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Message: The Mystery of Marriage

Transcribed Message
February 21, 2021

There are two shows on television, and I confess, neither of which I have ever watched. They are perfect illustrations of what I want to talk about this morning though because they illustrate for us the great gap, the great divide, the enormous gap between how the world views and sees marriage and how God presents this holy and amazing gift that He has given to us in His Word. Those two shows, as you might guess if you had time, are called “The Bachelor” and “The Bachelorette”. It is my understanding, and correct me if I'm wrong on this, but beginning back in 2002 “The Bachelor” is still running and “The Bachelorette” I guess began in 2003. In each of these two shows, they kind of mirror each other. An individual is picked, a man or a woman depending on the show, and then there are a whole bunch of contestants or other people who they are going to get to know and to pick from one of these to become perhaps a future husband or wife. The shows are cast as the unique opportunity to find true love in the most exciting and adventurous way. The question remains after all of this will he pop the question and will she accept? The description of “The Bachelorette” is very similar: a single woman courted by a group of handsome men assembled to live under one roof. Towards the end of the process there are a few overnight dates and at the end of the show, the woman picks one person to continue seeing and he may or may not choose to propose marriage. I would suggest that that is probably a fairly accurate picture of how the view that the world views marriage.

What I want to do this morning is set before you the mystery of marriage and I want to give you a decidedly different perspective of this idea of marriage. As we think of our world and how it is that we have come to worship self, we have elevated this idol of self to a place of idolatry. Our main doctrine is personal happiness and freedom. The central act of worship is personal pleasure and sexual pleasure. What I would like to do is put before you a most glorious view of marriage right out of the Word of God. That is the only place that we go to find this kind of revelation by means of God's Word and

God's Spirit. Here's what we want to see. God's Word and the world are always at odds, never more so than concerning marriage. When we follow God's plan, we experience His blessing. When we tamper with God's plan, we do so at our own peril.

Now before we even look at the outline this morning, I just want to say to you this is the way it has always been. This is not true of us alone in 2021. This has been the history of the people of God. As you read your Old Testament and you read your New Testament, it becomes very apparent that God has always called the people out from among the culture and the society. What the world looks at and calls good, oftentimes God calls evil. What God calls holy and righteous, the world often looks at and calls evil. What God elevates as being something that is holy, the world so often treats as being very lowly. We live in this world. We live in this culture and it has always been that way for the people of God.

I want to begin this morning by bringing us into the context of Jesus's interaction with the religious leaders about this matter of marriage. The teaching is taken from Mark chapter 10. We're not going to turn there because I'm just briefly going to give you the setting for what Jesus does in taking us to Genesis chapter 2. Jesus is asked a question in Mark 10 by the religious leaders about divorce. In asking this question about divorce, verse 2 of Mark 10 says that their whole desire was to try to entrap Him. It was to try to get Him to be caught up in a controversy that would diminish in some way His reputation among the people. They bring to Him this question about divorce and as Jesus steps into this, He doesn't answer their questions about divorce. In fact, what He reminds us of is where you begin often determines where you end. If you go into marriage thinking that there is some way out of this relationship, statistics tell us that you're going to find it somewhere along the path of life together. If right now you are in a marriage situation and you're looking for a way out, statistics tell us that you're probably going to find a way out of this marriage relationship. It is always that way. Where we begin so often determines where we end. Jesus does something masterful here. Rather than stepping into the whole controversy of divorce and getting into all the details of that, He instead teaches about marriage. Instead of giving an answer to the question of divorce, Jesus presses into what the Bible says about the very matter of marriage. As Jesus does that, He takes us back to Genesis chapter 2.

So let's do that. We've already read those verses. What we have in Genesis 2 is nothing less than the divine design of marriage. It is rather amazing to me that as you read Genesis 1 and 2, these opening chapters of the Bible, that we really are told in these two chapters everything that we need to know about what God was up to in giving us this mystery called marriage, in giving to us this amazing blessing called marriage. We really have everything else that the Bible will build off of in Genesis 1 and 2. We have this amazing account. What I want to do is pull three principles out of this Genesis account and if we have time, and hopefully we will, we want to close out with the principal from Ephesians 5.

The very first thing I want you to see, the very first principle is this. Marriage is a God idea. Marriage is a God idea. Now you might look at that and think that was a typo. Maybe it was supposed to to say marriage is a good idea. Well, that would be good, too. That's a good answer as well. But what I have in mind is marriage is a God idea. It certainly is a good idea but it is a God idea primarily as we see in this passage. Our first point simply and immediately points us to this contest between what the Word of God reveals about marriage and what our culture believes about marriage. Our culture looks at marriage and says basically it is a human invention. It is simply the result of the anthropological, sociological, evolutionary process in relationships. It just as a matter of people finding each other and coming together and society and culture have evolved and we have this thing called marriage. Yet here we see that God's perspective is that no, God is the one who thought up marriage. God is the one who created marriage. God is the one who has given it to us for the good of society. Just as He has done with marriage and the family, so He has done with government and so He has done with the church. These major institutions that God has established in His Word for the benefit and the good of society. Marriage is that beginning point.

GK Chesterton said, "Never remove a fence until you understand why it was erected in the first place." That's what our culture is doing. Our culture is so busy taking down fences because they truly believe that marriage is simply a human invention. Being a human invention, it is a very fluid thing. It is constantly changing and they see it in that way because they begin with the understanding that marriage is something that they have thought up. But what God tells us here is that it is His idea. Notice how it

begins. It begins with God making them male and female. God makes them male and female. Back in chapter 1 you read in verse 27: "God created man in His own image. in the image of God He created him. Male and female He created them." It begins with this most fundamental principle. It begins with this most fundamental foundational truth. Marriage by God's divine design is for one man and for one woman. God has created men and women different and distinct. They are different and they are distinct. They are two recognizable sexes, equal in every way but different. This is where we get the beginnings of our understanding of complementarianism, that God has created men and women. He has created them equal in the image of God but He has given to them different responsibilities, different callings if you will. Marriage by God's creation, by God's definition, is between a man and a woman.

That is the battleground of our time. I put at the welcome booth an article that just came out this weekend dealing with the Equality Act. We need all be in prayer. This week Congress is taking up the Equality Act. it's the most far-reaching legislation since the 1964 Civil Rights Act. It will codify gender identity. It will codify all manner of sexual perversion in my view and what the Bible teaches with this regard. We have now obviously as we know a Congress and president who are anxious to put this into law. It's going to be onerous and it's going to be burdensome for Christian ministries, for churches, potentially schools. The impact we have no idea the extent to which this could go, but it is going to lift up above any religious conviction a person's ability to self-identify or to speak to this whole matter of sexual discrimination. This is the day in which we live.

The fall which comes right after chapter 2. Genesis chapter 3 introduces into humanity all kinds of abnormalities. You get to chapter 4 of you already have polygamy. You get into the 19th chapter and you have the sad, gut-wrenching story of Sodom and Lot and homosexuality and all that went with that. This is the challenge of our day and of our time. We as the people of God are called to speak to this issue in love. We are called to speak the truth and to do it in love. We haven't always done so good on the love part, but my fear now is that we've gone so far the other way that we're giving up the truth. It saddens me. It disheartens me as a believer, as a pastor, to see Christian leaders diminish the teaching, the clear teaching of the Word of God with regard to

these matters of sexual identity and sexual preference. But this is the day and this is the time that we are called to live in and we want to be faithful to God's calling. Marriage is God's idea. Marriage is for a man and a woman.

Secondly, you notice that God met man's need. God met man's need. Chapter 1 of Genesis is an overview of the creation account. It gives us the big picture. We don't have, as liberal theology says, two different conflicting accounts of creation in Genesis 1 and 2. We have Genesis 1. It's a big picture. It is the overview. Genesis 2. Moses drills down and he gives us details with regard to what God did. One of the things that God did in that second chapter is God gives to us the story of how it is that Eve was created. God sees Adam in the second chapter before Eve had been created and it is God's observation in verse 18: "Then the Lord God said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone. I will make him a helper fit for him.'" That is not Adam's self-conscious conclusion. That is a divine sovereign declaration on the part of God as He looks at Adam and says Adam, it is not good for you to be alone. It is God making that pronouncement. It is God making that announcement. Adam, you need somebody who is going to perfectly fit and compliment you as a man.

What did Adam do? What was Adam's contribution to this? Well, as we read in the story he went to sleep. That was his contribution. But that's not altogether fair. That's just low hanging fruit and I shouldn't have said that. What Adam did do – he didn't immediately go to sleep, but Adam was given an assignment. He was given a zoology assignment. God paraded before Adam all of the different animals that He created. He gave to Adam this unique assignment to name the animals, which of course was a part of Adam's dominance over the creation that God had given to him. As each of these animals came by, Adam realized that every one of these animal pairs that came by there was a he and there was a she. There was a he and there was a she. Every one of those encounters enforced in his own thinking the declaration that God had made – Adam, it isn't good for you to be alone. Every one of those was to remind Adam that he was alone and he was incomplete.

Then of course we know that God did something very special. He fashioned, we read, a woman. He did not make Eve out of the dust of the ground as He had done with Adam. He did not speak the words and create Eve as He had done with much of the

rest of His creative work. He put Adam to sleep and He took a rib from Adam, which speaks to the vital connectedness that God was picturing for us in this mystery of marriage. In doing so, he amplifies the sanctity and the grandeur and the glory of what it is that He is doing in Adam's life. The Word says that God brought her to Adam. He brought her to Adam. He didn't hide her. He didn't say Adam, I created something very special for you. Would you go find her? No, it says that He brought her to Adam. Think for a minute of the implications of that. So very often those of you that are single spend time thinking about who it is that God might have for you to marry. You probably spend a good bit of time trying to think of who that right person is. I would suggest to you from this revelation that it isn't so much about finding that right person as it is God wanting you to become the right person. That's a part of the divine design God wants you to focus on what you need to focus on and let him deal with the details of this person that He has created for you, if it is the intent that you be married.

When you think in terms of not knowing what the will of God is in that regard, how do we discover the will of God in that arena when we don't have divine and direct revelation? You discover the unknown will of God by walking in the revealed will of God. As a single person this morning, you think in terms of who it is that you might marry. The revealed will of God would say to you, rule number one is they need to be a believer. They need to be a believer. If they're not a believer, then they're not a candidate for you to marry because God doesn't want a believer and unbeliever unequally yoked together. You know the unknown will of God by following the revealed will which is they first and foremost need to be a believer. You don't need to take a compatibility test before you find out whether they're the person for you because if they're not a believer you already have the answer to that. Then I would think as you just process through what that might look like, are they free to marry and are you free to marry? If the answer is yes, then probably you should ask yourself are they not just a believer? Are they a fully devoted follower of Christ? Are they passionate about their walk with God? Does their passion for God spill over into your life and encourage you to do the same? what do your parents say if you're of a younger age and your parents are believers? What do they say about this relationship? This is a part of what God does

here. In all of this we're trusting in God. God created Eve and He brought her to Adam because marriage, my friend, is God's doing. It is God's idea. It is God's design.

The second principle. Marriage is a primary and a permanent relationship. Marriage is a primary and a permanent relationship. Look at the last part of verse 24 "Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife." I actually like the King James version. I think the New American Standard says the same thing. They say you shall leave and cleave. This has a nice ring to it. Leave and cleave. You shall leave one relationship and you shall cleave to another. The first thing that has to happen in a marriage relationship is you have to leave. You have to leave. I voluntarily walk away from the benefits and privileges of a single life. That's what I'm doing when I get married. I'm leaving something. It is a strong word. It means to forsake. It means to abandon. It means to change your allegiance. In this context obviously for us, it's a leaving of a relationship between parent and child. You're forsaking that on some level and you're stepping into a new relationship. But it's more than that. As a single person, you are abandoning, you're forsaking the single life and you're stepping into a married life. Whereas it had been to this point all about me, myself, and I, now it's going to be about us and we. There's a change. There's an allegiance that is being changed. There is a forsaking. There's a leaving.

Single life has its advantages. The Bible even talks about that. Paul talks about that in 1 Corinthians. For some, God has given the gift of singleness to call them into full-time vocational Christian ministry or for to give themselves fully to the gospel. There is benefit, Paul says, in being single. For most of us, we're going to be called out of that life and we're going to be called into marriage. We're going to have to make those conscious decisions of leaving what was a world in which we really didn't ask anybody if we wanted to do something. I was single for 22 years. Bonnie was single for 22 years. If I wanted to go out and do something to my '72 Dodge charger when I was single, I didn't have to ask anybody. So I did all of that before we got married. No, that's not true. But singleness requires you then to step out of the benefits of being single into a relationship. Here's the reality. Nobody forced me to do that. Nobody told me I had to abandon the single life. I wanted to. I was anxious to. I looked forward to that. But there had to be a leaving. There had to be a change of allegiance. What married life will do for

you, my friends, is marriage will reveal the utter sinfulness of the human heart. Marriage unlike anything else will reveal just how self-centered you and I really are.

Listen to this. Mike Mason, in his book *The Mystery of Marriage*: “Marriage comes with a built-in abhorrence of self-centeredness. In the dream world of mankind's complacent separateness amidst all of our pleasant little fantasies of omnipotence and blamelessness and self-sufficiency, marriage explodes like a bomb. It runs an aggravating interference pattern, an unrelenting guerrilla warfare against selfishness. It attacks people's vanity and lonely pride in a way that few other things can, tirelessly exposing the necessity of giving and sharing and the absurdity of blame. Marriage is one of God's most powerful secret weapons for the revolutionizing of the human heart.” Marriage is a revealer of our self-centeredness and our selfishness. The problem for very many married people is they want their cake and they want to eat it too. They want the benefits of a previous life that centered basically on themselves and they want to somehow marry that into this new relationship. It simply cannot work. It will not work. It does not work. We have to leave and then we cleave.

Look at the second thing. We cleave. I unite and I commit unreservedly to this new relationship. I unite and commit unreservedly to this new relationship. If leaving has a kind of a negative connotation because we're abandoning or forsaking, then here is the positive. Cleaving is the positive side of that. We're gaining something within this cleaving relationship. The word cleave is an equally strong word. It has the idea of bonding or gluing. It has the idea of something permanent. We leave a temporary relationship of singleness and we step into a permanent relationship of marriage. That is exactly what is in view in this word. Jesus points out in that Mark 10 passage in that interaction that He had with the religious leaders, He says what God has joined together let nobody put asunder. What God has joined together let no man put asunder. Marriage is God's idea. God is the one who married you. The vows that you make to each other, you make before others, but you also make before God. That's why divorce is a tearing, it's a rending. That's why divorce, and I know many of you that have experienced that will speak to that. That is why it is so incredibly painful because by divine design, God's intention was that marriage be a permanent bonding and a permanent relationship. Jesus said in answering that question from the beginning it was

not so. God never intended for marriage to be anything other than a permanent relationship.

Look at that statement. I unite and commit unreservedly to this new relationship. The only way to sustain that relationship is found in that sentence. What is the word that is going to sustain this relationship? The word commitment. Your marriage is sustained by your commitment to your marriage. It is not sustained by feelings of love. People often say they don't love their husband or their wife anymore. Okay, we get that. Go home and act like you do, because that's the command that we have. There's a permanency here. There is an issue at stake here that speaks to commitment. Marriage isn't built on simply love. It isn't built on feelings. Marriage isn't sustained simply by a sexual, physical relationship. Marriage is sustained by a commitment to permanency. Every marriage in this room and every married person listening by livestream – every marriage has problems. Every marriage has problems. It's just determining what you do with those problems and the commitment to work on those. It is a commitment to work those things out. Marriage is God's idea and marriage is a primary and permanent relationship.

Third principle. Marriage is characterized by oneness and intimacy. Last part of that 24th verse. "Therefore, a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife and they shall become one flesh." Marriage is characterized by oneness and intimacy. Verse 24. This is divine math. One plus one equals one. This is God's goal for your marriage. This is God's intent. One of the purposes, not the only one, but one of the purposes for your marriage is oneness. One of the purposes that God has in mind for your marriage is companionship. One of His purposes is this idea of partnership. That's why verse 24 starts with the word "therefore" which simply means "for this cause". For this cause of companionship. For this cause of oneness. That is physical. That is emotional. That is spiritual. In all of these ways, the purpose of your life now changes. The direction of your life now changes. The goal of your life now changes. You're walking in harmony with God but you're now called to walk in harmony with your spouse. It is a walking partnership and oneness, and the more we understand that principle, the less likely we are to do anything to hurt each other. Isn't that what Paul says in Ephesians 5 when he talks about a man who loves his own body? And what

man doesn't love his own body? if you love yourself in that way why would you seek to harm yourself because you're now one with your spouse?

It's also a matter of divine protection. It's not just divine math, it's divine protection. Look at verse 25. "And the man and his wife were both naked and they were not ashamed." The oneness of companionship, the oneness of partnership leads to the oneness of intimacy. I would suggest to you that what you have in verse 25 in that description – the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed – is an honesty. It's a transparency. It's an openness. This is what we have pictured in that statement. The man and his wife were both naked and they were not ashamed. The nakedness that is pictured there is not just sexual nakedness. It is that but it's much more than that. It's a picture that God gives to us in this perfect beginning, in His idea of marriage, that there would be utter transparency and openness and honesty and partnership with each other. It certainly is pictured in the physical relationship, but it is so much more than that. It's a part of God's protection – that He would have one man who would devote his entire life to one woman, and He would have one woman who would devote her entire life to one man. It is this protection that God has built in.

That's why Paul says in 1 Corinthians 7 when you get married you get another person's body as your own. When you get married you give your body to somebody else as their own. That's why he calls out the believers in Corinth because they were withholding sexual intimacy from each other. It's a violation of God's plan to protect your marriage. I'm pretty sure that any marriage counselor will tell you that in the discussion with a couple that is struggling in their marriage, the first thing that goes is their sexual relationship. Why is that? For the very reason that God has designed this relationship, this matter of nakedness, to be one of transparency, to be one of honesty, to be one of openness with each other. What happens when we don't tend to the weeds growing in the garden? We immediately begin to put fences up towards each other and the first to go is the very matter that God has said to us here that is built into your marriage relationship as a means of divine protection. So we commit ourselves before God. We commit ourselves to each other. We are in a covenant relationship.

Now let's go briefly to Ephesians 5. In Ephesians 5, we have this last principle. Marriage is about the gospel. Marriage is about the gospel. The gospel undergirds

everything I have said to this point and everything that comes out of Ephesians 5 with regard to this matter of marriage. The gospel is the thing that is to shape your marriage. The gospel is the mold into which your marriage is poured. The gospel is what you're to be living out. It's the focal point of your daily life. It's your daily reminder that you have this relationship to God based solely, completely upon His grace and His mercy in your life, that apart from Him you would have nothing. You have nothing to commend yourself before God or anybody else apart from His grace. That's what the gospel speaks into our life every day.

Look at how it starts off at the beginning of this 5th chapter verses 1 and 2. What is it that Jesus did? "Therefore," Paul says in verse 1, "be imitators of God as beloved children and walk in love as Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God." Behind marriage in general and in the roles that he is going to speak to about husbands and wives in just a little bit, Paul starts off by looking at what Jesus did. Let's start off by getting our eyes on the Lord. In those first two verses, this is the gospel being lived out. It is Jesus sacrificially loving us and giving Himself for us. It is this reminder that God is holy and I am not. It's a reminder that I can't earn any merit before God. I need His grace and His salvation. It is this that is life-changing. You can't make your marriage work the way God intended it to work apart from the gospel. That's why Paul, when he's going to introduce these thoughts about the relationship of a husband and a wife, begins at the beginning of this chapter by pointing us directly to Christ and to the gospel. Without that heart change and without that priority in our life, we can't possibly achieve what God wants for us.

So what does God want from a husband? I know this is very brief but time constraints are what they are and we're just kind of flying in about 30,000 feet as we think in terms of what is it that God wants a husband to do. Well, when we look at verse 25 it becomes pretty clear, doesn't it? "Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her, that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the Word so that He might present the church to Himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish." The command to a husband is to ultimately be like Christ. It is to be like Christ. To be like Christ specifically in what way? To love your wife the way Christ loved

the church. That's the call that He places upon us. It's a command. Again, it's not an appeal to emotions. Guys, it's not an appeal to the feelings that you have. This is a command to action. The action that He is calling us to is both sacrificial and intentional. It is a love that is mirrored in the love that Christ has displayed and shown to the church. When I'm sitting and doing premarital counseling and I'm talking about the role of the husband and the wife and I start off and I say to this guy do you know what it is that God has called you to do and to be in this relationship? What is His primary command to you? all you have to do is love your wife the way Christ loved the church. That is an absolute game changer. Who could ever say I can do that? The whole idea is that we're casting ourselves totally and completely upon the Lord. It is this spiritual leadership that God has given to men under the banner of loving our wives as Christ has loved the church.

That love can never be harsh. That love can never be domineering. That love can never be threatening or intimidating. That love could never be abusive to your wife. Those things have absolutely no place in your relationship with your wife. How you treat your wife. How you view your wife. What man following the command of Christ could ever be threatening, harsh, uncaring, unloving, to his wife in following what God has called us to do? it is a call, men, to servant leadership. Listen again to what Mike Mason says: "Holy matrimony like other holy orders was never intended as a comfort station for lazy people." I like that. "On the contrary, it is a systematic program of deliberate and thoroughgoing self-sacrifice. A man's home is not his castle so much as his monastery, and if he happens to be treated like a king there, then it is only so that he might be better enabled to become a servant." Guys, the call on your life is to love your wife the way Christ loved the church.

Ladies, what is a wife to do? Verse 22. "Wives, submit to your own husbands as to the Lord, for the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church body, and He is Himself the savior. Now as the church submits to Christ so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands." Now the obvious word that jumps off the page is that word that we don't like to talk about, but there it is. the word "submission". A wife's responsibility, according to Paul and the Holy Spirit, is that she is to be in submission to her husband. Again, the church has not always done a great job

of teaching this or modeling it. In fact, sometimes the teaching is simply un-biblical as to what it is that is intended here. But the most basic definition of submission *hupotaso hupo* under. *taso* to arrange, to arrange yourself under. It is the idea that is used all through the New Testament. It is used of Christ submitting Himself willingly to the will of the Father. It's used of believers as they relate to each other. We submit ourselves to each other. In this context of marriage, a woman, a wife is called to submit herself to one man, to only one man, and that is to her husband. She is in this calling to honor and affirm her husband's leadership, to help carry out the responsibilities, the partnership, this commitment together, so that she speaks into all of these decisions. She's there every step of the way using her unique gifts and talents and abilities to further this partnership. She is equal to her husband in every way. She adds her voice to every decision, but somebody is charged with responsibility to lead in marriage. God has given that responsibility to husbands. The responsibility that He has given to wives is that she follows her husband's leadership, that she lifts him up, that she respects him, and she encourages him. He's loving her now. Remember, he is loving her as Christ loved the church. She willingly follows his lead as he acts out this role of servant leadership.

Marriage, my friends, is a grand and glorious thing. It is a mystery. It can be all that God intends if we bring this gospel into our home and into our lives every day and we live out this truth in our relationships. Ultimately, at the end of the day, the question is am I following the world, or am I following God? Am I following the world's understanding of marriage, or am I following what God has set forth in marriage? They are very different. To follow God's plan is to experience His blessing. To follow the world, we do so at our own peril.

What do we need to do? Three things as we close. We need to follow the divine order. We have to follow the divine order. This is the plan that God has put forward. Genesis 1 and 2 anticipates everything else that the Bible teaches about marriage. What God says there is you leave, you cleave, and there is oneness, and there is intimacy. you follow that plan. You reflect the glory and the wisdom of God as you commit yourself to that. It is a beautiful thing when you do, but it is only as you follow

God's plan. The world longs for intimacy. The world pursues sexual intimacy at every turn, but they do it totally out of order of God's divine design.

Secondly, realize this is a process. Marriages are made in heaven but they're lived out on earth. It is a process that we step into day-by-day asking God to do this refining work in our life through marriage, because that's what He is committed to doing. If you're married, you're married to a sinner. At some point, that person that you're married to figured out that they were married to a sinner. You become the right person. You walk in the truth of God's Word. You walk in this gospel. Whenever we ask God for His help, He is always, always ready to give it to us.

Finally, we rely on God's power. We rely on God's Spirit. Marriage is a picture of this gospel that is being lived out every day. We cannot do it in our own strength. We can only do it by God's enabling grace. Change always begins in response to the truth. Let's respond to this truth that God has given to us this morning.

Let's pray. Gracious Father, we are so very thankful for this glorious gospel that has changed our lives, this gospel that says to us at you can't work your way into God's favor. You can rest and you can trust and you can believe in what Jesus did when He came to this earth. He lived His life of perfect sinlessness. He died a terrible death on the cross for my sins and for yours. What God says, if you believe that, if you trust that alone, He will give to you the gift of eternal life and He will change the direction of your life forever. Father God, I pray that every single person here this morning and everyone that is listening, every married couple that is here this morning and everyone that is listening, that the truth of Your gospel and the truth of Your Word would transform our lives and our marriages. We pray in Jesus's name, Amen.