

November 2015

Series Overview

Marriage Myths

[Thanksgiving – Nov 26]

Preacher:

Date: November 1

Title: Myth 1 – 1+1=2

Text: Ephesians 5:31-33

Preacher:

Date: November 8

Title: Myth 2 – My spouse completes me

Text: Mark 12:30-31; Ephesians 5:22-32; Rev 2:4

Preacher:

Date: November 15

Title: Myth 3 – Marriage is a one-time thing

Text: Hosea 3:1; Revelation 2:2-5

* Altar Call Week

Preacher: Derek

Date: November 22

Title: The Forward Project

Text: Luke 8:1-3

Preacher: Site Pastors

Date: November 29

Title: ONE OFF

Text:

Myth 1 – 1+1=2

Date: November 1, 2015

Preacher: Derek

Text: Ephesians 5:21-33

L.I.V.E. or CORE VALUE to mention

- Live · Invest · Volunteer · Equip · Family · Generosity
- Accessible Biblical Truth · Authentic Relationships · Spiritual Vitality · All In · Outward Focus

Text:

Ephesians 5:31-33

³¹ “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.” ³² This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church. ³³ However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

Big Idea – Unity in marriage is oneness, not sameness

Approximate Outline

Series Intro:

- Statistics about marriage // new statistics showing Christian marriages are less prone to divorce.
- Marriage in general is in crisis and needs some corrective measures.
- More pertinent to Grace – many of our marriages are in crisis.

Some of you are going to find some helpful information in this series. It’s going to serve to strengthen your marriages. For some of you this is going to be very, very painful because you’re in a really bad spot. (offer next step for those struggling – marriage class/ Care and Support / marriage mentoring)

A word to singles.

- Marriage is not better than singleness.
- The goal of both marriage and singleness is Christlikeness.

The critical components of unity in Marriage

The bible has some interesting mathematics – in marriage it is not true that 1+1=2 – instead 1+1=1.

1. United in priority and pursuit (:31)
 - One flesh- 1+1=1 – just like the Trinity.
 - This flies in the face of our independent minded culture.
 - Leave and cleave – what the heck does this mean? It means that your spouse and not your family of origin is now your most important relationship.
 - Discuss how family of origin influences marriage – it doesn’t even need to be something bad – if we were raised differently from each other – it can come against unity.
 - How do we prioritize and pursue?
 - Understand the value of time together
 - Understand love languages

- Understand communication
 - Spouse as best friend – Keller chapter 4
2. United in revealing Christ (:32)
- Marriage is a “mystery” – word can also mean “secret” – there is a secret to marriage that some people don’t know about. Marriage is simply a shadow of a greater reality – a picture Christ and his church.
 - Christ is the source of all love and joy—the love you were created for is not the love of another human being;
 - In this relationship we see that Jesus set aside his rights, his power, and his status for the good of the other. In this way – marriage becomes symbolic of this relationship.
 - Points back to :21 – submit to one another – as well as submission and Christ-like love in :22-31.
 - Paul says. Do for your spouse what God did for you in Jesus, and the rest will follow. This is the secret—that the gospel of Jesus and marriage explain one another.
 - Keller: “Marriage is a major vehicle for the gospel’s remaking of your heart from the inside out and your life from the ground up. The reason that marriage is so painful and yet wonderful is because it is a reflection of the gospel, which is painful and wonderful at once. The gospel is this: We are more sinful and flawed in ourselves than we ever dared believe, yet at the very same time we are more loved and accepted in Jesus Christ than we ever dared hope. This is the only kind of relationship that will really transform us. Love without truth is sentimentality; it supports and affirms us but keeps us in denial about our flaws. Truth without love is harshness; it gives us information but in such a way that we cannot really hear it. God’s saving love in Christ, however, is marked by both radical truthfulness about who we are and yet also radical, unconditional commitment to us.”
 - How should a husband and wife grow together spiritually. Understand how your spouse connects to God and support that and talk about it. Not necessarily having devotions together, etc. Tell each other how you’re doing and what you’re doing in the context of love and respect.
3. United in Sacrifice (:33)
- Love and respect – both are a sacrifice
 - Husbands and wives need to play their role even when the other doesn’t deserve it.
 - Which means wives need to respect even when he doesn’t deserve it and husbands need to sacrificially love even when she doesn’t deserve it.
 - This is difficult and it flies in the face of our culture.
 - How does this work when it comes to fighting fair and resolving conflict?
 - Who are you getting marriage advice from. You may have friends giving you advice who love you dearly but don’t know Jesus and don’t give wise counsel. Plenty of people will give you counsel that will go against the scriptures. Be careful who you listen to.

Objections:

- What if my spouse isn’t a Christian?
- The whole submission thing
-

Additional material

- Ruth Bell once said, “If two people agree on everything, one of them is unnecessary” She went on to say, “If two people agree on everything, they double their chances of being wrong.” Now, Ruth Bell was not referring to the diversity of thought in the Christian church, she was instead talking about marriage.
- Incompatibility myth. Granted, there is alcoholism, child abuse, husband and wife beating, bankruptcy, unfaithfulness, and all those other distortions of relationship to which we have alluded. These are all awful things. Granted, there are personalities suffering from pathologies of all sorts that make them, or perhaps us, almost impossible with which to live. So we come to the conclusion that person no longer deserves us. Or perhaps that person should have someone better for them than us, so we do an end run around the hard work of resolving our differences. The truth was so succinctly stated by Swiss psychiatrist Paul Tournier when he said there is no such thing as incompatibility. Incompatibility is a word that we have created to give us an excuse to get out of relationship in which we are unwilling to work. So we continue one end run after another, avoiding that privileged fulfillment that comes from working a problem through, a problem that usually involves me just as much as her.
- There can't be “his” and “hers” when it comes to money, hopes, dreams or struggles. Marriage means sharing everything. It means keeping no secrets from each other. This means your disagreements won't have a “winner” and a “loser” because you'll either win together or lose together every time. It means remembering that you should never let your spouse walk alone, because you're unified in everything.
- Chap. 2-5 of Marriage on the Rock
- Marriage brings 2 people into closer contact than any other relationship can. You may be:
- Fearful person – tendency toward anxiety/ Proud – opinionated and selfish/ Inflexible – demanding / angry – harsh/ undisciplined – unreliable & disorganized/ oblivious – insensitive/ perfectionist – judgmental of others/ impatient – lose your temper
- Throughout your life, others have seen these flaws – you could write them off. For those people, these flaws created mild problems / for your spouse & marriage they create major problems.
- I.e. The small bridge at OMS – pieces of wood – not very strong – but to naked eye – nothing wrong. Try to drive a car – the pressure from the weight will expose the defects of that little bridge.
- Marriage doesn't create your defects (though you will try to blame your spouse for them all the time) it simply reveals them. If you have been hiding some flaw in the dark – marriage will shine a light – even though it hurts – we should be thankful – give your spouse the right to talk to you about what's wrong with you.
- It's the only hope you have at becoming the person God created you to be.
- Maybe “United in Submission” – Dueling Desires – Ortberg

Creative Ideas:

- Husband and wife on opposite ends tugging a rope with a conflict in the middle. The conflict is standing between them. Have them switch to the same end of the rope with the conflict on the other side. Now it's not dividing them – but they're working together to solve it on the same team.
- Couples holding up signs (maybe staff couples that people would recognize): Type A/B, Introvert/extrovert, 1201/BurgerKing, suit and tie/sweatpants, ballet/basketball, spender/saver, country/hip hop, strict with the kids/loose with the kids, night person/morning person, toilet seat up/seat down – then they turn their signs around to say “loves Jesus” or something that shows that there is a greater unifier than their differences.
- Song – Who are We Fooling? – Brooke Frasier <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FNiOQf-QIsE>
-

Myth 2 – You Complete Me

Date – November 8, 2015

Preacher – Sarah

Scripture Passages – Mark 12:30-31; Ephesians 5:22-30 (especially 32); Rev 2:4

L.I.V.E. or CORE VALUE to mention

- Live · Invest · Volunteer · Equip · **Family** · Generosity
- Accessible Biblical Truth · **Authentic Relationships** · Spiritual Vitality · All In · Outward Focus

Felt Needs:

1. disappointed/dissatisfied with marriage/spouse
2. waiting for spouse so that I am complete

Supporting passages: Mark 12:30-31; Ephesians 5:22-30 (especially 32); Rev 2:4;

Big Idea: Only Christ can complete me.

Approximate Outline:

Introduction:

FROM: Jerry Maguire, “You complete me”; Beatles, “All You Need is Love”; pinterest: “my life is complete because of you” “together, we are one whole heart, one whole soul” “To be with you, that’s all I want” puzzle pieces, donut + hole, milk + cookie; soulmate;

TO: “I complete me”; “I am the hero of this story. I don’t need to be saved”; “You spend your whole life looking for that one person to make you happy and complete, never realizing that one person is you.”

Plato’s soulmate: super race of androgynous humans, Zeus feared their power, separates male and female. Desperate to be reunited, when they found their other half they clung, died, because they were unwilling to do anything apart from one another, obsession made them weak

- a. Soulmate idea is not biblical- suggests that without “the one” we would be lacking something. He is sufficient.

Funny story- just before Nate and I were married I commented, “wouldn’t it be cool if when we got married we actually became physically connected so that we could be together all the time?!” Nate reacted with horror, and a few weeks into marriage, I did too.

What is our view of marriage?

- b. Culture-centered: stay married if I’m comfortable and my desires and expectations are met. If I’m happy. So when what you love about them now changes, and it will, you move on.

- c. God-centered: maintain marriage because it brings glory to God and it will point the world to Him. The reason we love them isn't dependent on something they do. It's because we love them. Because He loves them.

Main Points:

1. Expecting another sinful human being to complete you sets that person up for failure
 - d. Wanting/expecting *from* your spouse is expecting to be served- we're called to be a servant
 - e. There is no joy found in waiting for your spouse to complete you b/c we were not created to fulfill each other
 - f. No person can compensate for spiritual emptiness
 - g. "I'd be happy/satisfied if...."

2. Looking to our spouse to complete us is idolatry. God is our first love (Rev 2:4; Mk 12:30-31)
 - a. "Marriage is a glorious reality, but it is secondary to our spiritual identity as children of God"- Gary Thomas
 - b. "don't look for that person to be your savior or try and be someone else's savior, because there's only one" –blog Dana Ward, *Why I Hate Jerry Maguire*
 - c. What we lack can only be found in Christ (*life without Jesus is like a donut...there's a hole in the middle of my heart*)
 - d. When we wait for/expect a perfect "one" we deny Christ his place
 - e. "My wife can't be God, and I was created with a spirit that craves God. Anything less than God, and I'll feel an ache." We were created to love Him first.

3. Holiness is the core/ happiness is a result
 - a. Marriage is a shadow, a reflection of Christ and the church (Eph 5:22-33)
 - b. Christ loves us, forgives us, pursues us. He is safe, sure, constant.
 - c. Marriage teaches us to love, forgive, pursue, protect, persevere, submit/ inspires and challenges us to be more like Jesus
 - d. Marriage should bring glory to God. It should model his love & commitment so that our children and the world see Him.
 - e. Marriage at its best affirms that Christ is the center. But even at the worst, Christ is still my foundation.
 - f. Marriage reflects the Gospel- we are sinful, but Christ loves us more than we dare hope. We're transformed by this love- radically truthful, radically unconditional, radically committed (from *You Never Marry the Right Person*- Tim Keller)
 - g. Spiritual growth is the goal; marriage is the context
 - h. Marriage isn't everything, but it is something

Application

1. Free your spouse from an unfair expectation
2. Give to God an area of your life where you're expecting your spouse to fill the void only God can fill

Conclusion

My story: serious relationship in college ended badly and I was lost, years of drifting/waiting, longing to be w/someone, lonely, joined small group and renewed my commitment to Christ being 1st in my life,

visited friend in Kansas = vision of me as bride walking w/Jesus and I knew that no matter what happened on this earth, I was forever a bride of Christ. Met Nate 2 months later. I love my husband. I love my children. But Jesus is the first relationship in my life.

I am a daughter, a sister, a wife, a mom. But first, I am a daughter of the King. A bride of Christ. Because only Christ completes me. Let's pray.

Objections to address:

- 1.

Additional Material:

1. Sacred Marriage- Gary Thomas
2. Relevant mag's website
3. Pinterest ☺
4. Tammy Smith
5. Andy Stanley- holding the rock

Myth 3 – Marriage is a One Time Thing

Date: November 15, 2015

Preacher: Derek

Text: Hosea 3:1

L.I.V.E. or CORE VALUE to mention

- Live · Invest · Volunteer · Equip · Family · Generosity
- Accessible Biblical Truth · Authentic Relationships · Spiritual Vitality · All In · Outward Focus

Text:

Hosea 3:1

The Lord said to me, “Go, show your love to your wife again, though she is loved by another man and is an adulteress. Love her as the Lord loves the Israelites, though they turn to other gods

Revelation 2:2-5

. 2 “I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars; 3 and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name’s sake and have not become weary. 4 Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love. 5 Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent.

Big Idea – The conditions may change, the commitment may not.

Approximate Outline

The idea of this myth comes from this description:

- One of my mentors loves saying that he’s been married seven times to the same woman. I never understood what he meant when I was single. Now, I get it. Marriage is not static. It’s not a one-size fits all pair of jeans that will always wear the exact same. Your relationship will change, because people change. In marriage, you have to be willing to re-adjust and re-commit to new seasons. Sometimes that change is screaming in your face (a.k.a., a newborn). And sometimes the change is more subtle and nuanced. It could be a promotion, a death, a diagnosis or a new city. We have to adapt and grow as people, and so do our relationships.
- This concept is not foreign in the bible – marriage is a covenant just like God’s covenant with his people in the Old Testament. There are many examples of the covenant being renewed (both by God and by Israel) when circumstances had changed. They always came back to the foundation of the covenant.
- See the renewal of the Abrahamic Covenant throughout the chapters of genesis 12-22 (in additional material section below).
- Marriage as a covenant.
- One of the most striking examples of this is found in the story of Hosea and Gomer. Hosea was prophesying in the thirty years or so leading up to the destruction of Israel in 722 BC. He was a young preacher – with the tough task of delivering a message of destruction to a wayward people. But that

was just the beginning! God made him live out the tragedy of Israel's unfaithfulness by marrying a prostitute. This is not just a marriage, but a picture, a living parable, about God's love for you and me. But it also has implications for marriage as well.

- Warn husbands not to use this analogy as a weapon.

Hosea and Gomer:

- So they get married and things are moving along fine. The early days of their marriage were beautiful as their love began to blossom. And God blessed their union with a son. How Hosea's heart must have swelled with joy. He was convinced that his marriage would be better than ever with this little one to brighten their home. Scripture does not give us the details of what happened, but what it does say would permit us some speculation concerning the progressive trend that led to the tragic situation we eventually discover. Gomer's absences from home probably grew more frequent and prolonged and soon Hosea was feeling pangs of suspicion about her faithfulness to him. He lay awake at night and wrestled with his fears. He preached with a heavy heart during the day. And his suspicions were confirmed when Gomer got pregnant again and then again. Hosea doesn't tell us whether these last two were his children or not. When your wife is a prostitute, you never really know.

3 Things that will make you want to bolt when conditions change:

- Selfishness - the goal of marriage is not my happiness it's my holiness
- Independence – I don't need you. Self-centeredness is a havoc-wreaking problem in many marriages, and it is the ever-present enemy of every marriage. It is the cancer in the center of a marriage when it begins, and it has to be dealt with. In Paul's classic description of love, in 1 Corinthians 13, he says, Love is patient and kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. (verses 4–5) Repeatedly Paul shows that love is the very opposite of "self-seeking," which is literally pursuing one's own welfare before those of others.
- Apathy – I don't care anymore.

Revelation 2 – when you lose your first love... do the "first works" – the things you did at first. What are thing things you did at first in your relationship?

- Write notes?
- Go on dates?
- Make out?
- Text each other lovey-dovey things?
- Go out to dinner?

Figure out what those things are ... and do them!

- There are things that God has in store to teach you that he can only teach you after 20 years of marriage. Or 30 years. Or 50 years. Things that he can't teach you at 5 years because you're not ready.
- Imagine if a couple had bailed during a season of unfaithfulness – what they would have missed out on.
- What if God had bailed on Israel. What if he never sent the savior, never sent the Holy Spirit, just gave up. Instead – he renewed the covenant.

3 Declarations of Renewal

1. Again I commit to you.
2. Again I forgive to you.
3. Again I love you in all your brokenness.

Altar Call

The story of Hosea and Gomer is one of unfaithfulness and looming judgment. And we need to establish again that the unfaithfulness of Gomer the prostitute is a picture of our unfaithfulness. Our wandering hearts. Our tendency to take shortcuts. Our minimizing of the role and power of God in our lives. Our disposition to chase fleeting pleasures instead of the lasting joy that God offers. But, Hosea is going to continue loving, continue chasing, continue wooing his wife. And God is doing that with some of you today. He is speaking those three declarations over your life... etc.

Objections:

- I'm in an abusive relationship.
-

Additional material

- The Secret Enemy in Your Marriage (Relevant) – unexpressed conflict. It's like poison.
- These are the accounts of the periodic covenant-renewal assemblies and ceremonies, when the covenant children—typically following periods of apostasy, or at times of crisis or transition—are assembled by their leader to publicly rededicate themselves to the conditions of the covenant. Among these accounts are the assemblies recorded in Joshua 8:30–35 and chapter 24 when Joshua called the people together at Shechem; 2 Kings 22–23 when King Josiah, after the discovery of the book of the law, gathered the people to the temple; and Ezra 9–10 and Nehemiah 9–10 when Ezra recommitted the postexilic community at Jerusalem to the laws of the Mosaic covenant.

Genesis 12:1-3	- El Shaddai [God] initiated His covenant with Abram when he was living in Ur of the Chaldeans, promising land, descendants, and a world-wide blessing.
Genesis 12:4, 5	- Abram went with his family to Haran, lived there until he left at the age of 75 for the land of Canaan with his wife and nephew Lot
Genesis 13:14-17	- Lot and Abram separate; God again promises the land to Abram and his descendants
Genesis 15:1-21	- The Covenant is ratified when God passes between the three kinds of animals that Abram sacrificed and laid before El Shaddai.
Genesis 17:1-27	- When Abram is 99 the covenant is renewed and his name is changed from Abram [exalted father] to Abraham [father of a multitude]. God promises a son by Sarah through whom the covenant will extend. The sign of the covenant as circumcision is established for all males from the 8th day of birth.

Genesis 22:15-18	- The Binding of Isaac: confirmation of the covenant through Abraham's obedience: "and in your descendants all the nations of the earth shall find blessing..."
------------------	---

- Zero expectation philosophy – Tammy Smith – chapter 4

Creative Ideas

- song "Broken Together" - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RhxELo-uD3c>
- Disney's UP – opening scene of couple growing old together
- Video of aging couple - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X9HIHmY-PsA> – couldn't use as-is but a cool concept.
- Maybe interview a couple that has been married 50 years and talk about how they had to adjust and sacrifice along the way.

The Forward Project

Date: November 22, 2015

Preacher: Derek

Text: Luke 8:1-3

L.I.V.E. or CORE VALUE to mention

- Live · Invest · Volunteer · Equip · Family · Generosity
- Accessible Biblical Truth · Authentic Relationships · Spiritual Vitality · All In · Outward Focus

Text:

Luke 8:1-3

Soon afterward he went on through cities and villages, proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with him, 2 and also some women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out, 3 and Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's household manager, and Susanna, and many others, who provided for them out of their means.

Big Idea – Generosity has always fueled Jesus' mission

Approximate Outline

Review of the Forward Project – where we've been and where we're going.

Huge celebration of those who have already given.

1. Ministry requires money (8:1, 3b)
2. Those who have received should give (8:2)
3. God redeems re-purposed resources (8:3)

Objections:

-

Additional material

-