



Mark 10:1-12 | Serving All Includes Your Spouse

Written & Preached by John Cole

[Mark 10:1-12](#)

¹ And he arose from thence, and cometh into the coasts of Judaea by the farther side of Jordan: and the people resort unto him again; and, as he was wont, he taught them again.

² And the Pharisees came to him, and asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away *his* wife? tempting him.

³ And he answered and said unto them, What did Moses command you?

⁴ And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put *her* away. ⁵ And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept. ⁶ But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. ⁷ For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; ⁸ And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. ⁹ What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

¹⁰ And in the house his disciples asked him again of the same *matter*. ¹¹ And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. ¹² And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery.

INTRODUCTION

Our text brings us to such topics as marriage, divorce, and humble service.

That reminds me of a wife who told her husband that they each needed to make sacrifices to make their relationship work...

You should have seen the look on her face when she found a dead goat in the kitchen!

Sorry... but we had to have an icebreaker for this topic!

I believe our passage today argues that:

Main Argument: Disciples are called to steward their marriage and to love their spouse in the way they should do everything else—as a servant of all like Jesus has done for us.

This sort of topic brings up several challenges on a Sunday morning:

1. Not everyone is married or will or should be married.
2. Some here have had hurtful divorces in their past.
3. Some don't believe they need a biblical argument. They just intend to never divorce.
4. There is a lot of confusion, false doctrine (such as marriage as a sacrament in Catholicism), and poor teaching on this subject.

But those reasons and others do not mean we don't need to hear what God has said in this Scripture:

1. Every Christian is called to understand, uphold, and defend biblical marriage to some degree.

2. Concepts and treatment of marriage effects everyone's lives and the strength of our society and church.
3. Even those with difficult pasts in this area need truth to direct their steps, thinking, and teaching in the present and future.
4. Everyone needs a biblical argument if they are to have a position.
5. By God's grace, I pray today's sermon clarifies this subject for many, though it will not exhaust it. That is not the intent of this passage in Mark.

Here are some things to consider

1. Jesus came to save sinners and give forgiveness of sins.
2. Jesus's call to salvation is a call to repentance from sin and faith in Jesus.
3. The disciple's walk is about his or her present and future, not their past.
4. Our Lord takes our past and turns it for good, though that can be difficult to see at times.
5. I will not answer all your questions on this topic today, but I do believe I will help us interpret and apply this passage in Mark in a way that is needful and relevant for all present.
6. Most importantly, Jesus's call to serve in marriage points to God's unfailing love for us in Christ. If you see nothing else today, see the inseparable love God has for you in Christ as part of His redeemed church.
7. If you do not know the love, forgiveness, and lordship of Jesus, and pray that you see today's ideal of inseparable union as the union available to you by faith in Jesus.

With all that introduction, let's start into our text.

It begins slow as it sets up the context and intent in concise words.

The "servant" theme of chapters 8-10 is picked up with Jesus teaching those who come to Him as He travels toward Jerusalem and the cross...

A SERVANT-TEACHER ON THE WAY TO HIS CROSS v1

[Mark 10:1](#)

Mark 10:1

And he arose from thence, and cometh into the coasts of Judaea by the farther side of Jordan: and the people resort unto him again; and, as he was wont, he taught them again.

Jesus is focused on getting to the cross in obedience to the Father and as the Servant of all.

Crowds continue to come after Jesus.

Jesus continues to serve crowds through teaching.

Serving doesn't mean you have no authority, but it does characterize how you use your authority.

Jesus lives what He teaches! He loves and serves God and others.

Mark has communicated in narrative form that Jesus is fully God and fully man.

Jesus has ultimate authority, and He humbles Himself to serve us with it.

In fellowship with the Father and Spirit, Jesus came to reveal the Father and reconcile us to Him through His own death and resurrection.

Greatness in God's kingdom is humble, selfless service, and over and over again, Jesus proves Himself to be the Greatest!

But on the flip side... today's text brings us into an antagonistic confrontation against Jesus from the prideful, selfish (supposed) stewards of God's kingdom.

Who are they? Pharisees.

What's their "beef"? Jesus.

How do they confront Jesus? With a question about their right to exercise power over "the least of these." In this case it is women and wives.

And it all starts with a seemingly innocent question...

A SELF-SERVING QUESTION ABOUT DIVORCE v2

[Mark 10:2](#)

Mark 10:2

² And the Pharisees came to him, and asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away *his* wife? tempting him.

These Pharisees try to find and expose flaws in Jesus's teaching by asking a question about divorce.

Their questioning is based on their own distorted misuse of Scripture. I will come back to that.

They had a history of misusing God's allowance of divorce to make themselves "greater" in power, status, and money than women and their wives. I will come back to that as well.

But notice with me first what is made known by their questioning.

They weren't asking questions to learn from Jesus; they were asking questions to test Jesus.

They had placed themselves in the judge's seat and Jesus in the criminal's.

Even though it was the prophesied timeline for the LORD and His Messiah to come...

Even though John the Baptizer had already fulfilled prophesied ministry of preparing the way of the LORD...

Even though Jesus had demonstrated His authority from the LORD over and over through His words and deeds...

These learned fools only cared to scornfully catch Jesus in His words.

Fools don't ask questions to receive correction, instruction, or truth.

Fools ask questions to get their way... to "prove" they are right... to suppress the truth in unrighteousness—as Romans 1 makes clear.

Fools ask questions to confound and confuse and then to construct what they want.

Q: Why do you ask questions?

Do you really want answers, or do you just want to control things?

Are you seeking to learn how to love and serve God and others?

That is what the Pharisees claimed to be doing: *following the law of God*.

But they were so far from loving God and others.

Instead of serving others as Jesus is teaching, the Pharisees attempted to bind up God's Word and make it a slave to themselves.

Here they have the incarnate Word to teach them the inspired written Word, and all they want to do is catch Him saying something wrong.

They are blind scorners.

They have no faith in the true living God.

Their faith is in themselves, and Jesus is a threat to their self-appointed authority.

Before we go further into this topic of marriage, I believe it is prudent for us all to ask ourselves: *How are we coming to God's Word on this topic?*

If we come to it truly desiring to obey God, I am confident we will all be blessed with today's application of the text—whether or not we are married, single, or have ever been divorced.

This dialogue on divorce is a part of the servant motif Jesus is teaching His disciples—then, in the early church in Rome, and now.

It is not *just* about marriage and divorce—though it very much is.

It is about being a humble, selfless servant within the context of marriage.

Marriage is one of the greatest contexts for humble, selfless service because its very nature both demands it and tests it.

Actually, marriage seems to be particularly designed by God for humble, selfless service.

- Two royalties submit in one covenant with the King of kings.
- Two persons become one union by God.

- Two strangers become exposed in familiarity.
- Two servants become yoked in the work.

And the Pharisees' distance from this understanding is drawn out as they stress the lawfulness of *a man to put away his wife*.

Mark 10:2

And the Pharisees came to him, and asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away *his wife*? tempting him.

We know their first motive was to test and “catch” Jesus.

The assumption behind their test is very revealing: they did not serve their wives.

They didn't even think about serving their wives!

And Mark by the Spirit arranged this discourse within these narratives to drive home that primary point!

That's it!

The primary point of our text is that the greatest in the kingdom serves the least—including if you wrongly think that is your spouse.

We often lunge ourselves into the same trap as the Pharisees: we look past the point of Scripture to what we want to see.

We don't want to hear God telling us to serve the least or our spouse.

We want to elevate the important but supporting points of Scripture in order to distance ourselves from the conviction of Scripture.

We would rather get the *law* code out in order to distance ourselves from conviction of the *love* code.

So, why do you want to know what Jesus has to say about divorce?

Why should it matter to you if you are neither married nor planning to divorce?

Hopefully, we all want to understand this passage to better give ourselves to:

1. Our call to service as disciples of Jesus.
2. Our responsibility to uphold God's design in marriage.
3. Our commitment to marriage in the present.
4. Our love for Jesus as His bride.

So now that we have examined the heart of Jesus in verse one and the heart of the Pharisees in verse two, let's dive deeper into the details.

You may have heard it said, "The Devil is in the details."

And that is exactly what Jesus exposes in their detailed question and answer: the Devil.

The thinking of the Pharisees reveals their heart and mindset to be from Satan, not God.

A SELF-CONDEMNING USE OF SCRIPTURE v3-4

Jesus's first answer asked them what God had already said in Scripture, without abrogating it.

Mark 10:3

And he answered and said unto them, What did Moses command you?

If the Source of Scripture come in Christ refers to the authority of Scripture in His answers, maybe we as His disciples should do the same?

What does Jesus mean by what “Moses” commanded them?

Well, that would mean what did God reveal through Moses in the Torah.

So, somewhere within the first five Books of the Bible God gave instruction that answers their question about divorce.

Where in Scripture is Jesus referring to with His question?

Let’s see if the Pharisees choose correctly...

Mark 10:4

And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put *her* away.

They were right about one thing... divorce was “suffered” or permitted.

The Pharisees' answer prioritized God's permission and allowance for them as sinners *over* God's original design.

They were good at manipulating the letter of the law while ignoring the spirit of it.

And they had a real skill at *straining at nats and swallowing camels!*

They went right to the only passage that *seemed* to extend their *rights* in divorce.

Grant it, the passage does affirm the allowance of divorce, and it even seems to give a loose and ambiguous permission for why one can divorce a spouse.

However, there is a primary point of the text they choose that (as emphasized in the beginning) they seem to ignore. We'll get to that shortly.

In truth, divorce is only understood in Scripture as an allowance of God.

Mere divorce is neither commanded, nor is it itself directly addressed in the OT.

Instead, specific situations *related to divorce* are addressed in Scripture as “use case laws,” “analogies,” or situations within narrative accounts.

The primary text, which is the one the Pharisees referenced, is a “use case” and is found in [Deuteronomy 24](#).

The Pharisees and other religious sects of Judaism created all forms of oral traditions that were based upon an example of a misuse of the allowance of divorce.

Let's take a look at what I mean here.

First, let's just look at two verses from Matthew's account to add some of the detail of their question.

[Matthew 19:3](#)

Matthew 19:3

The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?

Notice the emphasis in their question: *for every cause?*

This is the context of Jesus's very direct answer.

Don't forget this.

Jesus is always hardest in how He answers and judges those who use their authority to misuse Scripture!

So, Jesus asks what Moses said about it, and then they replied (remember) with:

Mark 10:4

And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put *her* away.

Here is the Scripture they were referencing:

[Deuteronomy 24:1-4](#)

Deuteronomy 24:1-4

When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her: then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give *it* in her hand, and send her out of his house. And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man's *wife*. And *if* the latter husband hate her, and write her a bill of divorcement, and giveth *it* in her hand, and sendeth her out of his house; or if the latter husband die, which took her *to be* his wife; Her former husband, which sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after that she is defiled; for that *is* abomination before the LORD: and thou shalt not cause the land to sin, which the LORD thy God giveth thee *for* an inheritance.

In the Hebrew, verses 1-4 are one long sentence.

There is one primary point, theme, and command in this sentence, but there are also a number of principles and instructions to apply.

The first three verses present an example situation.

Deuteronomy 24:1-3

When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her: then

let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give *it* in her hand, and send her out of his house. And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man's *wife*. And *if* the latter husband hate her, and write her a bill of divorcement, and giveth *it* in her hand, and sendeth her out of his house; or if the latter husband die, which took her *to be* his wife;

“When... and it come to pass... because... then let him... and give it... and when she... she may go and be another man's wife... and if... [the latter husband divorce her or die]

Notice how everything in this is happening to the wife according to the feelings, preferences, decisions, or death of her husband.

This example case is exposing the former husband as a scheming, greedy abuser.

We will see that in the main point found in verse four.

This example is **not** about protecting the rights of the husband.

First, the husband decides this his wife no longer pleases him, and he bases that on a claim that he *found* “some uncleanness” in her.

This Hebrew word's most basic meaning is “nakedness,” and it is translated that way the majority of the time—dozens of times.

In some contexts it could refer to a sexual indecency, but it can't here because the penalty for the crime of adultery was *deathly* severe!

And this wife is actually permitted to *go and be married to another man*.

Second, the only *seeming* command is for the husband to write her a bill of divorce so that she can be legally free to marry another man before sending her out of the house.

This is actually instruction to protect the rights of the wife in a time in history where such protection was largely non-existent.

It assured that a petty or prideful or selfish husband could not just kick his wife out of the house without “putting in her hand” a bill of divorce.

So... when and if these things take place...

[Then] v4

“Her former husband may not... for...”

Deuteronomy 24:4

Her former husband, which sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after that she is defiled; for that *is* abomination before the LORD: and thou shalt not cause the land to sin, which the LORD thy God giveth thee *for* an inheritance.

You might ask, so what about “*after she is defiled.*”

Doesn't that refer to her having been divorced?

No! Having been divorced she was “free to be married to another man.”

She was “defiled” because the former husband *claimed* she was defiled!

In the example, the husband used some ambiguous claim of indecency as a justification of his divorce and the right to keep the dowry her father gave when they were married.

The point is not that the wife is defiled. The point is that the former husband used that ambiguous claim in order to divorce her.

Now that she is unmarried again (seemingly with her second dowry in possession) her former husband can't suddenly act like she is not “defiled” and marry her again—whether for her second dowry or for any other reason.

Such lowly, greedy, selfish, and wicked misuse of marriage and a woman is detestable (an abomination!) to God!

Do you see how this text in Deuteronomy (when interpreted rightly) is actually a protection of the wife and an honoring of women when both protection and honor of women was greatly lacking?

They were entering Canaan Land from Egypt! The cultures that surrounded and had influenced them treated women like possessions and offered children as sacrifices!

God was bringing them into the Promise Land and into His wise way from their sinful ways.

They were to be a light to the other nations!

They were to show the wisdom of the LORD to surrounding peoples!

How dare the husbands demean marriage, women, and wives in such a way.

How dare they dishonor the LORD with such prideful and greedy abuse!

That's what's going on in this text.

What is [Deuteronomy 24:1-4](#) teaching?

What wisdom is made known? What command is given?

Just one actual command: *The former husband **may not**...*

And yet... the Pharisees made this text all about: *The first husband **may**...*

Mark 10:4

And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put *her* away.

The Pharisees derived a liberating use of divorcing “for every case” based on a hypothetical example of a man who flippantly used divorce to abuse his wife for selfish financial gain.

Their concept and use of divorce was not that of a merciful allowance for limited use.

It was of prideful misuse of women and wives!

This is made clear in many of the traditions of the elders they followed.

They used an abominable illustration as their basis for their divorce traditions!

Have you ever tried to work a construction or sewing plan from a faulty pattern?

How did that go?

What was wrong? The basis for your plan was all wrong!

Rightly interpreted and applied Scripture is to be the basis for our faith and conduct as followers of Christ.

Q: How carefully do you apply Scripture?

MORE LAWS FOR HARD HEARTS v5

Their misuse of Scripture further revealed their stubborn, rebellious, and spiritually-dead hearts.

Mark 10:5

And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept.

Instead of exposing Jesus as a flawed teacher, the Pharisees were exposed as hard-hearted, prideful sinners.

Hard-hearted sinners tend to use the examples of hard-hearted sinners to justify their own doings!

This use of “hardness of hearts” comes from the Greek word *sklerokardia*.

It is not the same word as Jesus used about his disciples in chapter 8.

That word had to do with a having a lack of senses and understanding.

This word has more to do with having an obstinate and harsh heart.

In reality, the Scripture they were citing was neither the one Jesus was referencing nor was it one that justified their flippant misuse of divorce.

[Deuteronomy 24:1-4](#) was a “use case law” designed to limit the evils of sinners who would misuse the allowance of divorce in order to empower themselves at the expense of their former wives.

It was a precept for hard-hearted, abusively unloving sinners!

And Jesus said to these self-righteous Pharisees that this precept was written in the Torah because of *their* hard hearts! Ouch!

It appears that their testing of Jesus has backfired and rather exposed themselves as guilty!

That’s what God’s law does: proves us guilty.

[Romans 3:19](#)

Romans 3:19

Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

Through God's conscience-binding Word, He both limits our evils and condemns our sin.

The right response is confession, repentance, and trust for God's mercy in Christ.

The wrong response is self-righteousness, rebellion, and trust in our own ways.

God's commands are good. All of them.

They reveal God's wisdom and way.

Even societal commands that were given to Israel as a nation within a particular context and time in history still reveal God's wisdom.

God's commands are good.

Q: What do God's commands reveal about your heart?

GOD'S ORIGINAL DESIGN IN MARRIAGE

v6-9

Jesus's follow-up answer prioritized God's original design of marriage before humanity ever sinned and needed the mercy of divorce.

Commands did proceed Sinai laws and instruction.

Commands are seen in God's original creation design.

Commands are for our good and given before sin.

The answer to Jesus's question in verse 3 is found in Genesis.

Jesus alludes to and quotes from three locations in [Genesis: 1:27](#), [5:2](#), [2:24](#).

Mark 10:6–9

But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

More laws and instruction were given thousands of years later as a schoolmaster for hard-hearted sinners until the Messiah would come.

Jesus directs the Pharisees attention to God’s original design and commission of marriage.

1. **From the beginning of God's creation of man... v6a**
 2. **Men and women are equal as God's image-bearers... v6b ([Gen 1:27](#))**
 3. **Distinct as male and female, with the woman being made from the man... v6c ([Gen 5:2](#))**
 4. **So that they can unite as one in marriage... v7b-8 ([Gen 2:24](#))**
 5. **Joined together by God... v9a**
 6. **Not to be separated by man... v9b ([Ro 8:35,39](#); [1 Cor 7:8-17](#))**
 7. **Having left their parents. v7a ([Gen 2:24](#))**
- * Though not all will marry, marriage is good for all. ([1 Cor 7:8-9](#))
 - * Living as though married when not, is sinful and harmful for all. ([1 Cor 7:9](#))
 - * Though not God’s desire, God does permit divorce for “such cases.” ([Mt 5:31-32](#); [1 Cor 7:15](#))

In other contexts, Jesus and the Spirit give more insights into God's merciful allowance of divorce.

Though it goes against God's original design, divorce is still a God-given allowance for sinners and those sinned against. ([Mt 5:31-32](#); [1 Cor 7:15](#))

Matthew 5:31-32

It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.

1 Corinthians 7:15

But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace.

Note: *not under bondage in such cases.*

That can only mean to be freed and permitted to remarry.

I cannot take time to teach through [1 Corinthians 7](#), but if there is enough interest, I would consider doing so in an upcoming Wednesday Bible Study.

The true need we have as sinners is for God's Spirit to write His law in our hearts and give us a desire to please our Father as we know and follow the Son back into the restored Eden.

Jesus's point is to go directly to God's original instruction in Genesis when the Scripture was not addressing allowances and restrictions related to the realities of our sins.

For Jesus, what God allowed was not as important as what God desires.

As an illustration of this, consider being taught how to fly a plane.

I had the opportunity to fly a small plane under the direction of a flight trainer and commercial pilot once. I controlled the instruments for a couple hours *after take off and before landing!*

Interestingly, when asked how to fly the plane, the first instruction I received was not: press this button to be ejected into the air and pull this lever in order to release your parachute!

There is a problem if that is the first instruction given!

There is more to flying a plane than escaping a crash landing by parachute!

And there is more to marriage than the allowance of divorce “for such cases.”

Jesus responded to these prideful, selfish oppressors with the heart of what it means to be a “great” servant to your spouse: Leave, cleave, and submit to God by loving one another!

[Ephesians 5](#) was written after Mark, and in it, we are told that marriage illustrates Christ’s unfailing love for His church—us!

And what sort of love does Scripture say God has for those who are in Christ—inseparable love!

[Romans 8:35,39](#)

Romans 8:35

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

Romans 8:39

Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Christ is always our example for discipleship—including in marriage.

Also including our responsibility to uphold God’s design of marriage—whether or not we are married!

We are to love as Christ loves and serve as Christ serves.

And marriage is designed by God to illustrate such love to our world!

But, the Pharisees remain hard-hearted toward this... and the disciples don't get it.

THE DISCIPLES DON'T GET IT v10-12

The content of final verses have already been addressed, but the spirit of the disciples is what still needs to be understood.

The disciples are to be seen here as similar but not as bad as the Pharisees.

That is how every one of these scenes go in chapters 8-10.

Mark 10:10-12

And in the house his disciples asked him again of the same *matter*. And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery.

Disciples: *Doesn't the man have the right of divorce?*

Jesus: *He would be committing adultery on his wife.*

Jesus: *The wife can divorce her husband too, and it would be adultery.*

They both have equal provision and responsibility.

They are supposed to serve one another.

There are allowances for divorce that are addressed in other Scriptures non-exhaustively, but Jesus did not come to give us a better version of oral and written tradition that binds us in detailed laws for every situation.

Even the OT did not do that... it is mostly narrative and examples of laws for wisdom!

Jesus came to save us from our sin and call us to walk in holiness, wisdom, and love!

Jesus demands that we seek God's purposes, not His allowances.

The disciples believe this is a hard saying!

Disciples: *Marriage is not good.* (Mt 19:10)

[Matthew 19:10](#); [Genesis 1:31](#)

Matthew 19:10

His disciples say unto him, If the case of the man be so with *his* wife, it is not good to marry.

God in the garden: *Marriage is very good.*

Genesis 1:31

And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, *it was* very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

UPHOLD MARRIAGE. SERVE YOUR SPOUSE.

Mark 10:5-9

And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept. But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more

twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

Marriage is designed by God as the first and only societal union that was given both before sin and as an essential element of God's creation and commission of humanity.

Marriage enables a man and woman to serve one another's needs and to partner together in God's commission in a way that is unique to any other societal partnership.

Marriage is bigger than a government license, though that is a natural and normal administration of such a union within society.

Marriage is bigger than the allowance of divorce, which God has mercifully allowed as a necessity due to our sin.

Divorce is more permissive and protective than Jesus's statement in Mark. Jesus was driving home the points we have seen, not stating His own version of binding and nuanced oral traditions.

Divorce was largely given as a protection for women to not be left destitute, and now Jesus's teaching harshly condemns the Pharisees' for leveraging divorce to do that very thing—leave their wives destitute.

Marriage is to illustrate the unfailing love of Jesus for His church.

May Jesus's teaching help us better give ourselves to:

1. Our call to service as disciples of Jesus.
2. Our responsibility to uphold God's design in marriage.

3. Our commitment to marriage in the present.
4. Our love for Jesus as His bride.

Main Argument: Disciples are called to steward their marriage and to love their spouse in the way they should do everything else— as a servant of all like Jesus has done for us.

If you were once married but your spouse is no longer with you because of death or divorce, we hurt for your pain. I pray the Spirit gives you the strength to serve your church, family, and community by upholding God’s good design for marriage and speaking well of it. Speak of it according to God’s “very good” work and design.

If you have experienced the divorce of parents, we hurt for the pain you have experienced as well. I pray you know and follow Jesus the Good Shepherd who leads people through valleys and into green pastures with unending love.

If you are still in the home, I pray you see the beauty of redemption in a renewed home with parents who love you. May you have a tender heart that is not like the Pharisees and hardened toward your parents. Hear them. Learn from them. Follow Jesus under their lead and care.

If you are not married, there could many thoughts that go through your mind from a sermon largely on marriage—loneliness, frustration, eagerness, discouragement, etc. I pray you know the love and purposes of God in Christ and His church. God in His wisdom forms believers into church community who together fulfill His commission to us.

Being single, Scripture says you can have some advantages with less distractions to keep you from discipleship and evangelism in partnership with your church family. Scripture actually speaks very highly of this.

Just be sure fear, selfishness, and ungodly secular thought are not ruling you in this area.

Also being single, you may have particular challenges. I pray you guard your purity the same as those who are married but without the help of a spouse. Please lean into the church for help and partnership in life and community. There is just as much honor following Christ single as doing so married. You are a valuable part of Christ's church.

If you are married, marriage is both a privilege and responsibility, a blessing and a burden. While I like to contribute to the lacking message in our world of the positives of marriage, I still must acknowledge that for some it is difficult to hear that you are to serve your spouse.

I pray that God gives you the wisdom and grace to know how to obey and apply the teachings of Jesus. I invite you and your spouse to talk with me and Martha or others in the church if you desire help in navigating marriage.

May we follow Jesus's example and truly serve our spouse.

To us all, I pray we together uphold marriage in a society that increasingly confounds and opposes it. The church must be the pillar and ground of truth on this topic too, and that calls for everyone in the church to participate.

Main Argument: Disciples are called to steward their marriage and to love their spouse in the way they should do everything else—as a servant of all like Jesus has done for us.