

Mixtape: The Soundtrack for Marriage

Should I Stay or Should I Go?

Roger - August 5

Series Big Idea: All of us who have been married, at some point, wonder if we married the wrong person. Or we put off marriage because we fear we might choose the wrong mate. Or we consider divorce convinced we got it wrong. Fact is, there are a lot of reasons for these concerns. Nobody will ever be the perfect mate or find the perfect mate. We all have our hurts, hang ups, bad habits and issues. And compatibility is a fallacy that if relied upon will set up for failure. And trying to change our partner to become the “right” person is also recipe for disaster. God intended marriage to be mysterious. That mystery is that two people become one and stay as one. In this series, we are going to put together a “mixtape” of biblical ideas that can provide a “soundtrack” of songs to help us live the mystery of having a thriving marriage as we learn to stay in love and stay as one.

Message Big Idea: God’s plan in marriage is that two separate individuals will become one. But we’ve traded oneness to see marriage as a transaction. What we want is friendship, care, sex, security, and a family. We trade this to get that. I’ll put up with ___ (fill in the blank) to get ___ (fill in the blank). So we end up creating an unwritten contract. But the problem is that every spouse will fail to keep their end of the contract at some time and in some way. The problem isn’t that we are imperfect, the problem is that we’ve seen marriage as a contract rather than a covenant. Marriage as covenant means that we are making a choice to reflect the character of God by being committed to love and honor our imperfect partner as God loves us. We commit to an imperfect person in a lifetime of learning to love like God to become one.

Main Text: Matthew 19:4-6

Supporting texts: Deut 31:6, John 14:18, 20, Romans 8:31, Romans 8:35, 38-39, Psalm 94:14, Psalm 139:7, Exodus 6:7 Jeremiah 3:6-8, 12, 14.

Reflection/Discussion Questions:

1. How would you describe conditional love?
2. How would you describe God’s Covenant love?
3. Rate your parents on their ability to love. How would you describe their love? Conditional or God like? Why? Give some examples of how you witnessed their love.
4. How do you want your friends, family, children, and even strangers to describe your love for your spouse? What do you hope they will witness and repeat?
5. Romans 8:31 says, If God is for us, who can be against us? Can your spouse, girlfriend/boyfriend describe your love for them in the same way. Do they know you are for them? Describe some ways you have shown this to them.
6. In Jeremiah 3:6-14 we see God, standing, looking at his adulterous people that he loved so much, begging them to return, saying he would take them back. How

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does that inspire you to love more deeply? How does that inspire you to grow to love in a covenant relationship and not a simple contract type love? How does this picture challenge you.

7. Romans 5:8 says that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. He showed his love for us by dying. How much more can you do, will you do, to show your spouse you love them? How can the love Jesus has for you inspire you to love others at a deeper level than how you do now?
8. Will you, Choose Covenant Love, for better or worse?

IS YOUR MARRIAGE A COVENANT OR A CONTRACT?

A CONTRACT IS AN AGREEMENT MADE IN DISTRUST.
A COVENANT IS AN AGREEMENT MADE IN TRUST.

A CONTRACT IS CONDITIONAL IN NATURE.
A COVENANT IS UNCONDITIONAL IN NATURE.

A CONTRACT FOCUSES ON THE GROWTH OF SELF.
A COVENANT FOCUSES ON THE GIVING OF SELF.

A CONTRACT ASKS, WHAT AM I GETTING FROM THIS MARRIAGE?
A COVENANT ASKS, WHAT AM I BRINGING TO THIS MARRIAGE?

A CONTRACT IS ENFORCED BY A COURT (used this to form a one liner)
A COVENANT IS ENFORCED BY CHARACTER.

A CONTRACT IS CONVENIENCE-BASED.
A COVENANT IS COMMITMENT-BASED.

A CONTRACT IS A HAVE-TO COMMITMENT.
A COVENANT IS A WANT-TO COMMITMENT.

A CONTRACT IS FOR A SPECIFIED PERIOD OF TIME.
A COVENANT IS FOREVER.

IN CONTRACT NOBODY LEAVES UNTIL THE TERMS ARE MET.
IN COVENANT NOBODY LEAVES PERIOD!

~From "Little Lists to Live By" Multnomah Publishing