

Sermon Text: Luke 16:18 Permanent Marriage

God designed the permanence of marriage to illustrate the permanence of His covenant with His people.

- Verse 18 is not a random comment about marriage in the midst of a discussion on the Law/Covenant of God and the seduction of riches.
- The permanence of marriage is illustrative of the permanence of the covenant that Jesus expounds.

1) God established marriage between one man and one woman as a sign pointing to His relationship with His people.

- a) Communion with God/gods in worship is likened to physical intimacy in marriage or harlotry (Exod. 34:12-16).
- b) The second commandment forbids idolatry because God is a “jealous God,” likening God’s affection for His people to that of a husband for his wife (Exod. 20:5).
- c) God is the Groom/Husband of His people (Isa. 62:5b).
- d) Covenant-breaking idolatry is religious adultery (Jeremiah 13:25-27; Ezekiel 16; Hosea).
- e) The ultimate “one-flesh” union of husband and wife is found in the “one-spirit” union of Christ and His Church (1 Cor. 6:16-18; Eph. 5:31-32).
- f) Marriage is established to point to this union of pure love.
- g) **Application:** What is the chief end of your marriage? Are you intentional about this?

2) Divorce is forbidden as a travesty of God’s covenant with the Church.

- a) In this context, Jesus does not qualify this commandment, as He does in Matthew 5:31-32; 19:3-9, because He is emphasizing the permanence of marriage as it points to God’s covenant with the Church.
 - i) Matthew 5:31-32; 19:3-9 allows for (but does not require or recommend) divorce and remarriage in the case of sexual immorality/adultery.
 - ii) 1 Corinthians 7:10-16 allows for divorce and remarriage in the case of abandonment.
- b) God’s covenant with the Church is permanent and sanctifying (Luke 16:16-17; Eph. 5:25-27).
- c) Marriage, therefore, should be permanent and sanctifying (Luke 16:18; Eph. 5:28-30).
- d) **Application:**
 - i) If you have willfully entered into an unbiblical divorce, have you confessed this to God and sought His forgiveness? Have you sought the forgiveness of your ex-husband/wife?
 - ii) How are you guarding your marriage for God-glorifying permanence?

3) Marital love aims to reflect the perfection of the covenantal love of God and His Church.

- a) Complementarity not Egalitarianism
 - i) As Christ is the head of the Church and lovingly leads her, so the husband is the head of his wife and lovingly leads her (1 Cor. 11:3; Eph. 5:22-31).
 - ii) As the Church submits to Christ, so the wife is to submit to her own husband (Eph. 5:22-24)
- b) Joy (Isa. 62:5b; Song of Solomon)
- c) Faith (Prov. 31:11)
- d) Faithfulness/Loyalty (Lev. 20:10)

- e) Service (1 Cor. 7:3-5)
- f) Cherishing (Eph. 5:29)
- g) Honoring (Prov. 31:28-29; 1 Pet. 3:7; Eph. 5:33;)
- h) Communion (Gen. 2:24; Eph. 5:31)
- i) Forgiveness (in this fallen condition)
- j) **Application:**
 - i) Husbands, is your leadership sanctifying or discouraging your wife?
 - ii) Wives, is your attitude encouraging godly leadership in your husband or frustrating it?

4) Marital love must be open to children.

- a) Malachi 2:15-16 “Did He not make them one, with a portion of the Spirit in their union? And what was the one God seeking? Godly offspring. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and let none of you be faithless to the wife of your youth. For the man who does not love his wife, but divorces her, says the LORD, the God of Israel, covers his garment with violence, says the LORD of hosts. So guard yourselves in your spirit and do not be faithless.”
- b) Genesis 1:28 “And God blessed them. And God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’” (cf. Gen. 9:1)
- c) 1 Corinthians 7:14 Your children are holy, they belong to God.
- d) **Application:**
 - i) Are you refusing the blessing of God in the gift of children?
 - ii) Are you thanking God for the gift of children?
 - iii) If you cannot have children will you consider fostering and/or adopting children?

5) You are heirs together of the grace of life!

- a) Never marry outside the Lord (2 Cor. 6:14).
- b) If you have, then be the best witness for Christ that you can be in your loving and chaste conduct (1 Pet. 3:1-2; 1 Cor. 7:12-14).
- c) Christian spouses can encourage each other in the light of the hope of their eternal inheritance in Christ (1 Pet. 3:7)!
- d) **Application:** What are you doing to grow together in your relationship with Jesus Christ?

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Doxology: I will greatly rejoice in the LORD; my soul shall exult in my God, for He has clothed me with the garments of salvation; He has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself like a priest with a beautiful headdress, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. (Isaiah 61:10)