

Marriage: God's Holy Sacrament 2

What is a Godly Husband?

(preached 9/18/22)

Please turn to *Genesis 2:5*

Sermon #1: Marriage Exalted

- PURPOSE of last week's sermon was to properly exalt marriage in our own hearts as God does.
- Marriage isn't a piece of paper, a mere formality, a business contract, nor an institution made my mankind.
- The ceremony is important—a couple isn't "married in their hearts" therefore bypassing the need for a ceremony.
- Marriage isn't a ball and chain for a Christian and doesn't limit our freedom.
- Marriage is a holy sacrament that was created by God Himself and first performed in the Garden of Eden.
- Marriage is a monogamous union between one biological man and one biological woman.
- Marriage is the message of the Gospel symbolic of Jesus committing Himself to the Church.
- The Husband plays the role of Christ and the wife the role of the Church.
- Marriage is also symbolic of the promises that Jesus had made to us including Salvation and the Resurrection.
- Marriage is freedom to a Christian desiring to follow God's will.
- Agape is the love of God and is a noun, Agapeo is the love of God in action and translates to one binding oneself to another, committing to them for life.
- John 3:16 shows us Jesus committed Himself to us before we ever knew Who He was and He's "all in" with us for eternity.
- A good marriage isn't just good, soft-hearted feelings of love and joy—it's long-term commitment which remains even when feelings dry up or go south.
- Marriage was the first thing God did after creating both Adam & Eve. The first words out of Adam's mouth was "saying his vows" and confirming his nuptials to Eve, the first miracle Jesus ever performed was at a wedding, and the last thing to happen before the Second Coming will be a wedding ceremony.
- Said wedding ceremony actually prepares us for the Battle of Armageddon.
- I called upon us to repent of any frivolous or casual views of marriage we may have had.
- If God exalts marriage to a high level of importance, which He does, then we should too.
- I also called upon us to expand our definition of love to go beyond feelings and place equal importance and appreciation upon commitment.
- Commitment [not feelings!] empowers us to fulfill the marital vows we took: to have and to hold, for better or worse, richer or poorer, in sickness and in health, in joy as well as sorrow, until death do we part.

TODAY we explore the role of the husband in marriage.

SERMON NOT OVER. I'm going to make some declarative statements in today's sermon, like I do most every sermon, and please remember that until we get to the end of the sermon, the sermon isn't over. More revelations are to come.

ORDER. We read and expounded from Genesis 2 last week and let's quickly go over the proper order of Creation as far as humankind is concerned:

1. God created Adam first.
2. God created the Garden of Eden.
3. God created Eve.
4. God married them.

Genesis 2:5-9 (ESV)

⁵ When no bush of the field was yet in the land and no small plant of the field had yet sprung up—for the LORD God had not caused it to rain on the land, and **there was no man to work the ground,**

⁶ and a mist was going up from the land and was watering the whole face of the ground—

⁷ then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.

⁸ And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and **there he put the man whom he had formed.**

⁹ And out of the ground the LORD God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Verse 5: God didn't create any fauna of any kind for this reason: there was no ADAM to work the ground. Man = Adam.

Verse 7: God creates Adam...for what purpose? Verse 5 just told us: *to work*.

Verse 8: what is Adam supposed to work? What's He supposed to do? When is he to get going on this? Verse 8 tells us: God only creates the Garden AFTER He makes Adam. Adam was "someplace else" when he was first created. After God creates Eden, He picks Adam up and puts him in his place of work.

Verse 9: then and only then does God start planting things—fauna.

Jumping to verse 15:

Genesis 2:15 (ESV)

¹⁵ The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden **to work it and keep it.**

SINGLE. At this point in Creation there is only Adam—no Eve yet. Adam is a single man.

THE FIRST COMMANDMENT EVER GIVEN BY GOD TO THE MALE GENDER IS TO WORK AND KEEP.

WORK translates to “serve, till, worship, and labor.”

KEEP translates to “preserve, save, watch over, protect, preserve, and watch.”

This commandment is within the spiritual DNA of every male born since Adam, including Jesus.

Ladies: you cannot love or threaten him out of this priority. There is no reward or punishment that you can come up with that will get him to deviate from this.

TABLET OF HEART. God literally wrote this into the tablet of every man’s heart just like He wrote on the 2 stone tablets Moses brought down from Sinai.

In the heart of every man, this commandment takes precedent over everything.

“WORK, WORK, WORK.” I’ve done a lot of marital counseling over the years and its mostly wives who seek this out. The majority of them have the same complaint: all her husband wants to do is work. He spends most of his time down at the barn, shop, factory, office, church, or place of business. She and the kids rarely get to see him. If she’s a stay-at-home wife & mom, she spends hours by herself and is lonely.

GETS HOME. When he gets home at night he’s tired and maybe cranky, just wanting to flop down on the recliner and wait for dinner. He’s emotionally distant from her and the kids. On weekends he does other “working” tasks like mowing the lawn, fiddling in his woodshop, or working on an engine. To make matters worse, he spends his vacation days hunting and fishing with his buddies, once again leaving his wife and children out of the equation.

“IF I’D KNOWN....” At this point in the counseling session, the wife venting all these things then says “if I’d known things were going to be like this, I might not have married him.”

FOUGHT. Then comes the request for me to “talk to him.” They’ve fought about this over and over and he just won’t listen. She’s tried to love him out of it and, when that didn’t work, she tried threatening and punishing him out of it. Things might have changed for a short time, but then it was back to same old, same old.

NO BAD HAND. Ladies, you didn't get a bad hand with your husband. You didn't get the one bad apple in the bushel. This issue is not unique to your husband.

I repeat: this first thing God ever said to us men was “go to work.”

THIS IS NOT GOING TO CHANGE.

Is the sermon over?

PROMOTION TO HUSBAND. Then single Adam got a promotion. After Father God brought Eve to him and he said His vow of “this is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh and I shall call her woman, because she was taken out of man” things kicked into a higher gear.

WORK/KEEP YOUR WIFE. Adam no longer had just himself or a garden to think about, but now a wife he needed to WORK for and KEEP. The Hebrew translation to the word “husband” is an enhanced addition to God's original command to work and keep the garden: Adam was now “a mighty champion” and “a good steward.”

STEWARD/HOUSE SIT. First, a steward is not an owner, he's a keeper. Have you ever had someone house sit or pet sit for you while you were away? You entrusted them to take care of your home and your fir babies while you were away on a long journey. The covenant you made with them is that, upon your return, you would find your home and pets strong and healthy. Your expectation of the steward is that they will treat your home and pets just as you did: with tender loving care.

Another old fashioned name for steward was HUSBANDman.

EVE BELONGS TO GOD. Eve was God's creation. Even though she was taken out of Adam and is therefore one with him, both her and Adam belong first to God. When they were married and he became her Husband, Adam realized the amazing gift God had given him.

Just as God created Eden, placed Adam in the midst of it, and told him to take care of it now he needed to do the same with Eve.

EDEN FOR ADAM. Eden was given to Adam and it was his, yes. But it belonged to God and God wanted to make sure Adam loved it and kept it just as if God Himself were there to do so. If Adam did as God commanded, then the verses of Genesis 2 would come to pass: *the fruit bearing trees would bear good fruit for Adam to eat and be nourished.*

FRUIT = KIDS. If Adam took care of his wife the same way, she would bear children—which the Lord has compared to fruit all throughout Scripture in both OT and New—who would grow up in his image.

COMMAND TRANSFORMED. So after saying his vows and taking Eve as his wife, God righteously transformed His original command in Adam's heart: ***take care of your wife and kids. Provide for them and protect them.***

Thus from Adam until now, **MEN ARE COMMANDED BY GOD TO WORK AND DEDICATE WHAT THEY MAKE AND ACQUIRE FOR THE BENEFIT OF THEIR FAMILIES.**

SELF SERVING? Ladies: I know you believe that he only thinks about himself. He comes home and waits for dinner to be served, then gets his own food first. He expects his clothes to be washed and folded for the house to be kept clean. He leaves the care of the kids to you while he stares at his phone or the TV, then takes vacations with his buddies claiming he “just needs to get away.”

CARES FOR FAMILY. Yet that same man is also thinking about and heavily burdened by both the present and future of his family. He asks himself questions like “what will happen to my wife and kids if I get hit by a truck tomorrow? Will they be able to survive? Will they have a roof over their heads and food on the table? Medical coverage? Will they be able to go to college? Keep the car? Will my wife have something more than social security to draw on after I'm gone?”

WEIGH HIM DOWN. These questions weigh down upon him and drive him to work long hours, make investments, buy and sell, and do side jobs. Thus he gets angry and defensive when his wife accuses him of “only thinking of himself.” In the fights he has with his wife, he can't understand why she doesn't appreciate all the sacrifices he's been making on her and the kids' behalf.

JESUS WORKED. Jesus was a man and if you read through the Gospels, all He did was work, work, work. Once in a great while He sent the multitudes away to ascend to the top of some mountain to pray...but for the most part He worked.

Jesus was and is married to the Church. We are His Bride. Everything Jesus did was for us. His preaching and miracles were for us. All His travelling including going without food at times was for us. All the persecution and false accusations He took was for us. Facing down Satan 2 times was for us. Not being married physically and having physical kids and totally dedicating Himself to the spread of the Kingdom was for us.

ARRESTED, ETC. Being arrested, beaten, abandoned, betrayed, and going to Cross was for us. Descending into Hell for the 3 days and coming back, resurrected from the dead, was for us. Even going back to Father in Heaven was for our benefit in the present and future:

John 14:1-3 (ESV)

¹ “Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me.

² In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?

³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.

These 3 famous verses about marriage. Back then after a Groom proposed and the Bride accepted, He returned to His Father’s home and built an addition on to it which was to be the living space for him and his new wife. His Dad would be busy making the wedding ceremony arrangements including setting the date and inviting the guests while the groom got the lumber, nails, and tools and immediately started work on the addition.

WEDDING DATE/SNATCH AWAY. Once the addition was done, he let his dad know and dad would tell him the wedding date. On that day, the Groom along with his groomsmen would go to the house of the Bride and snatch her away from her dad’s home. She would not know the day or hour this happened, but she would know the general time frame and wait up all night for him to come. Sometimes she would stay awake 24/7 for 3 days in a row!

WEDDING CHAMBER. The groom took her hand and the two would flee back to his father’s house, go into the room he’d built—called the Wedding Chamber—and consummate their marriage and then live together all the days of their lives.

NJ IS OUR HOUSE. Jesus’ promise in John 14 is exactly this. When He ascended to Heaven after His Resurrection He built the New Jerusalem which is the home we’re going to live in together forever.

When He was here the first time, Jesus forsook His own personal pleasure and needs to work toward the present and future for His wife...for His family.

SACRIFICING ONESELF FOR THE SAKE OF WIFE AND CHILDREN IS CHRISTLIKE AND IS ONE OF THE GREATEST FORMS OF LOVE THAT A MAN CAN EXPRESS.

This command was programmed into every man by God Himself to awaken after he gets married.

Just as the daily sacrifices a wife makes should never be taken for granted, neither should this one for men.

Just as a husband should meditate upon the sacrifices his wife makes and FEEL appreciative and thankful to her, so should wives do for their husbands who've worked for years and decades for their families.

DARK SIDE. **Yet there is a dark side us guys need to face.**

- We need to confront it head on just as if a mugger were attacking our wife in front of us.
- We need to face it down like we're at bat and the pitcher just wants to strike us out.
- We need to drive forward like football lineman pushing against the opposite team lineman whose trying to push us back.

When Adam and Eve fell, a terrible curse was pronounced that haunts us men to this day:

Genesis 3:17-19 (ESV)

¹⁷ And to Adam he said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it,' **cursed is the ground** because of you; **in pain you shall eat of it** all the days of your life;

¹⁸ **thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you**; and you shall eat the plants of the field.

¹⁹ **By the sweat of your face** you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; **for you are dust**, and to dust you shall return."

WE RESIST US. The very earth resists us but this doesn't just mean trying to work the ground for crop, it's something far worse. Adam was formed from the dirt of earth and when the Lord God spoke this curse, it manifested both in creation itself *but also from within him.*

THE FLESH. A new nature was born called the flesh. The Godly nature that Adam had before the Fall was just like that of Jesus—without sin, exalting and obeying God, taking reverent care of his wife and working completely for her. Placing her needs above his own and making sure she would be in pristine condition for Jesus. *Adam's sense of value and worth came completely from God, being God's son, and working for God.*

WORK OF HIS HANDS. But when sin entered into him and acted through his flesh, another side of him was born, a dark side. This side of him remembered the curse God spoke and then IT wrote on the tablet of Adam's heart that **now his worth and sense of value would forever be tied up in work.** The Bible calls it "the works of his/their hands."

HOSEA. In my personal devotions I'm reading the Book of Hosea. Saturday morning, the morning I wrote this sermon, I read this verse that made gooseflesh break out all over me. The context is that Israel has fallen away from God and the Lord is calling upon them to repent and return to Him:

Hosea 14:3 (ESV)

³ Assyria shall not save us; we will not ride on horses; **and we will say no more, 'Our God,' to the work of our hands.** In you the orphan finds mercy."

SELF WORSHIP. Look at the last half of the verse: Israel was proud of itself for the work it had done, what it had accomplished through effort...to the point of calling it "God."

That, gentlemen, is the dark side of us men. When the Fall took place and sin entered in, it twisted and perverted God's commandment into something the Lord never wanted. It turned our spiritual eyes away from God and toward ourselves.

ADAM'S PRE-FALL WORK. In Eden before the Fall, when Adam worked the Garden his results were amazing: large, lush, healthy fruit that was no doubt gorgeous to the eye, sweet in the mouth, and energizing for the body. After seeing and eating such fruit, pre-Fall Adam would have fallen to his knees to praise God for such a bountiful harvest. Joy at the Lord's blessing and generosity would have overwhelmed him.

POST FALL ADAM. Post-Fall Adam was resisted by the earth, which produced thorns and thistles. So fallen Adam had to work a lot harder, to the point where he would sweat, just to get anything. After eating this crop and seeing his wife and children full, he might have said "look what ****I**** have accomplished! It was my hard work that did this!"

NEW EMOTION. Then a new emotion washed over him...one that felt good. One that seemed to fill in the void left by the Fall. One that was similar to what he felt before being exiled from the Garden. ***This seductive and euphoric feeling is called PRIDE.***

WORTH SHOT UP. The moment pride washed over Adam for the first time, his sense of worth and value shot up to the top of the stock market. Shame disappeared as though a light had been turned on and he felt confident and secure.

ADMIRATION. Perhaps by the time others began to populate the earth, they might even look at him with approval for what he had accomplished, other men giving him praise and respect, and women other than his wife looking at him with...admiration. The feeling of all this was heady, powerful, and fulfilling. It made him feel like a...god. And the serpent watched from the shadows and said "yessssssss!" Was this not Satan's "promise" of what would happen if they ate the fruit?

AMBITION. Now what was once a righteous and loving commandment of God is turned to an unending drive and ambition to build ourselves up and have others do the same through the work of our hands.

THIS IS WHY MEN LOVE TROPHIES. A plaque on the wall showing our degree. Lots of money in the bank and a fancy house for the neighbors to see. A massive taxidermied fish or animal head staring back at us. A hot car that's fast, loud, polished, and will do 0 to 60 in 5 seconds. A literal trophy showing we were the football, baseball, or karate champion who dominated others. A scar showing how we won the fight overseas or perhaps here at home. An attractive wife that others look upon and envy. Taking our shirts off to display our 6 pack abs.

TERRIBLE PRICE. Yet there was a terrible price to pay inside of us. Whenever we don't succeed, whenever we fail, and when we fall short of accomplishing that which we set out to do...*the same voice that drives us then condemns us*. It tells us that when we fail at the work of our hands, we're worthless and stupid. That we've lost the respect and admiration of our community, our wives, and our kids.

Our personal value plummets to the bottom and pops like an overinflated balloon.

MAN NOT WORKING. Think now upon a man whose been laid off long term and hasn't worked in awhile. Contemplate the man who was injured or sick the point where he had to go on permanent disability. Regard the man whose grown old to where he can no longer work or produce and here is what you might see.

Depression sets in as the condemning voice within torments him, repeating over and over that he has no value to anyone. He withdraws within himself and begins snapping and snarling at the people he says he loves and who love him. He might even go so far as to say terrible and hurtful things to them. He starts drinking more than he ever has, gaining weight, and in the dead of night after everyone is asleep, looks at porn.

PASSIONS OF FLESH. In an effort to fill the ever increasing hole inside him he turns more than ever to the passions of the flesh even if it's killing him. Sooner or later, even those things don't bring him the pleasure he seeks and then darker thoughts move in.

SUICIDE. That same condemning voice that's plagued him for years now starts convincing him that he's a **burden** upon his wife, kids, and anyone else around him. That everyone would be better off if he were...gone. If he chooses this terrible path, his family is left hurt and confused.

We cannot ignore this any longer, men.

WE MAY BE YOUNG, STRONG, AND ON TOP OF OUR GAME NOW BUT THAT WON'T LAST FOREVER.

We've allowed our flesh to pervert God's righteous command to provide for and protect our families.

We've allowed the curse of Adam to defile our conscience and alter its programming from keeping us on the straight and narrow to condemning us.

IT'S TIME TO STOP BUILDING UP OUR FLESH AND TIME TO START THE TRUE WORSHIP OF GOD.

The solution lies within the Gospel.

Ephesians 2:8-10 (ESV)

⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,

⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

¹⁰ *For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.*

GRACE. None of us got Saved because we worked for it or earned it any way—the glory and credit goes completely to God.

Verse 9: if it were a result of our efforts, we would brag. We would point to ourselves and say “see what I have accomplished?” We would then seek the admiration and respect of others and our “self-worth” would shoot up.

Verse 10: God did the work and He can handle praise, accolades, and human exaltation. He won't be corrupted by it and never has been. He remains holy, loving, and giving even after billions praise His Name and bow down at His feet in worship.

- So therefore, men what is our worth?
- Where do we find it if not in our accomplishments and successes?
- Where can it be had if not the compliments, praise, and accolades of others?

All of our value and worth is in Jesus. Let me go deeper. Reread the first part of verse 10: “we are His workmanship.”

BUDDY WHOSE GOOD AT SOMETHING. Think of one of your friends whose really really good at something.

- When your truck breaks down he's the one you call to fix it because it gets done right.
- His smoked meat is second to none and just thinking about it makes your mouth water.
- His carpentry skills are outstanding and he built your shed, stairs, or deck and you love it.

HE'S THE BEST. Whatever his skill set is, he's the best there is and you know that whatever you depend on him to do, you will use and enjoy it to the fullest.

That's Jesus. He took a dead, unregenerate, and corrupted you and, by the time he was done He made this:

2 Corinthians 5:16-18 (ESV)

¹⁶ From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer.

¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

¹⁸ All this is from God...."

You are no longer Adam after the Fall, you are a Mighty Champion after Jesus.

ADAM IS NO LONGER YOUR FATHER, GOD IS NOW YOUR FATHER.

- Your spirit is the result of the never ceasing efforts of the most highly skilled Workman to have ever lived: Jesus Christ.
- You are the result of all His work on the Cross. *Your old Adam self has died.*
- You are the product of His Resurrection. *You've been born again.*
- You are the completed project of His Ascension where He presented Himself to God as the High Priest and Lamb. *You've been made righteous.*
- *Your worth is not in the work of your hands, but in the work of Jesus' Hands.*
- *Your value isn't in your successes or accomplishments, but in Jesus' success and all that He's accomplished.*

And Jesus has never failed. Not once. Ever. Everything He's set out to do then He has done so with resounding success that's lasted for 2000 years. He's defeated all enemies who tried to stop, divert, distract, or delay Him. He uses the curse of Adam for a footstool.

And YOU are the result.

COMMAND IS GOOD. The command to work hard and provide for your family, and to protect them from harm, is holy, just, and good. It's a command from God Himself and was given to us in Eden. We must follow it and obey His will.

LADIES: here's my suggestion for your response to this sermon: give your husband unconditional and heartfelt appreciation for his obedience to God's command to protect and provide. Don't attach anything to your expression such as "but the kids and I need to see more of you" or "I hope you really listened to what Pastor said today."

MEN: it's time to stop following the false shepherd that leads us to worship the work of our hands.

It's time to die to the corrupted voice that drives us to find self-worth, self-confidence, and self-value in our ability to produce.

Because the moment we cannot or will not, the same voice turns upon us and stabs us in the back, condemning and calling us worthless.

OUR VALUE IS IN THE WORKMANSHIP OF JESUS AND WHAT HE'S DONE IN AND THROUGH US.

LET'S BRAG OF WHAT HE'S DONE AND CONTINUES TO DO IN OUR OWN LIVES, THAT OF OUR WIVES, AND OUR KIDS.

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