

Different On Purpose: Faithful When It's Hard Matthew 5:31-37

Passage

Matthew 5:31-37 It was also said, 'Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.' But I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of sexual immorality, makes her commit adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery. "Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn.' But I say to you, Do not take an oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. And do not take an oath by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. Let what you say be simply 'Yes' or 'No'; anything more than this comes from evil.

Faithfulness in Marriage Is God's Design, Not Man's Convenience

Assertion

- Jesus says that divorcing a spouse and remarrying leads to adultery. He raises the bar far beyond what was and is culturally accepted.

Possible Objection

- Isn't that too rigid? What about happiness? What if the marriage is broken beyond repair?

Application

- Set aside a non-negotiable time each week (date night, conversation time, prayer together) where you intentionally communicate honestly, reconnect emotionally, and pray for and with each other
- Biblical Grounding: Malachi 2:14-16 But you say, "Why does he not?" Because the Lord was witness between you and the wife of your youth, to whom you have been faithless, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant. 15 Did he not make them one, with a portion of the Spirit in their union? And what was the one God seeking? Godly offspring. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and let none of you be faithless to the wife of your youth. 16 "For the man who does not love his wife but divorces her, says the Lord, the God of Israel, covers his garment with violence, says the Lord of hosts. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and do not be faithless."
- Why It Matters: Because when we treat covenant like a contract, we make commitment dependent on circumstances; when we honor covenant, we reflect the faithful love of God.

God's People Are Called to Radical Integrity in Their Words

Assertion

- Jesus moves from marriage to speech: "Let what you say be simply 'Yes' or 'No.'"

Possible Objection

- What's wrong with making promises or swearing oaths? Isn't that just emphasizing honesty?

Application

- Practice immediate truthfulness in small, everyday situations. Especially in moments where dishonesty would be easier or more comfortable.
- Biblical Grounding: Ephesians 4:25-26 Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another.
- Why It Matters: Because our words reveal whether our character can be trusted.

Faithfulness Reflects the Character of God Himself

Assertion

- At the core, both marriage and speech point to the same thing: God is faithful, and His people are meant to reflect that faithfulness.

Possible Objection

- But I've already failed. I haven't been perfectly faithful in relationships or in my words. So where does that leave me?

Application

- Confess one area of unfaithfulness to God, and take one step toward restoration. Healing begins where honesty replaces hiding.
- Biblical Grounding: 2 Timothy 2:11-13 The saying is trustworthy, for: If we have died with him, we will also live with him; if we endure, we will also reign with him; if we deny him, he also will deny us; if we are faithless, he remains faithful.
- Why It Matters: Faithfulness matters because we belong to a faithful God. In our marriages, our words, our failures, and our hardest moments, Jesus calls us to reflect His character in a culture that desperately needs to see what faithfulness looks like.

Following Jesus Means Choosing Faithfulness When It's Hard

Assertion

- This is where it lands: choose faithfulness.

Possible Objection

- But what if I don't feel like it? What if it's exhausting to keep showing up, telling the truth, staying committed?

Application

- Pre-decide your obedience in a specific area where you're currently tempted to quit. You don't drift into faithfulness; you decide into it.
- Biblical Grounding: 1 Corinthians 15:58 Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.
- Why It Matters: Because faithfulness is most visible when obedience costs us something.

Conclusion

- Choose one area this week where faithfulness is hard, and be faithful anyway. Because that is what it means to live Different on Purpose.