

Caldwell Marriage Enrichment Session #1 - Dean & Peggy Caldwell

Summary

What does it truly take to build a marriage that lasts? This session challenges one of the most widely held assumptions about relationships: that love is the foundation of a strong marriage. Instead, we are invited to consider that commitment, not emotion, is the bedrock on which lasting marriages are built. Love, as we discover, is an emotion that rises and falls, but commitment is a decision that holds steady through every season of life. Drawing from the story of Joseph in Genesis 39, we see how God's favor and blessing can rest on an entire household because of one faithful person, a reminder that our dedication to God at home matters just as much as our devotion in the church. We are also walked through the four biblical characteristics of a Christian marriage, beginning with the necessity of a supernatural move of God in our homes. The message is clear: God needs to be as real to us at our kitchen tables as He is in our sanctuaries. This is not about religious performance but about creating an atmosphere where God's presence is welcomed and expected. For anyone who has ever felt their marriage growing distant or their spiritual life compartmentalized, this session offers both a loving challenge and a hopeful path forward.

Chapters

Chapter 1: The Foundation: Covenant, Commitment, and Character

0:00 - 9:56

Marriage cannot be built on emotion alone; it must be built on commitment, covenant, and an understanding of each other's true character.

Chapter 2: Supernatural Intervention: Allowing God to Be God at Home

9:56 - 25:41

A Christian marriage requires the same supernatural move of God at home that we experience in the church.

Chapter 3: Love, Forgiveness, and Canceling the Debt

25:41 - 40:47

A healthy Christian marriage requires genuine love and a commitment to forgiveness, which means canceling the debt so that the offender no longer owes us anything.

Chapter 4: Trust, Responsibility, and Embracing Our Differences

40:47 - 58:06

A strong marriage requires trust, an understanding of each other's spiritual, emotional, and social needs, and a joyful embrace of the differences between men and women.

Title: Building a Marriage That Lasts: Commitment, Covenant, and Character

Sermon Summary: Drawing from decades of marriage, ministry, and counseling experience, the speakers challenge couples to move beyond romanticized notions of love and build their marriages on a foundation of biblical commitment, supernatural dependence on God,

forgiveness, and mutual understanding. The sermon emphasizes that love is an emotion that fluctuates, while commitment is the bedrock that sustains a marriage through every season. Using personal stories, scripture, and practical wisdom, the message calls couples to allow God to be as present in their homes as He is in their churches, to cancel the debts of offense through genuine forgiveness, and to embrace the God-designed differences between men and women as complementary strengths rather than sources of conflict.

Key Points:

- A marriage cannot be built on love alone because love is an emotion that rises and falls; commitment is the true foundation of a lasting marriage
- God's supernatural presence must be as real and active in the home as it is in the church, and allowing God to move at home can transform rebellion, division, and dysfunction
- According to 1 Corinthians 7:14, when even one believer resides in a household, the entire home is sanctified and entitled to the blessings of God
- Biblical forgiveness means canceling the debt, reaching the point where the offender no longer owes you an apology; unforgiveness keeps the offended person in bondage, not the offender
- Every physical affair begins as an emotional affair, and unmet emotional needs create vulnerability; spouses must affirm and build up one another consistently
- Men tend to think with logic while women tend to think with emotion, and these differences are God-designed to complete one another rather than divide
- Each person carries three God-given needs: spiritual, emotional, and social, and a healthy marriage works to meet all three
- Trust and jealousy must be addressed honestly; a home should be a place of peace, counsel, and safety where both spouses can speak freely

Scripture Reference:

- Genesis 3:7, where the eyes of Adam and Eve were opened, used as a foundation for the idea that spouses must truly see and know one another
- 1 Corinthians 7:14, which teaches that an unbelieving spouse is sanctified through the believing spouse, and the household is covered by God's blessing
- Matthew 6:9-15, the Lord's Prayer, specifically the call to forgive debts as we wish our own debts to be forgiven
- Matthew 6:14-15, which states that those who do not forgive others will not receive forgiveness from God
- 1 Corinthians 6:18, which distinguishes between sins committed outside the body and sins committed against one's own body, used to address moral failure in marriage
- Genesis 39:2-5, the account of Joseph in Potiphar's house, illustrating how God blesses an entire household for the sake of one faithful person

Stories:

- A story about an elderly man who visited his wife with Alzheimer's every morning even though she had not recognized him in five years, illustrating the true meaning of "for better or worse" and covenant love

- A humorous story about a husband and wife giving each other the silent treatment, with the wife leaving a note at 5 a.m. to wake him up rather than doing so in person, used to open the session with levity
- The account of the speaker's brother Bob, born with a hole in his spine and told he would never walk, who received a miraculous healing after ten years of his parents believing God, illustrating the power of supernatural faith at home
- The account of the speaker's brother Randy, who had diabetes and epileptic seizures and declared his healing publicly as a teenager, never experiencing another seizure or requiring insulin again
- The speaker's personal account of his daughter Talisa's rebellion as a teenager, during which God convicted him that he had not allowed God to be God at home; after repentance and renewed family prayer, the spirit of rebellion broke and his daughter called off plans to run away with an older man
- The chicken nugget story, in which the speaker drove away from a steakhouse to avoid a man he had not forgiven, ending up eating chicken nuggets at McDonald's while the offender ate the steak he had wanted, used to illustrate that unforgiveness imprisons the one who will not forgive
- A lighthearted story about the speaker holding his wife's purse in a JCPenney dressing room and accidentally shouting the wrong clothing size across the store, used to illustrate the humor and differences that should be embraced in marriage.

Here is a list of all scripture references mentioned or alluded to in the sermon:

****Directly Cited****

- Genesis 3:7 - The opening of Adam and Eve's eyes after the fall
- Genesis 39:2 - The Lord was with Joseph during his time as a slave
- Genesis 39:3 - Potiphar recognized God's presence in Joseph's life
- Genesis 39:5 - God blessed Potiphar's household for Joseph's sake
- 1 Corinthians 7:14 - The unbelieving spouse is sanctified by the believing spouse
- Matthew 6:9-13 - The Lord's Prayer, including the petition to forgive debts as we forgive debtors
- Matthew 6:14-15 - God's forgiveness of us is connected to our forgiveness of others
- 1 Corinthians 6:18 - Fleeing fornication; sins against the body versus sins outside the body

****Alluded To Without Direct Citation****

- John 13:34 - The new commandment to love one another as Christ has loved us
- John 13:1 - Having loved his own, Christ loved them to the end
- Romans 3:4 - Let every man be a liar and God be true
- 1 Thessalonians 5:23 - Humanity made of spirit, soul, and body

Transcript

I didn't get to come last year.

I think I had the flu and I didn't get to come last year.

And when they called about this, we loved the idea of getting to be together.

We just celebrated our 50th wedding anniversary.

Yay!

We've had ten good ones out of that.

I don't know what's the best.

I always say nine.

I'm married to a Caldwell.

There are five boys and one girl.

And four of them are preachers.

And they're all cut-ups.

They're crazy.

And so people tell us all the time that the women get to go to heaven whether we're saved or not.

Because we live with them.

I always like to start out with a little funny.

You know, me and... are not equipped for women all the time on what we do.

And I don't know about you women, but when we first got married, I was real bad about holding a grudge.

When he would make me mad, I would talk to him.

And I thought that would bother him.

I don't know where I got that idea.

He loved the silence.

I want to read you this little funny.

It said a man and his wife were having problems at home, so they gave each other the silence treatment.

Suddenly, the man realized that the next day he needed his wife to wake him up at 5 a.m. because he had to catch a business flight.

Not wanting to be the first to break the silence and lose the fight, he wrote on a piece of paper, please wake me up at 5 a.m., and he left the note where he knew she had found it.

The next morning, the man woke up only to discover it was 9 o'clock and he missed his flight.

Curious, he was about to go see why his wife didn't wake him when he noticed another piece of paper by the bedside.

And it said, it's 5 a.m., wake up.

You're just not equipped for us, I tell you.

Our scripture that we kind of wanted to base this on is found in Genesis.

3 and 7.

And when I first read this to Dean and told him I wanted us to use this scripture, he looked at me like, well, what's that got to do with anything?

But it says, and the eyes of them both were open.

Adam and Eve.

Probably thought they knew each other real well. and suddenly their eyes were opened.

And I took that not only on the spiritual level, but sometimes we just need to open our eyes and look at the other person.

We think we know each other so well.

How many dated a long time before you got married?

Raise your hand.

Did it do you any good?

You married pretty quick.

Lord have mercy!

One fast group.

This man and I, I knew him as a preacher.

He started preaching when he was 14.

And I had heard him when he was 16.

He came in Arkansas and preached.

And all the little girls, you know, he had cold black hair and was a preacher.

A lot of it.

A lot of it.

Had them lamb chops, sideburns, and Lord have mercy, we all took after him.

No, I just heard him preach and just thought he was something else.

But anyway, we...

On our first date, we went to eat and started to talk for hours.

On the second date, he asked me to marry.

And two months and three weeks later, we were married.

And I have seen people date five or six years.

I saw people get married.

His mom and dad dated two weeks and got married. and they lived together 57 years before they passed away.

So it doesn't really matter the amount of time that you date, we don't know each other until we get married.

I found this saying, and I wrote it in my Bible.

No, I wrote it in my book.

The difficulty with marriage is we fall in love with a personality, or looks, but we marry a character.

We fall in love with the personality.

Oh man, they're funny.

They're just so full of life.

But we marry the character.

That's good.

And that's what we decided to, we're going to talk about commitment, a covenant, and the character of each other.

That's what we're going to talk about.

And Dean's going to do the, he does most of the talking.

But I want to read you this, for better or worse, because he's going to talk about covenant before we divide it up.

Covenant and commitment.

And I read this several years ago.

We both had parents that have passed on.

His mom had Alzheimer's really bad.

And so we all, as you grow older, if you haven't already and you have your parents, you're going to deal with situations, different things that happen in life.

Some of you may have already went through sickness.

I've had breast cancer two times in 2000 and again in 2010.

And I was so thankful for a man who stood with me.

And so we're going to face, you're going to face things if you haven't already.

But this one was about an older couple and it's called For Better or Worse.

On a busy morning, the nurse in the crowded emergency room seated an elderly gentleman who had come to have stitches removed from his hand.

He said, nurse, I'm sorry, but I'm in a hurry.

I have another very important appointment in an hour.

As the line of patients ahead of me moved slowly, he kept anxiously looking at his watch.

Knowing he'd never make his appointment, the nurse led him to an exam room, checked his vitals, and evaluated the condition of his wound.

Seeing it was healed very well, she consulted with one of the doctors and got clearance to remove his sutures so he could leave.

And she asked him, sir, are you hurrying to another doctor's appointment?

He said, oh, no, ma'am, I'm on my way to have breakfast with my wife.

She's at the nursing home.

The nurse asked about his wife's health and learned she was a victim of Alzheimer's disease.

Will she be upset if you're late, sir?

The nurse asked.

The old man told her that, oh, honey, she hadn't recognized me in five years.

Surprised, the nurse asked him, you still go every morning?

Although she doesn't know who you are?

The old man smiled and patted her hand softly and said, oh yes, honey, she doesn't know who I am, but I know who she is.

Loving, for better or worse, means being committed to each other in every season, every circumstance of life.

It's how Christ loves us.

Having loved his own, he loved them to the end.

And it's why he said, a new commandment I give you is I've loved you, so must you love one another.

A couple months back, Ms.

Pegg and I were doing a marriage retreat in Branson, Missouri. several people were there several churches together and before the first session i had two of the leaders from different churches come and they made this statement they said brother dean we've got some couples that we brought with us and uh they have troubling issues that was the words he used and uh if they don't get answers today they're done and

I said to him, I said, brother, you know, you don't bring to a marriage retreat trying to get everything fixed.

I said, but he said, we talked them into coming.

And with that thought in mind, I sat down and I thought, man, we're going to have to hit a home run before we even get out of the gate.

The first lesson I've done, I walked to the pulpit and I made this statement to them.

You can't build a marriage on love.

I know we've been taught different than that.

But you can't build a marriage on love, you build a marriage on commitment.

Because love is an emotion.

It comes and it goes.

And

I don't care how close to God you are, there's gonna be days you wish you wasn't married.

Now then.

The Barney Five said, put that in your smite and poke it.

You base your marriage on commitment.

Because there's going to be times when you're not so emotionally in love.

I know couples that Peggy and I have counseled with from time to time through the years.

One time was madly in love.

Now they're divorced and they hate each other.

So love is an emotion.

It comes and it goes.

You have to have love, that's true.

But you can't base your marriage on love.

You base it on commitment.

And that's the very reason why the Lord teaches salvation the way he teaches salvation.

Salvation is a commitment.

Because there's gonna be times in life you're not gonna understand why God does what he does.

You lose a loved one prematurely, a family member.

But you're committed, you are committed.

And in that process, I wanna deal with something today with a commitment.

And one thing that we need to pray for constantly in our marriage is supernatural intervention from God in our marriage.

We believe that our marriage can be all that God intended it to be, but without God's intervention, without God's intervention, you can't make the goal that God has set for you to make.

So we have to have God's intervention and you cannot have a marriage you're supposed to have without God's supernatural touch.

Even though you may have married someone that is a Christian, they believe God just like you believe God, but they come from a different background than you did.

Now let me explain what I'm talking about.

We all have adjustment periods.

When Peggy and I first got married,

My family was totally different than her family, even though our common denominator was both of us loved the Lord, we were both Christians.

But she come from a different background than I did.

Let me use something silly here.

Her bunch squeezed the toothpaste from the bottom, mine started in the middle.

We're different in different things.

And it takes an adjustment period over the little things.

Most of the time, we fight about the little things.

It's not the major things.

It's the little things.

But over time, little things build up.

And it's kind of like misplaced furniture.

If you don't deal with it when you get up in the night to go to the restroom, you're going to bump into it. because you moved it, and it's a different area.

So what we wanna talk about today is our commitment, and it takes four things to have a Christian marriage.

Four things, biblically, to have a Christian marriage.

You can both go to church, you can both have God in your life, and still not have a Christian marriage.

Miss Peggy and I have, oh goodness, through the years of time, a world of marriage counseling.

And I guess the reason we're doing that is because we thought so much when we first got married.

We know what that's like and what that's about.

But anyway, through the years of time, we've had to deal with a lot of preachers. that has had marriage conflicts and the last session we're going to do here is going to be on matrimonial conflict.

How do you deal with conflict when you have conflict?

And there is Bible answers concerning that.

But here's what I want to start out on when we're talking about the four biblical characteristics that you need to have to have a Christian marriage.

God honors anyone that has a relationship with him.

Now I want to show you something very powerful this morning from the scripture.

And here's a good scripture to underline in your Bible because it's so full and packed full of some good stuff that you can put your covenant of marriage on.

Let's say you're married to someone that's not a Christian.

And you may be here today and you're thinking, well, I come to this marriage retreat and I'm not really a believer of whatever the case might be.

Well, that doesn't make any difference whenever you're talking about the greatness of God.

I want you to go with me in your Bibles to 1 Corinthians chapter 7 and verse number 14.

What a powerful scripture this is.

Because this will help you in understanding how gracious God can move in your marriage when there's only one person there living for God.

The Bible says in 1 Corinthians chapter 7 and verse 14, The unbelieving husband, the unsaved husband, is sanctified by the wife.

And the unbelieving wife or the unsaved wife is sanctified by the husband.

Else were your children unclean, but now are they holy.

Now watch this.

I want you to look at this.

As long as God has one person living in a household that's born again, that whole household is entitled to the blessings of God.

I want you to get that in your mind.

Let it soak in.

Because I've watched this through the years of time.

When people that one person only saved and they come to church and they come discouraged most times if I just had any help at home.

But the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife.

Doesn't mean that the husband is now saved because the wife is saved.

It means the home is sanctified to the point the blessings of God can flow to that person.

Now let me show you how dedicated God is to that promise.

Here's a story.

Let me see if I... Genesis 39.

Genesis chapter 39 is the story of Joseph.

He was bought, he was sold into slavery, he was bought.

In chapter 39 in verse 2, top of the verse there, the Lord was with Joseph.

Now he was a slave, but the Lord was with Joseph.

Verse 3, his master Saul, the Lord was with him.

That means the man that owned Joseph knew that Joseph had a move of God in his life.

Now let me show you verse five.

Now the man that owned Joseph's name was Potiphar.

He was an idolater.

He served the sun god, but look at verse five.

Middle to the bottom of that verse, God blessed the Egyptians' house for Joseph's sake.

Wow, what a powerful statement that is.

Joseph was owned by a idolater that recognized God in his life.

But God blessed everything that Potiphar had for Joseph's sake.

Why did he do that?

Because God is simply saying you can't change your circumstance sometimes. but it doesn't belittle the blessing and the favor of God.

So if you're the only one living in your house, living for God, or maybe you're raising kids that are so rebellious and grandkids and what have you, but when you go home, and unlock that door and step across that threshold, you know this, that house is blessed and favored of God because God has people there that's covered by the blood of Jesus Christ.

Just wanted to throw that in there because sometimes we stumble over things that God has clarified for us in the scriptures.

So number one, the four characteristics of having a Christian marriage,

You have to have supernatural move of God.

God's going to have to move in your behalf, in your home.

Now listen to me very carefully.

And I'm not trying to take you home and become a nutcase over this.

That's not what I'm advocating.

But God needs to be as real to you at your house as he is in your church.

And sometimes we fail in that area.

I grew up in a preacher's home, and it was a common thing for the glory of God to fall in our house.

My dad, we're all musicians, and after, we call it supper, some people call it dinner, but supper is a Bible term, the supper of the lamb, so I think it was the evening meal.

After supper,

Because we didn't have a television, anything like that.

But we'd sit around the piano and get a guitar, mandolin, a rub board, something like that, and we'd go sing.

I have seen multi-times my mom just start worshipping God in the living room.

Of course, there's six of us kids.

We had enough to start a church by ourselves.

But just worship God in the house.

And I've seen my daddy just leave the piano stool, and I'd take the piano stool and sit down and start playing the piano and hand the guitar to one of my brothers, and he'd just start working across the floor worshipping God.

This is at home.

Now, I never invited anybody from school to come home and spend the night.

I may look dumb, but I'm smarter than that.

Because I knew what was going to happen.

But let me show you something.

I had a brother that was born a twin.

Bill and Bob, they're twins.

Bob had a hole in his spine, a birth defect.

They said he'd never walk.

They were gonna send him to Columbia, Missouri for special surgery.

And my dad and mom just believed God.

But it took 10 years for God to come across for that healing.

Bob was two years old before he ever took his first step.

One side of his body matured faster than the other.

One side of his face was smaller, one arm was smaller, one leg was smaller.

But on November the 9th, 1969, ten years later, we were in a revival and Brother, I can't remember his name now, called him up.

We didn't know this preacher called him up, carried him up there, set him on the bench on the platform and said, you've waited ten years for what God's about to do.

I was playing the guitar that night we were doing the singing for that revival.

I'm standing behind Bob in one of those little short preacher's bands, as we called them then.

Brother Al Hewison was his name.

Brother Al picked up Bob's short leg, put it in his hand and said, in the name of Jesus, I believe in heaven's best.

I heard bones pop and snap.

That leg began to grow, that arm straightened out, that face blowed out like a balloon.

My brother Randy had diabetes, epileptic seizures on insulin.

He stood in the service when he was about 13 and said, I'm declaring my healing.

Never had another seizure, never had another dose of insulin.

Miracle after miracle after miracle took place in our home.

We thought that was normal.

You know why?

Because we had a supernatural move of God at home the same way we had in the church.

Now after I got married, my wife and I had our children, my oldest daughter Talisa went through a time of rebellion.

I mean a bad time, rebellion.

We'd done everything just short of smothering her.

And that crossed my mind a time or two.

I mean real bad rebellion.

And she was a teenager.

And I was at the church praying.

God, what am I going to do?

What do you want me to do?

And the Lord spoke to me and this is what he said, you won't let me be God at home.

Now I wanted to stand up and say, well that ain't right.

But I know the scripture well enough, let every man be a liar and God be true.

When I opened my mind, my mind began to flood how I was raised at home.

And we had a move of God.

And I had allowed

Things to happen that I didn't plan, they just happened.

It was easier for us to sing in our house than it was for us to pray.

Okay?

When my daughters would come in the room where I was praying, I automatically changed it to a song.

We didn't pray at home.

We didn't join hands and pray at home.

We believed in it, prayed at church.

I repented.

I went home.

I'm bawling, squalling, called Peggy and Talisa and Tara together, and I apologized to them, and I said, I haven't allowed God to be God in this house.

My daughter that's in rebellion rolled her eyes and made this statement.

If he's any more God in this house, we'll have to put a steeple on the roof.

I'm so thankful I just come from a good prayer meeting.

Yeah.

I was more passionate.

I thought, girl, you don't have a clue.

You don't have a clue.

It seemed like a handful of thumbs when we started out, but we changed it.

We did.

We changed it.

When someone calls for prayer, we pray immediately.

It don't make no difference if we have company.

It don't make no difference if we're in a restaurant.

It don't make any difference where we're at.

When someone calls for prayer, we change the attitude of everything and we pray at that point.

We started having family prayer.

I'm telling you, it was odd.

It was strange.

It was tough.

But God broke. that spirit of rebellion.

My daughter was going to run off with another guy.

He was five, six years old.

She was 15.

He was 21, 20, 21.

And I told them they wasn't going to do it.

But the night before they left, he called.

And this is what she said.

I can't tell you why, but I can't do this.

I can't do this.

You know why?

Because we had a supernatural move of God in our home that changed some months earlier.

You've got to have a supernatural move of God in your home.

And I'm not telling you to go home and be in that case.

That's not what I'm saying.

But go home and allow God to be God at home the same way

You allow God to be in your life in the church.

I know this may be a little different marriage retreat here than you've ever been to, but I'm speaking from the heart of what I felt this morning in prayer, asking God what to do.

Number two, you do have to have love.

You have to have a love.

And, you know, in the Greek language, love is divided up in different parts.

There is a phileo love and then...

There is eros love and then there is agape love.

Agape love is unconditional love.

Now I've heard about that but I've never seen it.

I know people say I've got agape love and then it's not long until they cloud up and rain all over somebody.

But we go by what is called phileo love.

Phileo love is if you love me I'll love you back.

And if you don't I won't.

Now that's how we operate.

Agape love is unconditional love.

Jesus had agape love, unconditional love.

I'm going to confess something.

I have never made that grade.

Never made that grade.

Then arist love is the natural physical love.

But you have to have love, caring, loving each other.

And when you have caring and loving each other, then you can go into the next mode and that is forgiveness.

To have a good Christian marriage, you've got to live in forgiveness.

I preach a message on forgiveness just from the word of God because God requires us to forgive in the natural with people.

Marriage is included in that.

You think where that's at.

In Matthew chapter 6, and verse 14 and 15.

Verse 14 said, If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will forgive you.

Verse 15, If you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father in heaven forgive you.

What's he said?

If you don't forgive, you can't be forgiven.

Right.

That's some strong language there.

So if God requires us to forgive, then there's got to be a Bible way to do it.

I was telling someone out there in the hall this morning, I've had to pray this prayer before.

God, I don't like them people.

But I know you do.

And will you love that person through me?

Now don't come to me after church and tell me, oh, I love everybody because I ain't going to believe you.

There's some people you like better than others.

But some people make it hard to love.

But here's what I found out.

Several years ago, I was hurt, wounded deeply.

And how can I say this?

Because I'm going to be open with you today because I feel there's some need here.

That needs to be addressed.

I have a good memory.

Always have had a good memory.

And everybody says, oh, I always had a memory like you do.

Let me tell you a downside for good memory.

It's hard to forget.

When you have been wounded deeply, I can tell you what clothes they had on when they said what they said.

I can repeat what they said almost verbatim, word for word, even with the periods and question marks.

It's hard to deal with that.

So it sticks.

It sticks.

Only two things I know of that's got crawls, and that's chickens and people.

A chicken uses their crawl to digest their food.

We use our crawl to hold jet grudges, and I don't know what part of the body that is.

I know you've got one because I've heard it all my life.

That just sticks in my crawl.

I know you have one.

And it'll stick in your crawls for sure.

But anyway, I was praying and I'm saying, God, I've got to get past this.

This is tough.

And God, I was in Knoxville, Tennessee in revival there in the church and praying and Scripture just began to flood through my mind and God was helping me.

And I stopped and I said, Oh God, I can do this.

I can do this.

By the Word of God, I can do this.

But don't ever ask me to preach that because then nobody will respond to something like that.

Every time I've ever preached that message on forgiveness, we've had a tremendous altar service.

So I want to show you from the Scripture what that is in a brief form here.

Seven words in the Bible that deal with forgiveness.

Three in the Old Testament, four in the New.

Hebrew and Greek.

You guys all know that.

But here's the ironic part.

Even in the Hebrew and Greek, they have the same meaning.

Cancel the debt.

Cancel the debt.

It's what forgiveness means.

Let me see if I can... Matthew 6, beginning in verse 9.

Now everybody knows this.

Jesus taught the disciples this prayer.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come.

Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.

Alright.

Cancel the debt.

What does that mean?

When you come to the point that the offender no longer owes you an apology. now then they don't owe you anything as long as you're expecting an apology you have it forgiven have it forgiven that applies in marriage marriages I've seen fall to pieces because of unforgiveness the preacher you know he done this she done that understand that

But if you're wanting to heal your marriage, there's the key.

If you want to heal your marriage, you've got to forgive and cancel the debt.

If you don't want to heal your marriage, keep going like you're going and it won't be healed.

It'll probably fall to pieces.

But when you cancel the debt, you've come to the point that the offender no longer owes you Anything.

I'm going way around the horn and taking this piece by piece because I want to help you.

In prayer this morning, I feel like there's some of you come here right now and you've got issues.

You're trying to work for it and you don't have any answers.

But there is answers from the Word of God.

And I'm going to use myself and Miss Peggy.

For example, and probably using myself more, she just cleared her throat.

I remember there was a guy that headed in for me, and I don't know to this day what he got mad about.

We used to be good friends, and I don't know what he got mad about.

He was mad, and of course, we travel all the time.

We cover seven states, and we were off in another state, and boy, I mean, every time I get a word, somebody hear him say something that's negative, and I'm thinking, knock a knot on his head, a cat can suck.

That's how I felt.

And so I told Miss Peggy, I said, when we get home, I know it's a little pricey, but there's a steakhouse.

I said, we're going to go and celebrate.

They're going to get our good tennis shoes on, and we're going to go celebrate at that steak.

And we looked forward to just me and her being together.

So we got home, and we went to this steakhouse, and when we drove up to the parking lot, there's that dude's car.

Got a little teddy bear hanging out the windows.

I know that's his car.

And I said to her, I'm not going in.

And she said, well, why?

I said, they'll set me right across the table from him.

And he said one word, I'm going to knock his nose to the back of his head.

Yeah.

Oh.

I said that.

And let me put a little verse on there.

I meant it.

When I said it, I wasn't just talking.

So we drove around twice in the parking lot and left.

And I'm so mad, I could have bit a nail into it.

We ended up at McDonald's eating chicken nuggets.

And then I got mad.

And about halfway through that 10-pack of nuggets, I said to myself, who's in bondage here?

Who's in bondage here?

He's eating the steak I wanted to eat, and I'm eating chicken nuggets.

Because I wouldn't forget it.

When you don't forgive, you're the one in bondage.

Because you're expecting, you're expecting, you're expecting.

And if it don't happen, then it's repeat over and over and over and over again.

So you live in forgiveness if you want a good marriage.

You have to forgive.

You have to cancel the debt.

Preacher, I don't know if I can or not.

You can.

Yeah, you can.

You can.

I'm tempted to go here.

But we've got time to do this here.

I want to help you with something.

1 Corinthians 6 and 18.

Now you can tell I'm shooting from the hip right now, okay?

I want to show you something from the Scripture.

There's two kinds of sin a person can commit biblically.

Two kinds.

I'm about to read it to you.

1 Corinthians 6 and 18.

Yes.

He said, Flee fornication.

Every sin that a man doeth is without his body.

That's character sin.

But he that commits fornication sins against his own flesh.

Now I do a whole lesson on marriages that have had breakdowns morally.

And I'm just going to touch that, not go through the whole lesson here today because I want to help you biblically.

There's a character sin and there's a fleshly sin.

Now listen to me very carefully.

If you're here today and you've had a moral failure in your marriage and you're in a struggle, struggle with this.

You're still together, but it's tough.

It comes up every now and then.

And then it's a two week ordeal.

But you are getting through this.

There's two things.

There's a character sin and then there's a fleshly sin.

A character sin is without the body.

A flesh sin is with the body.

And adultery, fornication is part of that.

There has never been a physical affair without first an emotional affair.

Okay?

When we fail to meet each other's needs emotionally, let me have, maybe I need to discuss this in the guys, and we may hit on this when we go back there, but if you don't tell your husband, wives, that he's handsome, he's all you need,

Some woman out there is going to.

Sir, if you don't tell your wife she's pretty, you're glad you married her, and you're going to flatter her and build her up, there's some man out there that's going to.

They may not mean it, but the flattery that's behind it, and then you have an emotional affair.

You're drawn together.

It fulfills a need.

And it will eventually... lead to a physical affair.

Now here's the problem with physical affair.

God can forgive it.

A wife or husband can forgive it.

But you never forgive yourself.

Every time you see somebody that knows what you've done, it raises back up again.

And you're having to deal with it over and over and over.

We probably should have.

I'm feeling that pretty strong.

That is one full lesson.

But when you cancel the debt and you start from the point of hurt, anguish, anxiety, whatever, you feel rejected, you feel whatever, you can build back.

You can build back.

But there's an order that you go through scripturally, and like I said, we're not in that lesson right now, but I felt like I need to tell you that you can do it.

And forgiveness is a big area of that by canceling the debt.

And if you're here today and you're in an emotional situation, now's the time to break it off.

Now's the time to just raise up and say, hey, I'm done, I'm not going to do this anymore.

I have my own husband.

I have my own wife.

We have a good relationship.

Or maybe our relationship is not the best in the world, but I'm going to make it better.

Okay?

Alright.

Then we have responsibility.

Trust.

Responsibility.

Jealousy can destroy a marriage.

And it does.

And sometimes jealousy is brought on by something we've done.

But if you don't trust your companion enough to keep them having a fight every time they go to town and they stay 15 minutes longer than you think they should, you're going to have an issue and you're going to have a situation that you need to resolve.

Because misery will divide and separate.

Listen, I'm not talking from something I read in a book.

I deal with this in people's lives all the time.

Miss Peggy and I do a world of marriage counseling.

And for years, when we would come home, pastors would send their cases to us for the simple reason they didn't want to make the decision.

Sometimes you just have to make hard calls. order to get the answers but I'm a firm believer in healing marriages you can divorce and find somebody else but if you've got children they're the one that pays the price they pay the price and if you can hold it together and take biblical principles of healing you're ten miles ahead of the game

And it's not all about you.

It's about the partner set beside you.

You've heard it said, well, it's 50-50.

No, it's 100%.

You have to give 100% every way you go.

And in saying that, we understand there's three needs that you and I have individually.

We have a spiritual need, an emotional need, and a social need.

Let me explain that.

We have an emotional need.

We need for someone special in our life.

From the time you went to the hospital and brought your baby home, and your hands, I mean, both hands could carry that child.

You brought them home.

If you would have laid them on the bed and left them there, they'd die.

You have to pick them up.

You have to feed them.

You have to change their diaper.

You have to bathe them.

But still, still inside of them,

When they were born, God put this to have somebody special in their life.

It's there.

I want to show you how it works.

As that baby matures and grows, they get to the point they feed their self.

It's messy, but they'll feed their self.

They get some of it in their mouth, some of it in their ears, some of it in their hair, most of it on the floor.

But they're learning.

They'll learn to walk.

They'll learn to change their own clothes.

Put their shoes on.

They may be on wrong feet, but they're learning that.

And sometimes the parents, if we're not real careful, we get the feeling left out because they're maturing and growing because how God made them.

And as they get older, they need less of you.

But your love never changes.

But your actions have to change.

You have to trust your raising in your kids.

And then one day, they're going to come home and say, Mom, I met this gal.

Or Mom, I met this man, this young man.

And I remember telling my girls,

I ain't going to like anybody you bring home.

I'm going to tell you that up front.

I've always been blunt and plain spoken.

And my daughter said, Dad, I don't care who it is if it's Santa Claus.

I'm not going to like them at all.

Not even going to try.

But then I said this.

Whoever you choose to marry, I'll love them with all of my heart.

I will love them with everything I've got.

They ain't gonna like who you bring home.

And here's why.

Because the kids get to a point that that something special rises on the inside that God put in them when they were born.

But it took you materializing that and growing them up in that that they might make the right choice.

You know, I'm so thankful that we didn't live under the law and my dad would have chose my companion.

They'd tell what I'd ended up with.

But we should have referred it back when my girls got to choose it.

I could have picked.

But God put it in all of us.

So we all have an emotional need

We're emotional there.

Let me switch and go into that just a little bit deeper because you know there's some things here that it's just... Oh goodness.

I'll just have to do that in another session.

Let me go through here where we can get out on time.

You have a social need.

God put a social need.

Does it make any difference if you're bashful?

Does it make any difference if you don't like to be around people? god put it inside of you you have a need for other people in your life and if you don't trust your companion this area is going to go broken because of jealousy because of whatever your husband your wife is going to have to be with other people on the job when you're on your job you can't be with them all the time

It's just part of life.

But God put a need in each one of us for socialization, to socialize.

You men are gonna have buddies.

You women are gonna have buddies.

They're not called buddies.

What do y'all call them?

Girlfriends.

You're gonna have people that you share your life with.

All God's children got a buddy.

All right.

There's going to be people you're going to socialize in your life.

There are need.

There are need there.

How many here deer hunt?

Let me see.

Deer hunt.

What do we got?

Yeah.

Don't ever take deer.

Deer can't talk for your marriage.

No.

I like to runt mine.

Yeah.

Them old men lied to me like a dog.

Told me you had to train your wife.

And I took them at their word.

Yeah, I took them at their word.

And we could tell some stories.

I mean, we could really tell some stories.

But for social activities, interaction with other people is a necessity to make you appreciate your companion.

What you do on your job, when you come home, your home needs to be a place of peace and counsel that you look forward to coming home.

But if you come home and it is a war zone, you'd rather stay on the job.

So we have to work to strive to make it what God intended it to be.

When you come home, my house is my castle.

My house is a place of peace.

I can say anything I want to to my wife.

We can talk about things, issues I can't talk about to other people.

Things that I can't discuss with other folks, but I can discuss them with her.

That's how God intended it.

Now, last evening, I spoke in one of the questions of how God made us.

Spirit, soul, and body.

And in that order.

And there's a reason God made us like that.

And I went through that with you guys last night.

The soul houses the emotions.

Spirit has the knowing.

And then put it all together.

Men, we think with logic.

That's our Trump suit.

We think with logic.

A woman thinks with emotions.

Learn that about your companion.

Peggy come up and she'll have something off the wall and I'm thinking, where did she get that?

How'd she come up with that?

That don't make a lick of sense.

And I don't tell her that, boy, it's going through my mind.

And then maybe I say something to her and she says, that don't make any sense.

We're totally different.

We are totally different in our thinking and aspect.

But watch this.

I draw from her emotions.

She draws from my logic.

And it completes us.

That's where the term soulmate come in.

When I draw from her emotions, when I feel her, when I feel what she says, may not always be right, but I feel what she says.

I draw from that.

We're totally different.

Guys, I dress by smell.

She dresses by public opinion.

She'll come out with something and she'll do this.

She'll come in and she'll say, how does that look?

Looks fine.

Oh, does it make me look fat?

No, well, you're lying.

Well, maybe a little.

Maybe a little, because she told me I was lying.

I said, maybe a little bit.

She said, I'd talk if I was, look at that belly.

And I'm thinking, where's she coming from?

I was just trying to follow suit.

I told you, he tells everything.

Did she go back changed 10 times?

And everything she puts on is good.

It's good.

But we guys, we'll pick up a shirt and smell of it.

If it smells all right, we'll put it on.

And I come out and Peggy said, you wore that yesterday.

And I said, it smelled all right.

We're totally different.

Have a lot of fun in your marriage.

Have a lot of fun.

Several years ago, it just closed down the last few years, but Batesville, Arkansas used to have a JCPenney's.

She loved it better than any JCPenney's we'd ever been in, and we'd go in all of them.

And since they closed down, we'd go to TJ Maxx.

Every town we'd go in, we'd go to TJ Maxx.

And I said, what are you trying to find?

Something that they have that you don't?

And so...

We go to TJ Maxwell, we went to this JCPenney's there in Batesville and their dressing room was right in the middle of the store.

I'd never seen one just like that.

And so she picked out, she calls them outfits.

Now outfit to a man is a hunting club.

She wears her outfits.

And she picked her out an outfit, and she said, hold my purse.

Well, I'm in the women's department.

Purse on my arm.

And she went in there to try that on, and one of the ladies that worked there come out, and she said, sir, can I help you?

And she looked at my purse, and I said, well, ma'am, I can't find anything in the petite that I can wear.

And she said, oh, good man.

Well, I hear this real whispering voice.

Damn.

I said, what?

She said, take it back and get a 10.

I said, it didn't fit.

Take it back and get a 10.

I said, where'd you get it?

She said, they're all on the rack.

They're all the same color way over there.

So I carry my purse and I go all the way over there.

Now she's whispered. because she's real conscious about her weight, and mine too.

So I went over there, I found them, and I hung it up, and I hollered across the store.

I said, I found a 16!

And she said, you bring a 16 over here and I'll kill you! big time telling me what to do but we're different we need to understand that about each other in our life and fellows give some leeway here we think with logic they think with emotion women give us a little slack we'll come along later on if you just give us a little room here emotion emotion

Peggy gets emotion about a lot of things.

I mean, somebody we're dealing with, well, you know, they've got this, and that kid needs this, and you know, and I said, no, the kid needs strapped like a zebra.

That's what he needs.

We think different.

We are different.

Let me wind this down, and then we'll break.

Love is the ability

To care for someone more than you care for yourself.

That's what love is.

When you think of your companion more than you think of yourself.

And if the flame has gone out and they're just a spark, rekindle the flame by your confession to each other every day.

I love you.

Touch, hug.

And when you started after things have kind of fell apart, there'll be resistance, there'll be a drawback, but to build trust, you must confess your heart.

In order to build trust, you have to confess your heart.

And when you confess your heart, your companion's gonna know whether you mean it or not.

Because you've been together long enough to know that.

I hope this first session here has been a help to someone gathering some information and maybe a nugget or two and I'll turn it back to our pastor.