadn't been sweet to me, and she hadn't.

[ 30 : 09 ] And all you can think about is nasty stuff. All you can think about is negative stuff. And then all of a sudden, when there's the right time, it escapes, and you say stuff you ought not say. But what about if you instead said, I will learn to control my thoughts, and I will think good things about my spouse.

And she goes walking across the room, not even out loud, you go, whoo, she's good looking. Inside, you don't even have to say it out loud. Hey, she's fixing your breakfast, and you're like, not everybody's got such a good wife.

You're just thinking about it. You know what will happen? On accident, they're going to escape your mouth. You're going to look at her and go, you're the greatest. Oh, I didn't mean to say that. Hmm? The problem is what you're thinking.

You're thinking selfish thoughts. Accept your spouse. Meditate on good things. I've got to quit, so here it goes. Have a funeral. Literally have a funeral, and think about what you'd say at the funeral.

And be honest. See, if you think right, you'll act right. So years ago, Leroy and Mary McConnell were part of our church.

[ 31 : 13 ] I'm not really sure how we got them to come to church, but Mary and her daughter. I think her daughter might have been Patricia. Betty would know for sure. And they came to our church. And Leroy was a functional alcoholic.

He was older than me, so he's dead. Mary's about my age or so. And Leroy worked all week long, came home and gave her some money, and got drunk every weekend.

He'd get drunk on Friday night. He'd stay drunk until Sunday night. Sometime early in the morning on Monday morning, late after midnight Sunday night, Leroy would show back home. And he would get all cleaned up and rest a little bit, and he'd go to work.

And then he'd work a whole other week, and he'd live for the weekend. And she used to say to me, I wish he was dead. She'd come to church, and she'd say, you need to pray for Leroy. God ought to kill him.

So Leroy had a wreck. He got saved, started coming to church, quit drinking. And then later on, he got drunk again, had a wreck. And when he had a wreck, this time he'd be dead.

[ 32 : 13 ] And so I go with Mr. Shelton, who's like my right-hand man. He's a real old man. He's like 65 or 70, like my age now. And I'm like 25. And we go to the house, and I'm like, we're in the car driving up.

I said, boy, she's going to be happy. I mean, she'd been praying for this for years. I mean, I really thought it. I was dumb enough to think she meant it when she was acting so ugly. And we got out of the car, and I go up, and I say, Mary just came over.

You know, I saw Leroy yesterday at the hospital in Rome. Oh, Leroy's dead. I said, yeah, God answers prayer.

I didn't say that because I couldn't really say that. But I was just kind of like shocked because I was like, you're acting sad. And when God answers prayer, you should act glad. Boy, she went to weeping and wailing, and she lost her car, had to move to a cheesier apartment.

Her kid had to be pulled out of the Christian school. And, buddy, she just loved Leroy. And I thought to myself, well, if she loved Leroy like she loved Leroy.

[ 33 : 22 ] If she loved Leroy alive like she loved Leroy dead, he'd probably still be alive. You're not invested in each other. It's the way you're thinking. Any woman that would live with me for 45 years is a great lady.

And, you know, I need to think like that. So I work at it. You say, well, you just must have a very unique thought life. No, I have to work at it. You say, well, Betty must be perfect. Probably not.

You ever read Romans 3? Probably not. But you can learn to think the right thoughts. I'm just going to be honest with you. I look at you all the time. And I think to myself, man, I'm blessed to pastor this church.

Those are wonderful people. Can I be honest with you? I have weak days when I'm like, watch it. Stay in there. Go on.

We all have those days. Have a funeral. Amazing. You go to funerals and men, they're the most in love. It's like they never were in love.

[ 34 : 25 ] I told Betty, I said, if I really want to be loved, I just need to die. You know how to be the most loved you've ever been in your life? Die. Be Tom Sawyer and show up for your funeral. Everybody's over.

Oh, we loved him. Tom's over like, had no idea. Huh? Huh? We ought to have great marriages. You ought to make your spouse your priority in your time, in your thoughts.

You ought to be attentive to your spouse. We ought to work at our marriages. Marriage is the greatest privilege after salvation God gave us.

There is no reason we lose our spouses. We choose to disobey God. By the way, a man that's thinking about his wife won't be looking at porn. A woman thinking about her husband won't be looking at porn.

A man thinking about his wife won't be looking at other women. Vice versa. A woman thinking about her husband won't be looking at porn. Because we're in love. If we're in love.