

Harris Creek Baptist Church
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Roles in Marriage

Passage (1 Peter 3:1-7)

Wives, in the same way submit yourselves to your own husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives, 2 when they see the purity and reverence of your lives. 3 Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as elaborate hairstyles and the wearing of gold jewelry or fine clothes. 4 Rather, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight. 5 For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to adorn themselves. They submitted themselves to their own husbands, 6 like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her lord. You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear. 7 Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.

Transcription - Sermon Content

Well, eventually as I was growing up my parents came to the dreaded conclusion that I had to get my first job and I'm like, 'Do I have to?' And they're like, 'Yes, Nate it's time to get your first job.' I don't remember exactly how old I was at the time. I think I was like 26-27. No, I think I was a sophomore in high school, and I'm like, 'I don't want to get a job,' but I looked and researched what different jobs were available, and I decided that I was going to be an umpire because umpires were actually paid really, really well. I would soon realize why they're paid really, really well because no one wants to do that job, but I thought I could do it because I grew up playing sports and watching sports and thought I kind of had it figured out what makes a good umpire versus a bad umpire or a good referee versus a bad referee. There's really one thing, there's one characteristic that you can always tell if that person is a bad umpire; it's this: if you know their name. If you know their name that means they're not very good at their job because your job as an umpire or a referee is to just be invisible, do your job, and go home because the game's not about you. Nobody came to that game to watch you.

But, there are some umpires and some referees who show up to the game and they're like, 'I'm a part of the game; some people want to watch me do my job,' and they won't just make bad calls, but they'll be behind the plate and they have these wild strike three calls where they'll just be like, 'You're out of here!' really just to humiliate the batter. And then they'll get in the face of the coach, they'll get in the face of the players, and they just really become a part of the game, and they want to make sure that people at that game see them do their job.

So, I had that in the back of my mind the whole time I'm working as an umpire. I'm like, 'Hey, just be invisible.' The problem is, parents make it really, really hard because they yell at you, and most of what was yelled at me is suppressed in the back of my brain; I can't really remember it, and I'm sure it'll come up someday, but one of the things that I do remember is when I was umpiring a fourth-grade boys' baseball game, and I just, behind the plate, I call strike, and someone behind the fence goes, 'Hey, what do you have against my son?! What do you have against my son?! That was a ball.' And I'm like, 'I don't really care about your son; I just want to go home.' Then the next pitch, I call another strike, and then he's like, 'Hey, I see what's going on; you've got a date tonight; you just want this game over with so you can go on your date.' And I'm just like, as a sophomore in high school, I'm like, 'Oh, if you only knew my dating life, you would know I don't have a date tonight.' But the whole time I'm working that job, I'm just thinking, 'Hey, Nate, just do your job and go home; just be invisible because no one came to this game today to watch you; no one came here to watch you; this game is not about you; just do your job; go home; it's not about you.'

I start with that this morning because today we're going to be talking about marriage, and I think the rules for a good or a bad umpire are the same rules for the good or a bad spouse. You know what the worst spouse is? The worst spouse is someone who wakes up every single day and goes, 'This marriage is about me; it's about my needs being met; my desires being fulfilled; my dreams being reached; this marriage is about me; I need to make sure that I'm seen today.' That's the worst spouse. Naturally, the best spouse would be someone who thinks their marriage is about their spouse, right? I actually don't think so because I think the best spouse is not someone who says, 'This marriage is about me,' or someone who says, 'This marriage is about my spouse.' The best spouse is someone who says, 'This marriage is about Jesus; it's not about me being seen; it's about Him being seen; it's about whenever my spouse sees me, I want them to see Jesus, and whenever other people see our marriage, I want them to see Jesus. This marriage is not about me; it's about Jesus.'

The problem is for many of us, our marriages do not point others to Jesus, and our marriages do not point our spouse to Jesus because we're too busy pointing at ourselves, and your primary concern in your marriage is not that God would be glorified, but that your needs would be satisfied. And when your marriage is all about you and what you want and make sure that you get what you need, everyone ends up miserable. This is just what's true about most marriages in the United States today. Most marriages are not good marriages. In fact, stats say somewhere around 40% of marriages end in divorce. That does not mean the other 60% live happily ever after. Some percentage of that 60%, let's say half of that 60%, end up with marriages that are just like unemotional roommate-type relationships, or they're bickering, fighting, exhausting relationships. There's really only a certain percentage of marriages that are actually truly working.

Why is that? Well, it's because of what we see in Genesis chapter 3. You see, in Genesis, God created Adam and Eve; He created marriage. This is His idea. But then in Genesis chapter 3, Adam and Eve sin, turn their backs on God, and then the marriage relationship is forever marked by that sin. What we see in Genesis chapter 3 is that Eve has a desire for control over her husband, and Adam has a propensity to passivity. And since each of them just do whatever they

want to do, it makes the marriage miserable for both people. The same is true in your life, in your marriage. If you just do whatever you want to do, it's going to make your marriage miserable.

So today, we're going to talk about marriage and what God desires for us in marriage. Here's how I think you can have a marriage that works: you can have a marriage that works not by doing what you desire in marriage but by following God's design for marriage. So that's what we're going to talk about today—God's design in marriage. We're going to be in First Peter chapter 3 as we're just going verse by verse through the book of 1st Peter in our sermon series called 'Forged,' and we're going to look at God's design for marriage.

I just want to give a disclaimer to this text today: this is a hard text. It's a difficult text. There are some words here, there are some phrases here that are potentially confusing and even downright frustrating. But, whenever you come across a difficult text in Scripture, you have an opportunity. You have an opportunity to ask yourself a question: 'Hey, do I believe the Holy Spirit or not? Do I trust God or not? Did He preserve this for a reason or not?' So, whenever you come across a difficult text, don't just shove it aside; wrestle with it, figure out what it has to say to you. That's what we're going to try to do this morning—we're going to wrestle with the text and figure out what God has to say about marriage.

Now, I know for some, some of you are like, 'Well, I'm not married.' We've got a lot of people in this room today who are single. I think this message still applies to you. First, because statistics say that most people will end up married in their life. And I'm telling you, just as a married person, you don't want to wait until you're married to figure out what marriage is. You want to know before. And I think this text is going to help you figure out if you're becoming the person you want to be in marriage, and it's going to help you decide who you should marry. But for some other people in this room, you're single, and you might be single for the rest of your life by choice or that's just how your life has resulted. And I think even then we should just still want to know what the Bible has to say.

So that's what we're going to do today. We're going to look at 1 Peter 3:1-7. And before I read it, the context is always important for every passage of Scripture, but the context here is especially important. In 1 Peter chapters 2 and 3, Peter's primarily concerned with power dynamics, specifically those in the least amount of power. So if you were here last week, you saw that he addressed everyone who was under the authority of the government. Then he addressed slaves, and now this week, he's going to instruct wives, and he's going to instruct husbands lastly. And he goes in that order for a reason. It's not in order of importance or worth; it's simply in order of power in that day and age in the Roman culture. These are just the order of power.

We're also going to see in this text that there are six verses of instruction for women, one verse of instruction for men. This does not mean that women have more to work on than men. It does not. What it means is Peter, again, he's primarily concerned with power dynamics, specifically those who were in the least amount of power. Since women had less power at the time, he gave them more instruction. Him instructing them alone was actually transformative. The vast majority of moral philosophers in that day wouldn't even address women because they were seen as beneath them. They wouldn't even talk to women. So the fact that he addresses them is transformative. But what he actually has to say is also transformative because it gives them an

individuality and a choice that they didn't otherwise have in that culture. So let's see what he says in 1 Peter chapter 3. We're just going to read the first two verses, and then we'll break it down. It says this:

1 Wives, in the same way, submit yourselves to your own husbands, so that if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives 2 when they see the purity and reverence of your lives.

Now, women, I promise you, I'm going to talk to the men in a minute. I am. I'm just going to start with you because that's where the text starts. The men are addressed at the end. So I'm going to talk to them at the end. So if you ever think, 'Man, why aren't you talking to them?' I'm going to, I promise. Just be patient. But the first thing we can learn from this text is this:

1. Point 1: Wives submit to their husbands.

Wives submit to their husbands. I know that 's' word can be troubling for many of you, and it's because that word 'submit' has been hijacked by narcissistic men in culture and, unfortunately, within the church. These men have looked at that word 'submit,' and their primary concern with it is that their wife would submit to them rather than them being a man worthy of submitting to. And they use that word 'submit.' This has been used for years in different relationships to mistreat women, to neglect women, to disrespect women, even to abuse women. That is not God's best. That's not what this text is saying. And if that's where you find yourself today, if you're in a marriage where you feel unsafe, man, talk to someone on staff today. We would love to help. We're eager to help. That's not what this means. But what does it mean? I think for many of us, we've seen that word 'submit' used in just an unappealing way, so we kind of just want to toss it out. Whenever we toss it out, I think we're throwing the baby out with the bathwater because this teaching—wives submit to your husbands—it's not just a 1 Peter 3 teaching. It's a New Testament teaching. It's, in fact, in Scripture elsewhere, really in the exact same way in Colossians 3, Ephesians 5, and Titus 2. It uses the same exact word.

So what does it mean? Does it mean that wives just need to blindly go along with whatever their husbands decide? I don't believe it does because, as I said, this passage gives women more individuality than they otherwise had at the time. Here's why: this text was addressing all women, but he specifically addresses women who were married to unbelieving husbands. Perhaps that's because they came to know Jesus after they were married, or perhaps sometimes in that culture wives didn't get to choose who they were married to, and they ended up being married to an unbelieving husband. In that culture, the god or the gods that the husband worshiped would become the god or the gods that the whole house worshiped. Everyone was supposed to fall in line because the husband was in control of the whole house.

What Peter is saying here is he's saying, 'don't submit to their gods, don't submit to sin, but he does still say submit to the man.' And I think when we hear that, we think that means that women just have to be weak. We think that submission means that you just turn into a pushover. That's not the picture of submission we see in Scripture. In fact, the best picture we see in Scripture of submission is this. Let me show you, going back to the text. Look at the text, verse one. It says this: 'Wives, in the same way, submit yourselves to your own husbands,' in the same

way as I was just talking about as the *person* I was just talking about do the same thing. Now, what was he just talking about? You might think he was just talking about slaves, and you're like, 'Oh my gosh, that's even worse than I thought.' But look at your Bibles. Look at your Bibles. What's the end of 1 Peter chapter 2? What was he just talking about? Who was he just talking about? He was just talking about Jesus. This is how he closes 1 Peter chapter 2. He says this:

21 To this, you were called because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example that you should follow in His steps. 22 He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in His mouth. 23 When they hurled their insults at Him, He did not retaliate. When He suffered, He made no threats. Instead, He entrusted Himself to Him who judges justly.

So Peter is drawing his readers back to a very specific moment in Jesus's life. He's drawing them back to the moment when on the night on which Jesus was arrested... What happened on the night that Jesus was arrested? Jesus goes to the Garden of Gethsemane. He's overwhelmed, so overwhelmed that he's sweating drops of blood, and he says, 'Father, let this cup pass from me, but not My will but Yours be done.' I don't want My desires to be fulfilled; I want Your desires to be fulfilled. And I submit My desires to you. Friends, that's not weakness; that's the very definition of strength. And this is what Peter is asking wives to do. He's calling them to say, 'Husband, I'm committing to putting your desires above my own. I'm committing myself to submit to you.' Why? Why does he ask them to submit? Look at the text. Why does he ask them to submit? Is it because women are less intelligent? Is it because women are less important? Why is he calling them to submit? It says this,

1 ...Submit yourselves to your own husbands so that if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives 2 when they see the purity and reverence of your lives.

So why are they called to submit? So that their husbands might see Jesus. Because wives, your marriage is not about you. Your marriage is not about your desires; your marriage is not about your needs; your marriage is not about your dreams. Your marriage is about Jesus. So when you put the needs of your husband before your own, when you serve your husband, when you honor your husband, you look and love like Jesus, and you help your spouse love Jesus more. This is what we're called to do. And submission here literally means to put your husband first. It means that you are underneath your husband, you're propping up your husband. And wives, your husband needs this more than you imagine. On the outside, they might seem tough, but on the inside, we are far more fragile than you imagine.

In fact, I recently had a conversation with my wife about this. We were talking about feedback from sermons, her feedback from sermons. Whenever I preach a sermon and I go home and I open up the front door, in the back of my mind, I'm just thinking, 'How did I do? How'd that one go?' And I want to make it clear, she never once has ever been discouraging. But how it would typically go is she'd say, 'Hey, great sermon,' and then we just kind of move on with our day. And I'm like, 'But why? Why was it a great sermon? Tell me more.' So eventually, I brought it up to her. I was like, 'Hey, could you kind of just tell me more? I'd love to hear more about what you thought of the message.' And she just said, 'Man, do you really need to hear from me? I know that you hear from so many other people. Do you really need to hear from me?' And I'm

like, 'Adalie, yes, because your voice has the strength of a hundred other voices in my life. What you say deeply matters to me, because the words that you speak that honor me, they uplift me and turn me into the man that God desires me to be. But if you dishonor me, I just become a shell of myself.'

That's true for your husband, whether you realize it or not. Your words of honor or dishonor have a great impact on the man that your husband is. So the first thing that we can learn from this passage is this, point number one: wives submit to your husbands, put his needs and his desires first. Let's keep reading. Verse three,

3 Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as elaborate hairstyles and the wearing of gold jewelry or fine clothes. 4 Rather, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight. 5 For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to adorn themselves. They submitted themselves to their own husbands, 6 like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her lord.

which I know is jarring. It's jarring for me. This is far more cultural than we realize. What it's really saying is she uplifted him; she honored her husband.

6 ...You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear.

So, the second thing we can learn, the second thing in this passage is this,

2. Point 2: Seek a beauty that does not fade.

Seek a beauty that does not fade. It's hard to find the exact number, but it's unquestioned that Americans spend tens of billions of dollars on beauty every single year. Some places I saw said that Americans spend around a hundred billion on beauty each year. And it's because Americans place a very, very high value on beauty. Peter here is saying that he places a very, very high value on beauty. The difference is Americans place a high value on outward beauty; Peter places a high value on inward beauty. And Peter is saying, 'I want to make sure you're beautiful, just be beautiful in all the right things.' And I want to make sure that you hear this. I don't think the text is saying you shouldn't ever jewelry or fine clothes or do your hair. He's just saying that your beauty should not come from them. He's saying you should be so beautiful on the inside that that's what people notice before they notice the beauty on your outside.

So, women, do you spend more time looking in the mirror at your face, or do you spend more time in prayer and in scripture looking at God's face? Who do you want to look more like? Do you want to look more like Jesus, or do you want to look like some TikTok or Instagram model? And I know this is addressed to the women, I think it can also be said of the men. Do you look more at yourself, or do you look more at Jesus?

Peter is saying, 'Hey, be beautiful, just be beautiful in the right ways.' Now, now, guys, especially single guys, pay attention to this verse. Pay attention to these verses because oftentimes single guys, they'll come to me and they'll say, 'Hey, how important is attraction when

it comes to marriage? How important is attraction when it comes to marriage?' And I always say it is incredibly important. Only marry someone you're attracted to. My follow-up, though, is this: What do you mean by attraction? What do you mean do you need to be attracted to them? Are you saying you need to be attracted to their outside or attracted to their inside? Because if you are primarily attracted to their outside rather than their inside, it's going to make for a very difficult marriage. Because I've heard this said before, Proverbs 31:

30 Charm is deceptive, beauty is fleeting, but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised.

And if you are attracted to her in the wrong ways, it's going to make for a difficult marriage. I've heard JP say before that simply having an attraction to her body will make for a pretty wedding and it will make for an ugly marriage. It'll make for a fun honeymoon; it will make for miserable anniversaries, because what you're attracted to matters. And I can attest to that. I am more attracted to my wife now than the day that we got married. Here's why. It's because nearly every single morning, she wakes up early and she spends time in God's word. And then she will get together with different women from here at Harris Creek, and they'll have prayer nights. They'll just get together and pray.

And it's not attractive that she does those things, I should say. It's not just attractive that she does those things. What's attractive is what those things do to her. Because the time recently where I was the most attracted to her was the day in which I fell through our ceiling. If you missed that, it was in a message a couple of weeks ago. Basically, long story short, I'm in the attic, my leg falls through the ceiling, and I'm in my living room, just staring up at the ceiling. You know what she didn't say? She didn't say, 'Nate, you are so stupid. Nate, that's going to cost us so much money to fix that. Nate, you should be so much better at these things by now.' She didn't say those things because I'm already thinking them. Do you know what she did say instead? All she said that night was, 'Hey, Nate, are you okay? Hey, is there anything I can do for you? And I'm sure we can get it fixed. I'm sure guys have done this before.' And after preaching that message, I've heard from you, a lot of you have done it before, it made me feel so much better.

But that night, I just looked at my wife, and I'm just like, 'Who are you?' Who are you? How, how did I get to marry you? Because while she's so beautiful on the outside, I'm telling you, she's way more beautiful on the inside. And here's what makes her so beautiful: her, her beauty is not a beauty that says, 'Hey, look at me.' Her beauty is a beauty that says, 'No, look at Him.' Because when I see her, I'm attracted to her, but when I'm attracted to her, I really get more attracted to Jesus, because the way in which she lives is simply because the Holy Spirit is working on in her life. So when I see her live, when I see her inward beauty, I'm not just drawing to her, I'm drawing closer to Jesus. And that's what this text is telling you to do. It's saying, have an inward beauty that doesn't just draw people to you, but it draws people to Jesus, because this is who we are to be about. This is what our marriages are to be about. So point number two, second thing we can learn here is to seek a beauty that does not fade. Let's keep reading, verse 7. And now, I get to talk to the guys. Let's go. Says this:

7 Husbands, in the same way, be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner.

Again, potentially a difficult phrase. All that is saying is typically, the husband is the more physically strong partner. Typically, husbands can beat their wife in an arm wrestling match. And why Peter is saying this here, he's trying to make it so clear to his listeners. He's saying, guys, as followers of Jesus, you are the stronger partner. Do not use your strength to oppress women or to undress women. You use your strength to bless women. That's who we are to be. He concludes by saying this,

7 ...As heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.

In verse 7 at the beginning, it says, 'In the same way, be considerate as you live with your wives.' Be considerate is not the best translation for that word. It's not saying, 'Hey, just be nice to your wife.' The Greek word here is *gnōsis*, which literally means "with knowledge." It means, know your wife, and the ESV is a more literal word-for-word translation of scripture, and I think it does a better job here. It says, 'Husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way. Get to know your wife, understand your wife.' Someone on staff this week asked a group of people on staff what they wanted to be an expert in. If you could be an expert in anything, what would you be an expert in? And I heard that, and I was like, I want to be an expert in golf. I would love to be an expert in golf. I'd love to just hit it up down the fairway and then hit it to within 15 feet of the hole, like that'd be awesome. I love it. I'm not that great at golf, but I enjoy golf. And then our marriage Pastor, Scott Kedersha, goes, I would love to be an expert in my wife. And I was like, Scott, that is so annoying, and it's so accurate. In fact, that's exactly what this text is saying. It's saying, husbands, be an expert in your wife, understand your wife, know your wife. And this is the third thing we can learn from this passage. It's this,

3. Point 3: Husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way.

Husbands, do you know why God calls you to understand your spouse? I think it's because you don't really want to. It's far easier to say, you know, she is so confusing; she's so needy; she's so emotional; her needs aren't being met, and it's her problem. Hey, brother, it's a *you* problem, because your role in marriage is to know your spouse; understand your spouse; get to know what she wants; get to know what she needs; get to know what her dreams are, and then you do all you possibly can to meet those needs. You figure out who she is, figure out what she wants, and you do all you can to meet those needs.

My wife frequently says, 'Nate, I'm so much easier to understand, and you realize all I want is eye contact in a conversation,' and I'm I'm just like, but I don't, sometimes I don't. Whenever I walk home, walk in the door from work, and she says, 'How was your day?' I just want to say, 'Good,' and that doesn't seem to go over very well. You see, she wants to hear every single detail about my day, and I just don't really want to tell her every single detail about my day. Husbands, when your desires come in conflict with your wife's desires, what do you do? You understand your wife. You live with her in an understanding way, and you understand what she wants and what she desires, and then you do what she desires, because husbands, your marriage is not about you. It's not about getting everything you want. It's not about your desires being met. It's not about your needs being fulfilled. It's not about all your dreams coming true. Your marriage is not about you. So when your desires come in conflict with her desires, you don't tell her to submit to your desires; you tell your desire to die, and then you serve her for the rest of your life, and then

you die. That's what you signed up for. That's your role as a husband. You lay your life down for your wife because Jesus laid his life down for you, and you are to represent Jesus to her. Your marriage ain't about you, buddy!

Sorry, I'm excited because I heard that from someone this week, and the thing is, that's just, it's just real. It's just real. We get into marriage, and we think, 'Oh my gosh, all my dreams are going to come true.' It's not about you. It's not about your dreams. It's about laying your life down for her. Here's the problem, though.

Every single week, we do a sermon run-through, which means whoever's preaching gives the sermon on a Thursday afternoon, right here on this stage, and there's a group of people in the audience, who grade the sermon from 0 to 100 and then give feedback. There have been oftentimes on Friday morning where I'm like, 'I'm just going to quit, cause I'm not very good at this thing' and Thursday afternoon this week... we do that in order to make sure that the message is theologically accurate and helpful and beneficial and really improves the message every single week... at this portion of the message I said something like, 'Wives or husbands, your wife wants to hear that she is lovely, so tell her that she is lovely.' And once we got to the feedback portion, one of the women in the audience said, 'I don't really want to hear that I'm lovely. I want to hear that I'm strong.' And I'm like, 'I am so confused. I can't figure y'all out. I mean, that's like the opposite of what I thought, and I'm like, how in the world am I going to figure out women?'

Here's the good news: I am not called to figure out women; I'm called to figure out my wife. I don't need to know everything about women; I need to know everything about my wife. I don't need to know what you guys want; I need to know what she wants. And I figure out what she wants, what her needs are, what her desires are, and then I do all I possibly can to serve her and lay my life down for her and meet her needs, because in marriage, my desires do not come first; her desires come first.

But wait a second, didn't I just tell wives the exact same thing? Didn't I just say, 'Hey, wives, your marriage is not about you'? And now I've said, 'Husbands, your marriage is not about you.' Didn't I just say, 'Wives, your desires don't come first; his desires come first,' and now didn't I just say, 'Husbands, your desires don't come first; her desires come first'? Which one is it? Well, it's both; it's both.

I hope you're now getting to see the beauty of this text. I hope you're getting to see the beauty of a Christ-centered biblical marriage. It's a marriage in which both people are putting each other first. Both people are trying to meet the needs of one another. Both people are trying to honor each other. And when they're serving one another, honoring one another, loving one another, they're helping one another know and love Jesus.

And then when people on the outside, when they see your relationship and the way you honor one another, serve one another, care for one another, they don't actually really see the two of you; they end up just seeing Jesus, which is the point of your marriage. Yes, your marriage is not about you; your marriage is about your spouse seeing Jesus through you and about others seeing Jesus through your relationship.

Before we close, this point, I want to address in my mind what is the most shocking part of this text. There's a lot of shocking parts of this text; this is the most shocking part of the text to me. It's the end of verse seven; I want to focus on that just just for a moment. It says this:

7 Husbands, in the same way, be considerate as you live with your wives and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.

What in the world does that mean? I will tell you exactly what that means. I'm a dad of a daughter; she's two years old, and, in fact, this week I'm going to get to meet my second daughter; she's being born this week, and can't wait to meet her. And, some people on staff were praying that she was not born yesterday so they'd have to preach, so it all worked out. But I'm a dad of a 2-year-old; her name's JC; here's a picture of me and her, and, I love her. I took her to the one game that we won at home, so I think she's Baylor's good luck charm. And, man, I love her; I do love taking her to the Baylor games. I love laying down on the floor and playing puzzles with her. I love taking her to the park and pushing her on the swing; I love everything about my daughter.

But since one of you apparently hates me, you told me to watch the movie Father of the Bride. I hate that movie 'cause that thing messed me up. I don't like getting emotional, and I'm just crying through this whole wedding, this whole marriage and the wedding scene because it's all about a dad who's given up his daughter in marriage. I left that movie a changed man because now whenever I drop her off over there in the kids' room, I look at all those two-year-old boys, and I'm like, 'Hey, you creeps, she is not interested in you, and she never will be interested in you.' But unfortunately, one day she probably—I don't want to say 'unfortunately,' one day she probably will be interested in getting married, and she will be married to some guy.

And you dads who have daughters, I need to talk to you. Like, I don't know how you give your daughter away, and the only thing I care about, this man is that he would know and love Jesus. It's the only thing that matters to me. But, imagine, God forbid, imagine if he didn't. Imagine if she married a man who would mistreat her, who would yell at her, who would neglect her, who would abuse her, who wouldn't respect her, who wouldn't protect her, who wouldn't serve her. Imagine if I saw all that as her dad. Imagine if I saw the relationship, I knew their relationship. I knew that's what it was.

Now imagine if while I know all that about them, he comes to me one day and says, 'Hey, Nate, could you hook me and some friends up for tickets to the Baylor game this weekend or, right, Nate, I'm a little down on my luck, could you kind of lend me some cash?' I would say, 'Buddy, there's not a chance in this world I'm giving you anything, because if you're not going to respect my daughter, then I've got absolutely no time for you. I mean, to think that you would have the audacity to treat her like that and then come to me and ask me for anything, it would blow my ever-loving mind to think that he could think that he could have a good relationship with me when he's got a bad relationship with my daughter. The only way for him to have a good relationship with me is for him to have a great relationship with my daughter.'

Husbands, listen, listen, listen. When you mistreat your spouse, when you neglect your spouse, when you fail to respect your spouse, when you fail to serve your spouse, when you fail to honor your spouse, and then you go to your Heavenly Father in prayer, He's going, 'Buddy, I got no time for that. I've got no time for you, because I have given you a good and perfect gift. I've given you my little girl. How dare you treat her like that? I love her more than you realize, and I've told you, love her, serve her, care for her the rest of your life. That's what I've told you. And if you're not going to listen to Me, then why would I listen to you?'

So, husbands, next time you disrespect your wife, next time you dishonor your wife, and then you lay down at night to pray, I hope you feel those prayers bouncing off the ceiling. That's how serious this is. And it's this serious because your Heavenly Father loves His little girl, and He's given you to give her to you. You better love her like He does, because He's watching. Amen. So, in summary:

1. *Point 1: Wives submit to their husbands.*
2. *Point 2: Seek a beauty that does not fade,*
3. *Point 3: Husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way.*

I know there's a lot of different marriages represented in this room, and I'm sure there are a lot of marriages that are going great right now, and I'm sure there's a lot of marriages in this room that are not going well right now. So, I just wanted to close with some hope. There's a story that I actually heard just this week, a true story, of a marriage where the husband did not know Jesus. Then he had an affair with his wife and wanted to get a divorce. The wife did know Jesus; she had been cheated on and she did not want to get a divorce. So, they decided that at least for the time, they weren't going to get a divorce, but he decided that he was going to move out. He was going to leave the house where they lived, and he was going to go find some other place to live. She was going to stay in the house on her own, and the only time she would see him is about once every week or once every other week because they had an agreement that he was going to come to the house to take care of the yard. So, he'd come and he'd mow the lawn, he'd pick the weeds, and he'd just take care of the yard.

You know what she didn't do? Whenever he would come over, she didn't go out. She didn't go out and yell at him. She didn't sit in the house and stew in her anger. She did what she probably didn't want to do. She went out and she greeted her husband. She brought him water, she brought him food, she said, 'Thank you so much for taking care of our house. I so appreciate the way you're taking care of our lawn.' She did not do that because she wanted to do it; she did it because that's what Jesus would have done. And do you know what happened? Her husband broke. It broke him. Messed him up because he saw this wife who he had had an affair with, who he had mistreated, who he had dishonored, and she was doing the exact opposite thing that she should have been doing.

She should have cut him off, she should have moved on, she should have ignored him, she should have disrespected him. But instead, what's she doing? She's serving him. It doesn't make sense. Friends, the Gospel doesn't make sense. You know what happened? They stayed married, they remained married for years and years to come. Why did that happen? Because his wife

came to a conclusion. She said, 'My life is not my own. I've been bought with a price; therefore, I'm going to honor God with my marriage.'

What are you going to do? What's your marriage about? Is it about you, or is it about something else? Is it about someone else? I'm just convinced that the faster you can make the decision to make your marriage all about Jesus, the faster you're going to see Him work in your life, in your spouse's life, in the life of those around you. Let me pray that He would.

"Father, we are so grateful for your idea of marriage, but God, even as I pray that, I know that there are people in this room, lots of people in this room watching online and in the lobby, who they are married and they're not that grateful for marriage. They're not here thankful that they're married; they're here thinking, man, how can I get out of this? This isn't as good as what I thought it would be.

Father, I pray that, through the power of your Holy Spirit, you would change their mindset and you would change their situation. I pray that they would realize that this marriage is not about them; this marriage is about You, and that, whether they're a wife submitting to their husband or a husband living with their wife in an understanding way, they would realize that their marriage is for the sake of pouring into their spouse and serving their spouse so that their spouse might come to know You, and so that other people might see you through our relationship.

So, Father, I just pray that every single marriage represented at Harris Creek would just be a healthy marriage, a marriage that grows in love for one another as the years go by, and that we'd fall more in love with one another, that we'd be more attracted to one another at our 50th anniversary than we are at our wedding day. And, God, I do pray that you would eradicate divorce at Harris Creek. And I don't just pray that couples wouldn't get divorced; I pray that we wouldn't just have blah marriages; we'd have amazing marriages. That we'd love our spouse, we'd serve our spouse, and that our marriage would be one of the primary ways in which we know and love Jesus more.