

Marriage by Design 03: "Covenant"
Malachi 2:13-16

April 26, 2026

Big Idea: Marriage is a commitment to be honored not a contract for mutual gain.

Series – By Design

We are in the middle of a series in which we are exploring God’s intent for marriage. It is often said, “context is key,” when we attempt to interpret Scripture. The idea is that discovering the intended idea communicated and how the original author and audience were communicating will help contemporary audiences, people like us, to understand and apply Scripture to our lives. Anytime we attempt to understand something, it is helpful to break down the original design. Marriage is no different. As much as government entities and various elements of society have to say about marriage, the truth is that marriage was designed by God. If we want to understand the institution and make our marriages better in the process, why would we not consider God’s design for uniting two people for life?

Cultural Misunderstanding #3: Marriage is a contract based upon mutual gain.

Contracts are temporary by design and conditional in that some rights are being protected. The moment a right is violated, the contract becomes null and void. Even the most loving of people make mistakes and fail. When marriage is approached contractually, it is easy to ask if it is working anymore. God’s design for marriage is covenantal in nature. Covenants are unconditional. They are a declaration of who we are more than what we are agreeing to do and receive in return. Marriage should be intentional not circumstantial.

God’s Covenantal Plan for Marriage

Read Malachi 2:13 – Failure to uphold marriage as designed is costly. Notice that the ones in agony wanted divorce.

Read V. 14 – God being a witness is a bigger deal than a testimonial witness in a courtroom. That is contractual language. A covenant witness is more like a co-signer on a loan. They have a vested interest in the success of the relationship.

Read V. 15 – The prophet contrasts God’s faithfulness with what was being experienced among the people.

Read V. 16 – There is strong wording here that shows the impact of covenant failure. Remember, covenants are about declaring who we are. When we declare that we will be loving and faithful but do something otherwise, the opposite character is what shows: violence. Rather than protecting someone, we become harmful to them. Malachi closes the thought to be guarded. He is not telling us to put up walls between us and our spouse. Rather, he is telling us to watch ourselves. Be wise about how we respond to things we experience. When you declare who you will be, stick to it!

Being Intentional

- **Choose presence over distraction.** Make time for one another without distractions.
- **Stop keeping score.** Do what is right without expecting returns. Don’t weaponize the past.
- **Guard your heart not just your actions.** Emotional connections online kill. Avoid them. Don’t compare on social media.
- **Choose commitment over feelings.** Don’t make permanent decisions based on temporary emotions.
- **Do the work instead of looking for an exit.** Hard and wrong are not the same. Do the hard stuff.
- **Remember who was there when you said, “I do!”** God was a witness, not a guest.

Family Night – Read Matthew 5:37

- **Elementary School:** Ask, “What did Jesus say about saying ‘yes’ or ‘no’?” “Why is it important to keep promises?” “How do you feel when someone breaks a promise to you?” “What can we do to keep our word?”
- **Middle / High School:** Ask, “Why does culture make promises lightly?” “How does keeping your word build trust?” “Why is commitment more important than feelings?” “What would change if people actually meant what they said?”

Prayer: “God, help us be people who keep our word. Let our ‘yes’ mean yes and help us live with integrity. Amen”

Velocity (Middle and High School Students)

Velocity: Meets this Wednesday, April 29th at 6:30pm.

Gravity: No Gravity Today

Today’s Songs

I Believe.....Phil Wickham
I Speak Jesus.....Charity Gayle
I Surrender All.....Hymn

Musicians Needed

We are looking for musicians to play in the band on Sundays. If you are interested, fill out a Communication Card. Thanks!

Wildfire Relief

We are taking cash donations in the lobby to purchase gift cards for families displaced by the wildfires in South Georgia.

Baby Dedication

May 10th in both services. If you would like to participate, sign up at the Welcome Desk. Choose which service you will attend and take an information sheet home with you.

Velocity Summer Camp

Rafting Trip is June 22-26 for rising 6th – 12th graders. Contact Tyler to sign up!