

Is Marriage Still Worth It?

Marriage and Courtship

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Preached on: Sunday, April 18, 2021

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As we come again to God's word here today, we started last time a series on marriage and courtship and I want to continue that theme today under the title of a message that asks this question "Is Marriage Still Worth It?" Is marriage still worth it? We saw last time that marriage is a God-ordained institution, it's a God-ordained institution in which a man and a woman covenant with one another to live as husband and wife in an exclusive monogamous relationship for the remainder of their earthly lives together. I gave that definition many times last week. I encourage you to see that message if you need to write the definition down again, this is just by way of review. What we saw last time is that God ordained marriage to be permanent, exclusive, intimate and loving. It's a noble gift that God has given to the human race. It was given before the fall of man, to give you a sense of its pristine origins. But marriage in our day has fallen on hard times, hasn't it? Cohabitation, pornography, sexual perversions, abortion and divorce are all so common that we are tempted to accept it all as normal even though it is all a violation of the permanence of marriage, the exclusivity of marriage, the intimacy of marriage and the loving nature of marriage, and we are, you know, we are in some ways cast adrift in an ocean wave of ungodliness as we contemplate the institution of marriage. So someone may well ask in our day and age, has the time for marriage come and gone? Is marriage still worth it? Well, I'm not going to try to fix the problems of society here with what I say this morning. I speak to those within the church. I speak to those of you that name the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. In a special way, I speak to those of you here today who are young adults with marriage hopefully still ahead of you in your desires, and I say to you this, that we must not drift with the culture. It is different for the redeemed of Jesus Christ and we think about marriage differently. After all, marriage pictures the relationship between Jesus Christ and the church. Is there anything more holy in the eternal purposes of God than the coming of Christ to save his elect with the shedding of his blood on the cross and keeping them until they enter into glory? Marriage is a picture of that great divine love and as I prayed earlier this morning, you know, we need to have a greater comprehension of divine love. If we sacrifice the biblical view of marriage, we sacrifice one of the most vivid pictures of marriage that the Lord Christ has given to us. So for the love of Christ, we must uphold true marriage against all of the counterfeits and the attacks which our society brings against the institution in our day.

Here's the thing that I find remarkable with all of the complex justifications that men will give for their sins and all of the rationales that you can find for everything that I

mentioned earlier and people go on and on and look at us as rubes and people living in the past, the beauty of Scripture is this: God's word cuts against our culture, it cuts through our culture with stunning clarity and with stunning brevity, even. The 10 Commandments say you shall not murder, thus condemning abortion in all of its ugly forms. The 10 Commandments say you shall not commit adultery, and under that umbrella term condemning all of the cohabitation and pornography and perversions that are so familiar to us. Our Lord Jesus Christ simply said what God has joined together let no man separate, thereby dealing a death blow to the easy no-fault divorce culture in which we live. So what we need is something more than just a condemnation of our culture, what you and I need this morning is we need perspective and we need the help of the Holy Spirit to stand up against the onslaught.

Romans 15:4 says this,

4 ...whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

God's word written in the past is of value to us today to persevere, to be encouraged, and to live with hope even if we are a minority standing against the culture of our times. So in other words, we need to do something today, we need to look back in Scripture and we're going to go way back in Scripture, to have hope going forward in life. And my friends, before we consider courtship next week, I want to remind you of our friend Ruth in the Bible, and the book with her name is the eighth book in your English Bible and one of the primary messages of the book of Ruth is that it teaches us the certainty of God's redemptive purposes and that's going to be our primary focus here this morning, the certainty of God's redemptive purposes no matter how bad culture gets around us.

Now in passing, Ruth also models for us, the book of Ruth also models for us a godly approach to marriage and gives us principles by which we can consider courtship, which by the term "courtship" all I mean is a relationship that is possibly going to lead to marriage. I'm not attaching any rules or regulations to that. I'm just using it as a shorthand term for the relationship that a young man and a young woman have together as single adults. But God's powerful blessing of Ruth's humble obedience that we see in the book that bears her name, lights the past in our dark age. Why would we turn to the book of Ruth in a series on marriage and courtship? It tells us something that we need for encouragement, perseverance and hope, it tells us that God is always at work even in the darkest times. His redemptive purposes are certain of accomplishment. They are not contingent upon the cooperation of man, in fact, they override the evil wickedness of men as God works out his purposes over time.

So what I want to do today is give you two sections in today's message. I expect this to be a little briefer than normal for many reasons, but just to remember some basic facts about redemptive history. We want to consider the promises threatened and the promises kept. Those are two sections to today's message: the promises threatened and the promises kept.

So for our first section here on the promises threatened, I want you to turn to the book of Genesis, if you would, Genesis 12. Genesis 12, we're going to do a five minute review, 10 minute review of biblical history that took thousands of years to unfold, and so you'll forgive me in advance for the brevity and the summary of what I am about to say. All I want to remind you of this morning is that God came to a heathen named Abram and graciously promised a land and a nation to him. In Genesis 12:1 through 3 it says this,

1 Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go forth from your country, And from your relatives And from your father's house, To the land which I will show you; 2 And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great; And so you shall be a blessing; 3 And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed."

These incomprehensible blessings that God was going to give this great patriarch, a land that in a sense bears his name, give him a nation, that is, a progeny of incalculable proportions of many many people under his name who would constitute that nation, and that ultimately through Abraham and through his seed all of the families of the earth would be blessed. Those are stupendous promises given to an individual man some 4,000 years ago or more, and so God has given these great promises to Abraham but we soon see that the promises are threatened and as you go through biblical history with these promises in mind, you have to consider it from, at least from a human perspective of saying these promises are in doubt with the things that are happening here that I am reading. So as the years turned into decades and the decades turned into centuries and the centuries turned into millennia, there were many times where the line seemed to be threatened with extinction and that there would be no continuation or fulfillment of the promises. These promises were threatened.

So without turning to the various passages, God told Abraham to sacrifice Isaac in Genesis 22. In Genesis 46, we see Jacob leading his small band of family of only 70 descendants out of the land and into Egypt, and the land that was promised was left behind. The people there in Egypt were in slavery for 400 years, 400 years, think about that. That takes us back from our perspective, that takes us long before the American Revolution and almost to the arrival of the Mayflower. That's how long they had been out of the land and in slavery in Egypt when we find them in Exodus 12. Then when God led them out, Pharaoh's army in a moment of time had them trapped at the Red Sea and it seemed like their destruction was imminent. Of course, God led them through the Red Sea, did a miraculous deliverance which we'll consider briefly on Tuesday as we begin to consider Psalm 113, but after they were led away from Egypt and delivered in that way, they sinned and rebelled against God and God judged the entire nation in the wilderness, only two of the men that came out from Egypt survived to actually enter into the land. As we go forward even further into redemptive history as we just recently remembered, even the Son of God was crucified, dead and buried on that Friday before the great resurrection. And you see throughout time, my beloved friends, you see throughout time the many ways and many portions the way that the promises were threatened and seemed

to be on the verge of extinction, and that times were dark. In different ways at different times, these promises were threatened and humanly speaking it appeared many many times that the promises of God would never survive what was happening on earth. And yet God did lead them into the land, didn't he? They conquered nations in the book of Joshua. They flourished under the leadership of Joshua and the elders that survived him for a couple of generations, and it seemed like things were on the upswing, you might say. But Joshua died, the elders who survived him died, and we find once again that that brief moment of shining light of prosperity was soon threatened again.

The people fell into a cycle of decline that we find in the book of Judges and I want you to turn to the book of Judges for just a moment, Judges 10, to just see three aspects of this decline after the death of Joshua. Judges 10:6. We see this and I'm not giving you much context here, just a flavor of the problems in those days. Judges 10:6,

6 Then the sons of Israel again did evil in the sight of the LORD, served the Baals and the Ashtaroth, the gods of Aram, the gods of Sidon, the gods of Moab, the gods of the sons of Ammon, and the gods of the Philistines; thus they forsook the LORD and did not serve Him.

This is the chosen nation abandoning their God and serving idols instead. These are the nature of the days of the judges.

Now as always happens when people fall into false religion, they become wicked, they become violent which is certainly what we are seeing in our day, is it not? The violence of wicked men who have forsaken God, well, it was no different in Judges 20. Look at verse 4 in Judges 20 with me, please, and the writer of the book of Judges gives us this account as an illustration of how severe the wickedness and depravity had become in those miserable days in the history of Israel. Judges 20:4, a Levite had a woman who had been killed and so he is seeking for revenge and in chapter 20, verse 4,

4 ...the Levite, the husband of the woman who was murdered, answered and said, "I came with my concubine to spend the night at Gibeah which belongs to Benjamin. 5 But the men of Gibeah rose up against me and surrounded the house at night because of me. They intended to kill me; instead, they ravished my concubine so that she died. 6 And I took hold of my concubine and cut her in pieces and sent her throughout the land of Israel's inheritance; for they have committed a lewd and disgraceful act in Israel. 7 Behold, all you sons of Israel, give your advice and counsel here."

The stunning desecration of a corpse then distributed throughout the 12 tribes of Israel with a view toward unspeakable revenge for the wicked acts that had been committed, give you a sense of the wickedness and the violence of the people at that time. They are godless idolaters, they are wicked and violent horizontally, you might say, and Judges gives us a reason and an explanation, gives us a summary of the situation and explains for us why there was such depraved chaos. They were in depraved chaos because they utterly lacked any spiritual leadership whatsoever.

Look at the end of Judges, chapter 21. Judges 21:25,

25 In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

And beloved, in one way or another this kind of chaos comes when people reject the God of the Bible, when people prefer their sins over righteousness. When people reject spiritual authority, chaos, rebellion, hatred, animosity and violence are the inevitable results of all of that and we are living, you and I are living in a day in which we see this on full display both outside the Christian church, broadly speaking, and also within it.

So we find false religion, immorality and violence even among God's people in the days of Judges, and my point in taking you through that brief history of the people of Israel is that as the book of Judges ends, once again it seemed that the promises that God made to Abraham were threatened. It seemed like they were destined to fail. How could anything good possibly come out of such pervasive comprehensive wickedness and rebellion? And as we are mindful that our day has so many parallels, it is remarkable for us to understand that it is precisely there in that day and age, in that culture of wickedness, it is precisely there that we meet the woman named Ruth, and that brings us to our second section of today's message: the promises kept. The promises kept, and here as we look into Ruth, we'll see this unfold rather rapidly but here's what I really want you to see and understand as we open to Ruth in the first chapter here. Despite the prevailing darkness of that day and age, despite all human perceptions and judgments to the contrary, God was advancing his redemptive purposes surely and without fail. The book of Ephesians tells us that God works all things after the counsel of his will, even the wickedness of men serves his purpose and God does it that way in order to establish that the glory and the power of redemption belong exclusively to him and not to man. So despite the prevailing darkness, God was advancing his redemptive purposes.

Look at the first verse of the first chapter of the book of Ruth and the opening phrase here is what makes this so compelling and why the book of Ruth cannot be studied in complete isolation from what went on before it. Ruth 1:1,

1 Now it came about in the days when the judges governed [those wicked, idolatrous, immoral days that we just did a flyby review of, in those days] there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Bethlehem in Judah went to sojourn in the land of Moab with his wife and his two sons. 2 The name of the man was Elimelech, and the name of his wife, Naomi; and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion, Ephrathites of Bethlehem in Judah. Now they entered the land of Moab and remained there.

So once again, a little brief comment here, they had left the land of promise and were living in a foreign pagan land, that was the state and is consistent with the state of the people in the days of the judges. They left the land where blessing was promised and

went into a pagan land and the consequences, in some ways, are predictable. It is never a good thing to leave behind the people of God and to leave the place where God has promised his blessing.

Verse 3,

3 Then Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died; and she was left with her two sons. 4 They took for themselves Moabite women as wives; the name of the one was Orpah and the name of the other Ruth. And they lived there about ten years. 5 Then both Mahlon and Chilion also died, and the woman was bereft of her two children and her husband.

In other words, Naomi was a widow and she had buried her only two sons, and all that she had left in this foreign land was two foreign daughters-in-law in a heathen nation. So this one Jewish woman, this one Jewish widow, in a time of national depravity, having gone through famine, having buried the three men in her family, is now alone with two foreign daughters-in-law in a heathen nation, and as you know the story, one of those daughters-in-law left and went back to her people. My friends, there were no outward circumstances whatsoever to suggest that God was at work in what was happening there. Everything outwardly suggested that God had abandoned his people, that the promises were going to die there in this time of famine and national depravity, and that is at the point which we meet Ruth. It was an utterly hopeless situation from human perspective. Now you and I as we are contemplating the world in which we live and the choices that you're going to make about how you will live going forward, you and I need to comprehend that very closely and carefully as we consider life going forward and as we consider that context in which we evaluate the institution of marriage in this brief series that we are doing.

Nothing suggested that God was at work. Nothing suggested that his promises were still in play and yet we read on in the book of Ruth and what happens? Naomi is old and she is bitter. She is grieving and she is discouraged as many of you are, and she is ready to give up. So she takes Ruth and she goes back home. Look at verse 19 of chapter 1.

19 So they both went until they came to Bethlehem. ["They both" being Naomi and Ruth.] And when they had come to Bethlehem, all the city was stirred because of them, and the women said, "Is this Naomi?" [She'd been gone for many many years.] 20 She said to them, "Do not call me Naomi; call me Mara, for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me. 21 I went out full, but the LORD has brought me back empty. Why do you call me Naomi, since the LORD has witnessed against me and the Almighty has afflicted me?"

But Ruth being a loyal daughter-in-law, having pledged her loyalty to Naomi before she returned to Bethlehem with her, Ruth is committed to doing whatever is necessary to eke out a living on the land, and so in the midst of desperate poverty, Ruth goes out to gather

grain from a field to simply have a subsistence living. Look at verses 1 and 2 here of chapter 2.

1 Now Naomi had a kinsman of her husband, a man of great wealth, of the family of Elimelech, whose name was Boaz. 2 And Ruth the Moabitess said to Naomi, "Please let me go to the field and glean among the ears of grain after one in whose sight I may find favor." And she said to her, "Go, my daughter."

So in this distressed condition, Ruth is happily going out to work with her hands to do the humble labor that is necessary in order for them to be able to eat day by day. It's a very very desperate situation and here is where the intersection of the providence of God and Ruth's humble obedience, her humble labor, intersect and in that humble act of Ruth, God is acting to keep his promises to Abraham.

We won't look at all of the passages here, I've preached on Ruth in the past, all of those messages are available online and you can study it more, I commend it to you for those purposes, but what happens here is this: God guides Ruth to the field of Boaz, this wealthy relative that had been foreshadowed in verse 1. He was a wealthy relative of Naomi's deceased husband. Somehow Boaz had heard of Ruth from echoes of those who knew her and knew of the story of her returning to Naomi. Boaz shows kindness to Ruth. Ruth reaches out to him for protection, and after some episodes of dramatic uncertainty which is worthy of the best of human literature in its description, after dramatic uncertainty Boaz and Ruth get married. They honor the institution of God and get married. Even in the midst of the depravity of the society all around them, in their humble simple world, in their love given by God in their hearts to one another, he respecting her and loving her, she respecting him and not having manipulated him in order to achieve a particular result, simply trying to be faithful to her day to day responsibilities, God blesses Ruth with a husband of magnificent character and of magnificent wealth. Ladies, it's worth waiting. I'm serious. It's worth waiting. It's worth waiting for a man of integrity, a man of character, a man who shows faithfulness to the people of God. It's worth waiting for that no matter how long you might wait, right?

So they get married and they have a son. Look at Ruth 4:13. I love this. One of the dark secrets that I keep about myself is that I'm actually a very sentimental guy and this plays the strings of the hopefully sanctified sentimentality of my heart. Ruth 4:13. Everybody loves a good romance, right? Well, this is better than any Hallmark movie ever turned out because this is real. This really happened in the midst of real-life under the hand of God with enormous biblical consequences. Verse 13. As you're going to see in just a moment, this is a profound moment of God advancing his redemptive purposes for all of history, this profound moment in verse 13 and expressed in such utter simplicity as the Spirit of God always does. The Spirit is a Spirit, in some ways, of few words of great clarity and simplicity. Verse 13,

13 ... Boaz took Ruth, and she became his wife, and he went in to her. And the LORD enabled her to conceive, and she gave birth to a son.

Now if that was all that we knew, it might just seem to be a matter of passing interest. Well, of course she had a son. That's what married people do, you know, you have babies, you start a family. Why the emphasis on this? Well, the emphasis on this is benefited from the fact that the writer of Ruth is looking back in perspective several generations later and able to – watch this – able to interpret the significance of that event in a way that could never have been known at the time that it happened. As providence and redemption was unfolding, there was no way to understand the significance of the son that was born to Boaz and Ruth at that time. Absolutely impossible. Friends, you cannot judge the direction of providence by what you see happening in the world around you or in your personal life at any given moment. You do not have the perspective necessary for that to be done. It's only as generations play out, ultimately only as eternity is fulfilled that we can begin to see the purposes of God in any of the things that are happening in the world around us. You see, we walk by faith, not by sight, and it is essential for you to remember that in all of life and as you contemplate marriage.

Now having belabored that point, we move ahead. Look at verse 16. Dear Naomi, the doting grandmother, I know a little something about loving grandmothers both beside me in my wife and in the women who have preceded me,

16 Then Naomi [the doting grandmother] took the child and laid him in her lap, and became his nurse. 17 The neighbor women gave him a name, saying, "A son has been born to Naomi!" So they named him Obed.

Now isn't that nice? They have a son named Obed and there's obviously this picture of joy, joy being returned for all of the bitterness of the prior days. Now you go on and you read that Obed is the father of Jesse. Ah, that's interesting. Obed apparently got married. He honored the institution of marriage. He and his wife had a son and they named him Jesse. So Jesse is Naomi's great-grandson and Jesse is the grandson of Boaz and Ruth. Why is Jesse important? Read the next cause, he's the father of David. Then they give a little bit of the generations here in verse 18. Look at verse 21,

21 and to Salmon was born Boaz, and to Boaz, Obed, 22 and to Obed was born Jesse, and to Jesse was born David.

Jesse – watch this, this is amazing to me – Jesse, the grandson of Ruth, had a son by his wife. Ruth's great-grandson was David. That David. The David who would become king of Israel. The David whose greater son would be our Lord Jesus Christ, the Messiah himself. David, the future king, was a product over the generations of the union between Boaz and Ruth. Reverse engineer this with me. Reverse engineer this with me. David is the great-grandson of that union which took place in the days of the judges. When the promises were most threatened, God was doing a most magnificent work to start the line that would lead to David that would lead to Christ. The New Testament emphasizes this. I mean, honestly, the precious nature of this, the power of God, the faithfulness of God to his own promises not because his people are good but because he is good, do you see that? This blessing coming to the nation of Israel and ultimately to all of the world, all of

the families being blessed as a result of the promises that God made to Abraham so many thousands of years ago, this blessing comes not because the people were good. They were bad, but in the midst of their badness, God was being infinitely good.

So in Matthew 1:1, I have no sympathy for the people who roll their eyes at biblical genealogies, no sympathy whatsoever for that because there is significant purpose in the genealogies recorded for us in Scripture and that is especially so here in Matthew 1. Look at it with me.

1 The record of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham:

Promises imprinted all over that verse. We didn't look at the promises that God gave to David in 2 Samuel 7 of establishing a permanent throne for him and his descendants but that's in play here. "The record of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham."

So he goes back in time to Abraham and brings us forward. We won't go through all of it but just look at this, remember generations going by here, you know, decades and decades from clause to clause.

2 Abraham was the father of Isaac, Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers. 3 Judah was the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, Perez was the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Ram. 4 Ram was the father of Amminadab, Amminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon.

Now at this point I understand your eyes, your unsanctified eyes start to glaze over a little bit but keep reading in light of the things that we've seen earlier from Scripture.

5 Salmon was the father of Boaz by Rahab, Boaz was the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse. 6 Jesse was the father of David the king.

Then it goes all the way down to Jesus the Messiah and Matthew then begins to tell the tale, the true tale of Jesus Christ in the remaining 27 1/2 chapters of his gospel. Oh, my friends, don't you see it? The line of Ruth and Boaz led to David, and the line of David led to Christ our Lord. What does that tell us? Imperceptibly when human rebellion is at its greatest height, imperceptibly and across generations, across thousands of years, God was keeping his promises and stated differently, God was working out his pre-eternal redemptive plan on exactly the timetable that he had established. He was working all things after the counsel of his own will so that in the genealogy, the climax of the union between Boaz and Ruth becomes our Lord Jesus Christ himself.

Do you realize, my friends, those of you that are united to Christ by faith in him, do you realize that Scripture traces his genealogy back to Boaz and Ruth and emphasizes it Old

and New Testament? Do you realize that the one upon whom you rely alone for your redemption found genealogical roots in such a sacred, sweet, unknowing to Boaz and Ruth at the time? They had no comprehension that their love, their marriage and their obedience would have consequences like this. They had no idea. They could not possibly have known. Do you realize that the Christ that was the fruit of their union, so to speak, that same Christ is the one who is lifted up on the cross for you? That in another display of wicked idolatry by the people of God, they nailed him to a cross and it seemed at the moment as though human depravity was prevailing in the most climactic way that even the Messiah was being put to death by this world and what was God doing? He was taking what they meant for evil and using it for good, Genesis 50:20. What you meant for evil God meant for good to bring about this present result.

So my friends, the sin and wickedness of this world is never the final answer, it is never the final chapter in the purposes of God. It couldn't be when a holy good God reigns over all the nations, when the Maker of heaven and earth prevails and executes his purpose, it could never be that wickedness is having the final word, and you and I need to step back from our preoccupation with earthly things, the fear and trembling that we have as we see wicked men prevail around us, we need to put aside our trembling and fear and come back to the God of Boaz and Ruth who works out his purposes even in the days of judges because what our God does is he keeps his promise of redemption, what our God does is he overrules impossible situations, even the sins of his people, to do that.

God, my friends, keeps his promises over time through human vessels who keep his ways even in the mundane details of life. You have no idea what God will use about your humble obedience in your seemingly obscure life, you have no idea what God may use that for. You walk by faith, you just obey him for the sheer joy and pleasure and responsibility of obedience, you do that and you live your life and you trust him for the outcome knowing that whatever it is, it's going to be really really good because God himself is really really good and he's working all things out to accomplish really really good for those who love him and are called according to his purpose. Out with our fearful wringing of hands over what's happening in the world around us, and in with the sense of this, it pleases our Christ to bless our humble obedience to his word, and in the context of what brings us here this morning, that means that there is an answer to the question is marriage still worth it? The answer to that question is, could only be one: yes, marriage is still worth it. It is still the institution of God designed to be a permanent, exclusive, intimate, loving relationship that reflects the permanent, loving, exclusive, intimate relationship between Christ and his church. It could be no other way.

So my friends, let me say by way of encouragement and exhortation to those of you looking forward to marriage, to those of you in the middle of marriage, for those of you on the other side of marriage either through the death or divorce from your spouse, our approach to marriage, your approach to marriage starts right here with what I'm about to say because all of these things are true from Scripture, it means that marriage, that permanent, exclusive, intimate and loving institution ordained by God, calls for your honor and respect. The forsaking of those sins of the world that I mentioned at the start, a keeping of yourself to your spouse or keeping yourself pure for a future mate, and if

you've lost your purity, to take that humbly to the Lord, confess it and receive his cleansing mercy as a result of his shed blood because, you see, my friends, God in ways that go far beyond marriage, God is certainly advancing his purpose of redemption in our sinful days. Let there be no doubt about that. That is why we keep, honor and respect marriage. It's part of the humble obedience that God blesses in ways that go far beyond all that we could ask or think. That means, and I just want to speak because we're about to transition next week into a consideration of courtship, that means that I want to take a moment to talk to our young people as one who loves you and cares about you, who cares about your soul. First of all, isn't it obvious how critical it is for you to know the Lord Jesus Christ, for you to be in him by faith? And isn't it also critical for you to understand that you need to shape your attitudes and your actions in a way that conform your life to this great institution of marriage? We'll begin to do that next week.

My Christian friends, the God of Ruth still reigns. When we refresh our minds by his word and we renew our faith, we understand that there's no cause for fear in the days in which we live no matter what's happening around us, and because the God of Ruth still reigns, you and I must be strong and courageous despite the obstacles in life. My unsaved friends who are in this room, this sovereign God came in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ and he came to advance redemptive purposes. Christ came in order to save you from sin, to redeem you from sin, redeem, to buy you out of the marketplace of slavery to sin and Satan. That's why Christ came. He paid the price to his Father on your behalf that you might belong to him. That means that he is a friend of sinners. He came to seek and to save the lost, people just like you. What a wonderful, gracious, loving, merciful God this is that we proclaim from his word. His blood, the blood of Jesus Christ, cleanses everyone who repents and believes and I ask you, will you come to him now by faith for the salvation of your eternal soul?

Let's pray together.

Father, we thank You for Your faithfulness to Your promises. Help us to be faithful to our duties. We ask You to bless especially our young people both those that are with us and those that are away today for whatever reason. We ask You to bless them. If singleness is to be there lot, Father, may they find great contentment and joy in that. As they wait for You to bring them a spouse, Father, may You encourage them, that You bless the most humble smallest acts of obedience for he who is faithful in a little will be faithful in much. So bless this consideration of marriage to the glory of Your most holy name through Jesus Christ our Lord we pray. Amen.

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