

SEQUOIA NOTES

Today's Sequoia Message...

The Beauty Found in Covenant Love

With Ryan Dawson - Lead Pastor
June 23, 2024



John 4:10 (NLT) “If you only knew the gift God has for you and who you are speaking to, you would ask me, and I would give you living water.”

Matthew 5:31-32 (NLT) “You have heard the law that says, ‘A man can divorce his wife by merely giving her a written notice of divorce.’³² But I say that a man who divorces his wife, unless she has been unfaithful, causes her to commit adultery. And anyone who marries a divorced woman also commits adultery.”

Our understanding of marriage (& divorce) needs to be informed by God's love & faithfulness.

- **God covenants to be with us, and to be for us, until we reflect Jesus Christ.**

Marital love is defined by God's love.

- **Our love for our spouse is to be with them (Presence), to be for them (Advocacy), & help them reflect Christ (Formation).**

Deuteronomy 24:1 (NLT) “Suppose a man marries a woman but she does not please him. Having discovered something wrong with her, he writes a document of divorce, hands it to her, and sends her away from his house.”

Matthew 19:3-12 (NLT) Some Pharisees came and tried to trap him with this question: “Should a man be allowed to divorce his wife for just any reason?”⁴ “Haven't you read the Scriptures?” Jesus replied. “They record that from the beginning ‘God made them male and female.’⁵ And he said, “This explains why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one.’⁶ Since they are no longer two but one, let no one split apart what God has joined together.”⁷ “Then why did Moses say in the law that a man could give his wife a written notice of divorce and send her away?” they asked.⁸ Jesus replied, “Moses permitted divorce only as a concession to your hard hearts, but it was not what God had originally intended.”⁹ And I tell you this, whoever divorces his wife and marries someone else commits adultery—unless his wife has been unfaithful.”¹⁰ Jesus' disciples then said to him, “If this is the case, it is better not to marry!”¹¹ “Not everyone can accept this statement,” Jesus said. “Only those whom God helps.”¹² Some are born as eunuchs, some have been made eunuchs by others, and some choose not to marry for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven. Let anyone accept this who can.”

- **Jesus asserts that God made people male or female.**
 - **Jesus asserts that God instituted marriage to be between a man and a woman.**
 - **Jesus asserts that this marriage union includes sexual intimacy or “one flesh”.**
 - **Jesus asserts that marriage is designed to be permanent until death.**
 - **Jesus asserts that divorce occurs because people have hard hearts and the only legitimate reason for divorce is marital unfaithfulness.**
 - **Jesus affirms God's blessing and purpose in marriage and singleness.**
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- **Healthy relationships (including marriage) require tender hearts & the Gospel enables this.**
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- **God came to be with us (Presence).**
 - **God showed that He is for us (Advocacy).**
 - **God is committed to His good purpose of our (Formation).**

Colossians 3:12-15 (NLT) “Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tender-hearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience.¹³ Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others.¹⁴ Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony.¹⁵ And let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. For as members of one body you are called to live in peace. And always be thankful.”

Big Idea: Cultivate a tender heart as you pursue God's plan for your life.

The Translation of the Bible Scriptures used in today's service are from the New Living Translation (NLT).



Sequoia Impact Communities are where we
live out our identity as a
Family of Servants on Mission.

To get plugged in email:

impactcommunities@sequoiachurch.org

The Beauty Found in Covenant Love
#11 of 26 - June 23, 2024

- 1) What has God revealed to you through the **Gospel Reading Challenge** this week? What have you learned or been able to apply?
- 2) Read Matthew 5:31-32 and Matthew 19:3-12. What is the **Context** for these passages? Who is the writer and the recipients? Where does this fit in the book as a whole?
- 3) **Observation:** What “jumps out” in these passages? What interesting details do you observe? What questions does it raise for you?
- 4) **Meaning:** What was the meaning for the original recipients? What meaning is inferred in this for us?
- 5) What is Jesus saying about marriage and divorce in these passages? How is marriage (and other important relationships) to reflect God’s covenant love for us? How is this different than what we see in our culture?
- 6) How does the Gospel enable and empower us to reflect God’s love in our relationships? Read Colossians 3:12-15. What does it look like to have a tender heart towards our spouse (if married) and others?
- 7) **Application:** What resonates with you from this message? In what ways can you apply the teachings of Jesus today?
- 8) You may consider taking time as men and women separately to discuss how to best live this out in your relationships.



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