

Big Idea: Love flourishes in an atmosphere of security.

Title: God's Enduring Love Painted on the Canvas of Marriage

Text: Matthew 5:31-32

Introduction:

If you have been with us for the past few weeks, you came today probably curious to hear what this new pastor has to say about the topic of "Divorce". For the past two months we be studying the **Sermon on the Mount** and have been talking about **six hypocritical actions** by the religious leaders found in Matthew 5. Thus far we have talked about our **BEHAVIORS** and **DESIRES**, now **MARRIAGE**. What I find so practical here is how **Jesus connects one's faith to the home**. Essentially, He is saying that if we want to follow Him down this road less travel, then we need to **address the condition of our home, particularly our marriage**.

Divorce is the topic Jesus brings up next in the Sermon on the Mount and like the culture then, it carries with it as much **stigma, shame and brokenness** to people today as it did back then. One reason, I vow to preach expository, or verse by verse, is to ensure that this pulpit preaches **the entire council of God's word not just one's favorite topics**. To be sure there are numerous land mines before us today. My vow to you as we precede together is two things:

1) Be very sensitive to the real pain people feel just by mentioning this topic.

Over the past 9 months, I have come to hear many of your stories and have found that in one way or other numerous people have been affected by divorce either from their spouse or as a child of divorce. It shapes you. I know it shaped me going through it as a child. I have been asking the Lord for not just insight to the truths of Scripture, but for compassion to share them.

2) Be true to the Word of God.

Whether we realize it or not our culture has weighed in heavily on this topic and we must discern between **what culture says and what Christ says**. There is a very real temptation here to shape the message to the outcomes, personalities or circumstances to the cultural trends. Some of the truths brought before you **this morning and next week** may not sit well with your own story or that of someone you love. I encourage you to go back and study yourself and determine for yourself how you read it.

Text:

Though we have only two verses before us, we will see that there are **two emphases on the topic: one by Jesus and one by the Pharisees and Scribes**. Read any commentary or devotional **on these two verses in Matthew 5** and you will see that they are almost always connected to the teaching on the same topic in **Matthew 19**. Though they are two different settings, they both give us insight on what Jesus is trying to say on the topic of divorce. I want us to read them together and then formulate a game plan on how to proceed.

Matt. 5:31 ¶ “It has been said, ‘Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce.’

Matt. 5:32 But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, **except for marital unfaithfulness**, causes her to become an adulteress, and anyone who marries the divorced woman commits adultery.

Matt. 19:3 ¶ Some Pharisees came to him to test him. They asked, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any and every reason?”

Matt. 19:4 ¶ “Haven’t you read,” he replied, “that at the beginning the Creator ‘made them male and female,’

Matt. 19:5 and said, ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh’?

Matt. 19:6 So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate.”

Matt. 19:7 ¶ “Why then,” they asked, “did Moses command that a man give his wife a certificate of divorce and send her away?”

Matt. 19:8 ¶ Jesus replied, “Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But it was not this way from the beginning.

Matt. 19:9 I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, and marries another woman commits adultery.”

From Matthew 19 we learn that **THE PHARISEES WERE CONSUMED WITH THE GROUNDS FOR DIVORCE.** On the other hand, **JESUS WANTS TO DISCUSS THE BEAUTY AND DESIGN OF MARRIAGE.** The tendency by many when preaching on this text is to fall into the Pharisees mindset and focus on the infamous “exception clause” - **EXCEPT FOR MARITAL UNFAITHFULNESS.** Everyone wants to hear about: **WHAT ARE THE GROUNDS FOR DIVORCE? CAN ONE REMARRY? WHAT IS THE CHURCHES ROLE? WHAT ABOUT FUTURE MINISTRY?** Yet, if we follow the text and Jesus’ emphasis, **BEFORE WE SPEAK ABOUT DIVORCE, WE MUST FOCUS FIRST ON THE BEAUTY OF THE DESIGN OF MARRIAGE.** If that is where Jesus goes **FIRST,** we must follow. So **THIS WEEK** we will focus on **THE DESIGN OF MARRIAGE.** **NEXT WEEK,** we will talk about **THE GRIEF OF DIVORCE.** This week we talk about the “**IDEAL**” of **MARRIAGE.** Next week, the “**REALITY**” of **PAIN AND CONDEMNATION of DIVORCE.** Please listen to both.

I know of no other way to focus on marriage other than to explain **THE COVENANTAL STRUCTURE FROM WHICH IT WAS BUILT UPON.** Caitlin Flanagan, a journalist for *Time* magazine writes:

“Marriage as a lasting covenant can be a vehicle for the nurture and protection of each other, the one reliable shelter in an uncaring world.”

In order to do so, we will address two simple questions.

Preview:

1. What is marriage especially in light of its covenant structure?
2. How does marriage parallel God’s love for His people?

MARRIAGE AS A COVENANT:

We often refer to marriage as a COVENANT. Let me give you a few Scriptures that point to this.

Compares human marriage to God's relationship to His people

Hos. 6:7 Like Adam, they have broken the covenant – they were unfaithful to me there.

Shows a covenant is formed during marriage

Prov. 2:16 It (wisdom) will save you also from the adulteress, from the wayward wife with her seductive words,

Prov. 2:17 who has left the partner of her youth and ignored the covenant she made before God.

Show God polices marriage

Mal. 2:13 Another thing you do: You flood the LORD's altar with tears. You weep and wail because he no longer pays attention to your offerings or accepts them with pleasure from your hands.

Mal. 2:14 You ask, "Why?" It is because the LORD is acting as the witness between you and the wife of your youth, because you have broken faith with her, though she is your partner, the wife of your marriage covenant.

Covenants in the Bible:

1. Adam (Liberty)
2. Noah (Life)
3. Abraham (Land, Messiah)
4. Moses (Law)
5. David (Eternal Throne)
6. New Covenant (You) - Jer 31 (a new covenant - rules of God on our hearts)

In fact the second half of the Bible is known as **THE NEW TESTAMENT** literally **THE NEW COVENANT**.

Definition of Covenant:

It is important to understand that **God works through the human experience to present Himself to us**. He doesn't force us to learn His language to speak to Him. Like any good ambassador or missionary, He learns our language, our culture, our understanding of life to communicate to us. In fact, **the parables of Jesus** show what

a wonderful sociologist Jesus was. **He understood the basic patterns of human life and communicated heaven's truth's through those mediums.**

In the same way, we approach the topic of marriage through the medium of **“covenants.”** Covenants are NOT something we use in Western 21st century today. In fact, I know of no true parallel in our American culture. People try to compare contracts to covenants, but as you will see that is far from the truth. It was how people related in ANE during Biblical times.

So let me bring out a definition and then unpack it for you. The definition I bring to one is learned in seminary. Don't worry if it sounds too “text book”. **As I unpack this application, you will see how it affects marriage and our faith.**

Covenant is an elected (voluntary), as opposed to natural, family-like relationship of obligation established under divine sanction. Covenant root word means “to bind”.

Covenant description:

Contracts typically two parties. Covenants has four parties: **1) Suzerain, 2) Vassal, 3) Witnesses and 4) a Policing Agent.** In the Ancient Near East, covenants were forged sometimes for **commerce** and other times for **protection**. If a vassal could not protect himself, a **Suzerain would initiate a covenant with them.** What was agreed upon was **documented and new family relationship was created.** **Witnesses** were allowed to see the terms. They would **validate** the event and **remind** people what happened. **A copy of the transaction was placed at the foot of the god who would then police the terms.** **Ceremonies** were involved to seal the deal. Many covenants have forms of **blessings and cursings** and the gods would bless the parties if they obeyed the terms and curse the parties if they disobeyed.

Let's build on this definition and description to show how covenants work in the Bible regarding marriage and faith.

COVENANTS HAVE 4 PARTIES: (SUZERAIN, VASSAL, WITNESSES AND A POLICING AGENT).

1. Covenants typically took place between A SUZERAIN and A VASSAL.
 - a. In following this cultural prescription, **God is vividly picturing that he is Israel's King**. We see it also with **Nebuchadnezzar**.
 - b. **Usually the Suzerain who initiates a covenant.**
 - c. **Man asks the woman in marriage. Husband initiates commitment and shows more commitment.**
 - d. **Husband becomes leader. Leader home.**

2. Covenants have A POLICING AGENT who holds one accountable beyond human laws.
 - a. Terms of covenant are **documented and put at the feet of the gods in the Temple**. Gods look down and police it. (2 tablets of 10 command)
 - b. Good marriage is not about 2 people, but four groups (God included)
 - c. The 10 commandments were document and placed in **“the ark of the covenant”** otherwise known as **“the footstool of God.”**
 - d. **God blesses and curses** as He sees fit.
 - e. Example: **Marry only Christians and require 6 months counseling.**

3. Covenants have A WITNESSING AGENT who holds one accountable beyond human laws.
 - a. Contracts typically two
 - b. Witnesses serve **to validate and partner**
 - c. Covenants have witnesses (heaven and earth)
 - d. God serves in both roles

COVENANTS CEREMONIES HAVE SEVERAL SIGNIFICANT RITUALS.

1. Covenants are typically **“CUT”** meaning they involve a **SACRIFICE**.

The technical phrase **“cut a covenant”** is generally used for **“making a covenant.”** The origin of this expression appears to lie in the ancient practice of slaying and cutting up sacrificial beasts at such covenant ceremonies. **See Abraham's covenant (Ge 15:6-8).**

A common element in the cursing formula in some treaties is: **“just as this [beast] is cut up, so may X be cut up.”** The man who recited it thus declared his expectation of the fate that would befall him if he broke his treaty obligations.

Notice who goes through the pieces. Only God. Unilateral Covenant. **“He who began a good work in you WILL COMPLETE IT until the day of Jesus Christ” (Phil. 1:6)**

2. Covenants are ratified with OATHS and VOWS

- a. Vow invokes Party #1 and God only. **Can't have a covenant without an oath to invoke God as a witness to the relationship (Ge 26:28, Dt 29:11).** Invoke God through an oath. Oath gives the obligation its binding validity.

Abe and Abimilech (Ge 26:28)

Gen. 26:28 They answered, *"We saw clearly that the LORD was with you; so we said, 'There ought to be a sworn agreement between us'—between us and you. Let us make a treaty with you*

Gen. 26:29 *that you will do us no harm, just as we did not molest you but always treated you well and sent you away in peace. And now you are blessed by the LORD."*

Gen. 26:30 *Isaac then made a feast for them, and they ate and drank*

Gen. 26:31 *Early the next morning the men swore an oath to each other. Then Isaac sent them on their way, and they left him in peace.*

Ex 19:8 and 24:3

Ex. 19:8 *The people all responded together, "We will do everything the LORD has said." So Moses brought their answer back to the LORD.*

Ex. 24:3 *When Moses went and told the people all the LORD's words and laws, they responded with one voice, "Everything the LORD has said we will do."*

Dt. 29:11

Deut. 29:9 *Carefully follow the terms of this covenant, so that you may prosper in everything you do.*

Deut. 29:10 *All of you are standing today in the presence of the LORD your God – your leaders and chief men, your elders and officials, and all the other men of Israel,*

Deut. 29:11 *together with your children and your wives, and the aliens living in your camps who chop your wood and carry your water.*

Deut. 29:12 *You are standing here in order to enter into a covenant with the LORD your God, a covenant the LORD is making with you this day and sealing with an oath,*

Covenant Sacrifice - Covenant ratified by a sacrifice and sprinkling of blood (Ex 24:4-8).

3. **Covenants are also RATIFIED WITH A MEAL (Exod 24:11 - Covenant Meal)**
***** Mt. Sinai like a marriage ceremony between God and His people *****

Ex. 24:8 Moses then took the blood, sprinkled it on the people and said, "This is the blood of the covenant that the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words."

Ex. 24:9 Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and the seventy elders of Israel went up

Ex. 24:10 and saw the God of Israel. Under his feet was something like a pavement made of sapphire, clear as the sky itself.

Ex. 24:11 But God did not raise his hand against these leaders of the Israelites; they saw God, and they ate and drank.

Matt. 26:26 ¶ While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body."

Matt. 26:27 ¶ Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you.

Matt. 26:28 This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

4. **Covenants CHANGE THE RELATIONSHIP. (Name change shows this)**

- a. Not a slave, but family. Suzerain becomes the Father and vassal the son. Covenants is **relational**, in one way or another it creates unity, community. We call God Father and He calls us son and we call each other brother and sister. The idea "I am yours and you are mine" underlies every covenant. In one way or another it creates unity, community.
- b. **Vassal takes on the name of the Suzerain. Shows they are no longer their own, but someone else (Just like in a marriage).**

Examples of Names Changes in the Bible:

Adam to Eve; Adam to the animals; Abram to Abraham; Jacob to Israel; Daniel and the 3 Hebrew boys (to Daniel, the name Belteshazzar; to Hananiah, Shadrach; to Mishael, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abednego) by Nebuchadnezzar; Simon to Peter, Saul to Paul; Tower of Babel; "a new name" (Re 2:17 & 3:12 (Pergamum and Philadephia).

COVENANTS ARE PERMANENT

1. Covenants are typically **DOCUMENTED**
 - a. Usually **copies** are made.
 - b. **Copies** are placed in **temples** of **suzerain** and **vassal** and **placed** under the **feet** of the **gods** so he can always look down upon it.
 - c. This is why we have **2 tablets** of stone each with Ten Commandments (one for the suzerain (God) and one for the vassal (Israel)).
 - d. Ark of the covenant is the footstool of God (1Ch 28:2; Ps 99:5)
2. Covenants extend to **FUTURE GENERATIONS.**
 - a. Often written on **silver, iron or stone** to remind the parties of the lasting agreement.
 - b. Contracts are temporal. Covenants endure.
3. Covenants are **CONTINUALLY RATIFIED.**
 - a. **Read publically and reviewed with succeeding generations.**
 - b. **Dt 31 says once every 7 years.**
 - c. **Paul commends Timothy on public reading of the Scriptures**
 - d. **Anniversary are recommitment times.**
4. Covenants are **UNALTERABLE.**
 - a. **Revelation can not be taken away or added too (Dt 4 and Dt 12).**
 - b. **Legalism add or subtracts to the requirements of God.**
5. Covenants involve **OBLIGATIONS.**
 - a. **General Stipulations - 10 commandments**
 - b. **Specific Stipulations - Case Laws**
 - c. **Requirements of His word - "If you love me, you will obey my commandments."**

COVENANTS INVOLVE THE HIGHEST FORM OF LOVE - "God's enduring love"

HESED OR AGAPE

Key word: Hesed:

"God's loyal love regardless".

God is consistently a covenant God with promises that secure a relationship.

All the hopes of eternity rides on the covenant promises of God

All the hopes of your marriage ride on the covenant reality of God.

God is a covenant God:

1. We live in a world of cheap commitments.
2. Promise are cheap in our world
3. God who always keeps His promises
4. God is about securing a relationship with unconditional security, loyalty and love
5. OT/NT is full of God's covenant work

GOD AND COVENANTS

1. God always takes the **initiative**.
2. God **binds Himself** to the covenant.
3. God's covenants are **unconditional**
4. God **pursues people** through covenant work.

Marriage and the covenant God (What does this have to do with my marriage?):

1. **God uses your marriage to show the world HIS COMMITMENT**
 - a. **Marriage is human illustration of our relationship with Him**
 - b. **Is 54, Je 31, Ez 16 (Israel is my wife)**
 - c. **God is husband and she is my wife**
 - d. **Hosea shows the promise of covenant to one who fails in the relationship**
 - e. **NT: We are the bride of Christ and He is the bridegroom**
 - f. **Every time God want to demonstrate covenant He uses marriage**
 - g. **He views your marriage as a living earthside picture of His covenant relationship to His people**
 - h. **Have I ever viewed my relationship with my spouse as the kind of relationship God has with me?**
 - i. **Do I bind myself to it regardless of what my spouse does?**
 - j. **Your marriage is a living symbol of God's relationship with us.**

2. **God uses your marriage to show the world HIS LOVE**
 - a. **Ep 5 - "Husbands love (not lead) your wives."**
Ep 5 - Wives submit yourselves to husbands as unto your covenant God.
3 verses to correct wives and 10 for husbands
 - b. **Titus - "Older women teach younger to love your husbands"**
 - c. **word here is agape (Hebrew hesed) covenant unconditional love**
 - d. **Agape love loves regardless**
 - e. **Well my husband, my wife doesn't deserve my love. I know your spouse doesn't deserve it. You do it for God.**
 - f. **A covenant husband looks to understand needs of his wife**

3. **God uses your marriage to BRING HIM GLORY**

2Cor. 4:7 ¶ But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us.

2Cor. 4:8 We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair;

2Cor. 4:9 persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed.

2Cor. 4:10 We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body.

 - a. **Artist and Medium Canvas or Stone**
 - b.
 - c.

Covenant equals security:

1. **When the security is challenged, all motives are questioned.**
2. **God resolves the security issue and then frees us to enjoy His love.**
3. **Likewise in marriage, security is the first issue resolved so love may be free.**
4. **Same pattern. God secures us first. In that security love may be free to grow and run free to mature.**

5. I implore you, I beg you, never put the divorce card on the table to get your way.
6. The enemy of our soul knows that if you can crack the foundation of all relationships (which is unconditional love) then He is come behind with fantasies and vain imaginations of what life could look like without.
7. This is why the security issue is resolved at a wedding.

Love flourishes from the foundation of security!!!

HUSBAND:

WILT THOU HAVE THIS WOMAN TO BE THY WEDDED WIFE, TO LIVE TOGETHER AFTER GOD'S HOLY ORDINANCE, IN THE HOLY ESTATE OF MATRIMONY? WILL THOU LOVE HER, COMFORT HER, HONOR AND KEEP HER, IN JOY AND SORROW, IN SICKNESS AND IN HEALTH: AND FORSAKING ALL OTHERS, KEEP THEE ONLY UNTO HER, SO LONG AS YE BOTH SHALL LIVE?

WIFE:

WILT THOU HAVE THIS MAN TO BE THY WEDDED HUSBAND, TO LIVE TOGETHER AFTER GOD'S HOLY ORDINANCE, IN THE HOLY ESTATE OF MATRIMONY? WILT THOU LOVE HIM, COMFORT HIM, HONOR AND KEEP HIM IN JOY AND IN SORROW, IN SICKNESS AND IN HEALTH; AND FORSAKING ALL OTHERS, KEEP THEE ONLY UNTO HIM, SO LONG AS YE BOTH SHALL LIVE?

Jesus Christ shed His blood on a cross to open the door for us to come to the covenant God.

1. Marriage is exclusive
2. Marriage is permanent. Love flourishes from the foundation of security.
3. Marriage is God-ordained, God sustained and God glorified.

Love flourishes from the foundation of security!!!

Abstract

The origin of the marble block utilised by Michelangelo for sculpting the David has been determined with the aid of a multi-method provenancing procedure including spectroscopic (EPR), isotopic and other miscellaneous variables. Data processing was carried out using discriminant function analysis. The provenancing procedure was split into three sequential steps aimed at obtaining increasing spatial resolution. High values of relevant probabilistic parameters indicate that the David's marble originates from Carrara and, specifically, from the Fantiscritti quarries (Miseglia), thus confirming the assignment proposed in the 19th century on the basis of simple autoptic examination. The role of different provenancing techniques in the three stages of the analysis is briefly discussed, as is the performance of instrumental methods as compared with the ability of a trained human eye.

Highly probable that he could have had a heart attack when he was given the gigantic block of marbles from Carrara for the new sculpture (it is over 4 meters high). In fact, the block had already been partially and badly worked - 50 years earlier - by a certain Agostino di Duccio, who later abandoned it. Nevertheless, Michelangelo accepted to sculpture on it. To be wrong in sculpturing this enormous block would have meant to throw the whole marble away or leave it as material for bricklayers; but the great **genius** of Michelangelo stands in fact in his own power: the ability to give the sculpture the appearance of a completed work immediately at his earliest touches.

The Michelangelo **style** was unique and unmistakable: with no mechanic tool except than his flat top sculptor, Michelangelo immediately set his sculpture "free" from the useless layers of stone, first on one side and then on the other, and at his first look to the block, as reported by many experts, he was able to "see" the already completed work at its inside. No other sculptor could ever work so bravely on a similar huge work.

After a change in leadership in 1499, Michelangelo returned to Florence. He was consulted to finish a statue of the biblical hero David for display in front of the Palazzo Vecchio. The work had been started forty years before, by Agostino di Duccio, but all that had been done was the purchase and moving

of a large block of marble, and some rough shaping. Michelangelo won the contract to complete the statue over DaVinci and several other artists, and began work on his David in September, 1501. He would work on the statue for almost three years.

Michelangelo's David is unique in one particular respect: David had been portrayed many times previously by other artists, and was favored as not only a biblical hero, but also as a representation of Florentine ideals.

However, while previous works, notably by Donatello, showed David after his victory over the giant Goliath, holding a sword in one hand, and the giant's severed head in the other, Michelangelo's David is unarmed and unadorned.

According to Michelangelo himself, the statue portrays David in the very moment he decides to go to battle with the giant, and his pose and musculature capture him virtually as he is turning upon making his decision.

Ironically, the block of marble, as it stood unused and prey to the elements in a cathedral yard, became known to the locals as "The Giant," because of its lack of form and its sheer size. The completed David still stands 17 feet tall

There is a very real temptation bend the message to how you view me over what God's word says. I am minister of God's word. I am not running for political office. Though I care what people think of me, my job as a preacher is to convey what God thinks about this.

What I mean is to lessen in one way, the importance of the topic or overplay in another the consequences of someone's c. Then from that context, we will look at this infamous "exception clause".

Though we only have two verses before us, we have a mountain of huge issues to address: Marriage, Divorce, Remarriage, Churches Role and Ministry.

Most of us are familiar with marriage ceremonies. For me they are always nerve racking because of the expectation for perfection. My greatest fear is to become a part of the blooper ceremony.

Parties.

Vows of Endurance.

Name Change.

Rings. Oaths and Vow. Documentation.

Story of IDEAL and REALITY.

There is the IDEAL and then there is REALITY. We always strive for the IDEAL, but chances are sometime we have to manage REALITY. We begin with IDEAL, but soon a dose of REALITY comes to us. We have dreams about the IDEAL, and often sleepless nights about REALITY.

No place is this more true than at the altar of a wedding ceremony. No couple ever believes at that moment that they will find themselves ever at the point where they are signing divorce papers.

If life was made purely of IDEALS, we would never need GRACE.

hoices.

I understand there are numerous landmines as we begin us. I will do my best to navigate both be sensitive to the damaging affects of divorce, yet still hold true to the truths of Scripture. For the record, I am the product of DIVORCE. Not in marriage as a child.

In fact, I have read over 200 pages on this topic from various sources before this measure most of it from views that are different than my own.

I have decided to follow the pattern of God's word on how to approach this topic. We cannot unpack the themes introduced in these two verses without going elsewhere in Scripture.

CHOOSE

the road less traveled
studies in the sermon on the mount



condition
(beatitudes)

influence / calling
(salt and light)

relational righteousness
(moral law)

behavior
desires

marriage

“YOU HAVE HEARD IT SAID.”

“FEEL YOU...”



YOU HAVE HEARD...

that anyone who divorces his wife
must give her
a certificate of divorce.



BUT I TELL YOU...

that anyone who divorces his wife,
except for marital unfaithfulness,
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an adulteress,
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- Matthew 19:3-9

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BUT I TELL YOU...

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except for marital unfaithfulness,
causes her to become
an adulteress,
and anyone who marries
the divorced woman
commits adultery^v.

JULY 11, 2019



The Final Days of Michael Jackson
Inside the battle for his money, his children and his legacy

TIME

Marriage as a lasting covenant can be a vehicle for the nurture and protection of each other, the one reliable shelter in an uncaring world." - Caitlin Flanagan

Infidelity is eroding our most sacred institution.

How to make marriage last again. by Caitlin Flanagan



www.time.com

Like Adam, they have broken the **covenant** - they were unfaithful to me there. - Hosea 6:7

It (wisdom) will save you from the adulteress, from the wayward wife with her seductive words, who has left the partner of her youth and ignored the **covenant** made before God. - Proverbs 2:16-17

The Lord is acting as the witness between you and the wife of your youth, because you have broken faith with her, though she is your partner, the wife of your marriage **covenant** - Malachi 2:14

COVENANTS IN THE BIBLE

- Adam (Liberty)
- Noah (Life)
- Abraham (Land, Messiah)
- Moses (Law)
- David (Eternal Throne)
- New Covenant (You)

DEFINITION of COVENANT

Covenant is an elected (voluntary), as opposed to natural, family-like relationship of obligation established under divine sanction. In short, it means “to bind”.

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COVENANTS HAVE FOUR PARTIES

God

(Witness & Police)

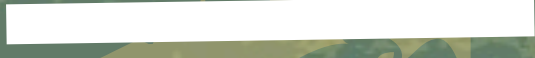
Suzerain



Party #1

Party #2

Vassal



COVENANTS ARE SEALED WITH CEREMONIES

- Involve sacrifice - “cut”
- Ratified with Oaths and Vows
- Ratified with a Meal
- Changes Relationship
(Name Changes in the Bible)

COVENANTS ARE PERMANENT

- Documented
- Extend to Future Generations
- Continually Ratified
- Unalterable
- Obligations

COVENANTS INVOLVES HIGHEST FORM OF LOVE

“God’s enduring love”

- O.T. - hesed
- N.T. - agape

GOD AND COVENANTS

- God pursues people through covenant work
- God always takes the initiative
- God binds Himself to the covenant
- God's covenants are unconditional

GOD USES YOUR
MARRIAGE TO
SHOW THE WORLD
HIS COMMITMENT

GOD USES YOUR
MARRIAGE TO
SHOW THE WORLD
HIS LOVE

GOD USES YOUR
MARRIAGE TO

COMPLEAT

TO BRING HIM GLORY

THE
BEST
OF
THE
BEST



THE S I M P L E S



CHOOSE

the road less traveled
studies in the sermon on the mount

