

# Relationship Status 2 - Married

## BUMPER -Relationship Status 2

Welcome back to Redemption Church. We are a mighty Church in Plano Tx. My name is Chris Fluitt

## Relationship Status

We are in the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of our Relationship Status sermon series. Last week we talked about the Single Status. We love our singles around here! You have something to offer that others do not have. We encourage you to use all your energy and passion in serving God.

If you missed the first week, be sure to check it out at redemption-church.com.

Today I want to talk to you about the Married relationship status.

## Married

How does our society think about marriage and family in the year 2018?

There is an ever growing negative sentiment around marriage and family.

## Homer

When Homer and Marge Simpson are one of the better examples of a successful marriage on TV... We have a problem. I remember when this show came out in 1980s and it was thought of as one of the worst depictions of marriage and family on tv... and all these years later society has seemed descend to the place where we no longer think this family is so bad. They are now considered one of the better examples of marriage and family.

The divorce rate is around 50% in the US. Many youth are growing up questioning why they should even attempt a marriage. The population is growing, yet fewer people are getting married. Those that get married are marrying later and later.

A growing number of people believe they are better off not ever being married.

Can I remind you that we should not take our cues from society. We need to look to the Word of God. So what does God say about Marriage? It says that marriage is a good thing!

## Marriage is a good thing

The Bible is very clear on this subject.

Genesis 2:18 God says "It is not good for man to be alone." He then creates Eve from Adam and declares it to be "very good." (Genesis 1:31)

Proverbs 18:22 Says whoever finds a wife finds a good thing... it goes on to compare finding a wife to receiving a favorable gift from the Lord. Marriage is a good thing!

Jesus' first recorded miracle happened at a wedding.

Jesus tells us that from the beginning God meant for man and woman to be joined together and become one flesh and to never separate. (Matthew 19:4-6)

Ephesians 5:28 says that when a husband loves his wife, he is loving himself. Paul is telling us that caring for your bride is the same as caring for your own body. To neglect your spouse is to neglect yourself.

God blessed marriage in Genesis 1:28 and told Adam & Eve to be fruitful and multiply.

There is NO DOUBT that God is pro marriage! Our culture treats marriage like an out of date relic, but we must look to the Word of God.

The Bible holds up marriage as a depiction of the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 5:25 (NIV2011) Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her

Heaven is a bride. If you think heaven is important then you need to think marriage is important.

Revelation 21:2 (NIV2011) I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.

Society also has negative thoughts about family and children. How does our culture think about children?

One well known politician referred to a baby as a "punishment." As radical as that statement was, I know people who think the same way about children.

What does the Word say?

## **Children are a good thing**

Proverbs 17:6 says that children are a crown to their parents and that parents become the pride of their children.

Psalms 127:3 says that children are a heritage from the Lord. It calls children a REWARD from God.

The married relationship status is a blessed status!

The family home with children is a blessed status!

I want to remind you of our scripture memory verse this month!

1 Corinthians 7:17 (NIV2011) ...each person should live as a believer in whatever situation the Lord has assigned to them, just as God has called them.

Whatever status you find yourself, you need to serve God in that status.

Don't be quick to change your status.

Last week we told the singles to not fast forward to a new relationship status. I feel like I need to tell the Married to do the same. Do not believe the lie of our society that you are better off getting divorced and being single again. That is something scripture does not support.

If your marriage is rough right now... what does 1 Corinthians 7:17 tell you to do? Find a way to serve God in the middle of this rough time.

It is not crazy to think that serving God might be exactly what you needed to turn this rough marriage around!

## **Married**

There is an absolute disconnect in our society over marriage. There is a disconnect between what God always meant marriage to be and what society means for marriage to be.

For the next few moments I want to talk to you about the covenant of covering.

## **The Covenant of Covering**

What is a covenant? It is a word that is used more than it is defined. Let's give a simple definition here.

**A covenant is when two parties form a relationship and offer agreements towards each other.**

Here is a scriptural example of covenant...

Exodus 6:7 (NIV2011) I will take you as my own people, and I will be your God.

The 2 parties here are God and Israel. They form a relationship and they promise agreements toward each other.

Marriage is a covenant where 2 parties come together into 1 relationship and offer promise towards each other.

This is what happens when the wedding vows are spoken. Listen for this covenant promise.

“to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death do us part... I pledge myself to you.”

Marriage needs a covenant of covering. God gives us a visual depiction of this covering inside the Old Testament tabernacle/temple.

## **The Covenant of Covering**

Inside the tent of meeting was a back room called the Holy of Holies. Inside this room was the very presence of God. Inside this room was a golden box called the Ark of the Covenant. This room was a meeting place for 2 parties. Only 2 were allowed into this Holy place – God & the High Priest.

This is a depiction of marriage. Only your spouse is allowed entry into your marriage covenant. YOU DO NOT GRANT OTHER PEOPLE ACCESS TO YOUR MARRIAGE COVENANT. There is a place where you tell Momma to mind her own business, this space is only for you and your husband. Do not allow others access to your Holy covenant space.

Your marriage is allowing 1 person access to your reserved space. Your marriage is your wife granting access to you and no one else. Your marriage is your husband granting you access to you and no one else.

NOT ONLY is your spouse the only one you grant access, but there is a covering that closes out every other person, their eyes, ears, and voices from your covenant space.

There is a veil, a covering, that only your spouse can walk through. This space is for no one else!

The High Priest walked through the veil covering to enter into covenant. This is not the only covering within the room.

There is the ark of the covenant present inside this room. It is a box and it's hidden contents are covered by acacia wood. The acacia wood is covered by gold.

On top of the box is a covering called the mercy seat. On top of this covering are 2 golden angels facing each other with their wings spread out towards each other in an attempt to cover.

Then there is one more covering. The blood of the lamb is sprinkled upon the mercy seat as a covering.

## **What is being covered?**

What is being covered by the veil, the acacia wood, the gold, the mercy seat, the angel's wings, and the blood of the lamb.

In other words... what's in the box?

There are 3 contents inside the ark of the covenant. The 10 commandments on tablets of stone, a bowl of manna, and Aaron's staff that bloomed.

**The 10 commandments** represents the law of God that we have never kept. We failed to love God with all your heart, mind, and strength. We failed to love our neighbor as our self. We took God's name in vain. We murdered in our hearts. We lusted in our thoughts. We did not honor our mother and father. We lied. We did not remember His Sabbath. We coveted. We made idols and worshipped other gods.

God took the law that we never kept and He hid inside Himself and covered it.

**The bowl of manna.** Manna was the bread that God gave the children of Israel every morning while in the wilderness. BUT WHAT did Israel do with God's provision? They complained and murmured about the manna. They were unthankful and ungrateful.

God took the provision that we never adequately thanked Him for and He hid it inside Himself and covered it.

The bloomed **staff of Aaron** comes from a time where Israel refused to follow Moses & Aaron anymore. They rejected the leaders God gave them. God caused the staff of Aaron to bloom as a way of showing Israel that they should follow the authority of God.

God took the authority that we rejected and He hid it inside Himself and covered it.

God took all our failures, short comings, rebellion, and un-thankfulness, and He hid it within Himself and covered it... and covered it... and covered it... and covered it.

He hid it in such a way that no one would ever have access to it again. He allows no one else access to this space of covenant. If anyone tries to touch the ark of the covenant they die. This covenant he has covered with the blood of Jesus.

Our marriages need a covenant of covering.

## **Covenant of Covering**

I want you to focus on the image of the two angels who are on the ark of the covenant. With their wings they are covering. We see two individuals, with 2 free wills, deciding to work together as one in an effort to cover. They end up

covering all the short comings and failures hidden within, but they also end up covering each other.

**This is what marriage should look like: 2 individuals, with 2 free wills, deciding to work together as one in an effort cover.**

The problem is, in our current world culture...

- Spouses don't work together, they often work against each other. Instead of being angels that face each other, they are devils who turn their back on each other.
- We don't hide the failures within ourselves. We don't cover them, we DISCOVER them and we go to social media and post about it, we get on the phone and we talk about it... We will talk about the problem to anyone and everyone except the one we are supposed to talk with.
- We don't cover we hold the failure over them. We keep a record of wrong like it is the football scoreboard.
- We allow others into our sacred space and we feel we have a right to do so because of the failure of our spouse.

I love wedding days. Everyone looks so nice on their wedding day. The bride looks like a magazine cover. She is absolutely perfect and had about 5 other women making sure she looks that way. The guy looks so handsome. He actually shaved, combed his hair, and put on a suit and tie. He actually tucked in his shirt for the occasion.

Everyone looks perfect on their wedding day, but life continues past your wedding day. Life does often look wedding day perfect. We are not perfect people.

The only thing that can keep two imperfect people from destroying their marriage is a covenant of covering.

**When the husband messes up she takes the failure and hides to within herself and she covers it, and covers it, and covers it... She covers both the offense and the offender.**

**When the wife messes up he takes the failure and hides it within himself and he covers it, and covers it, and covers it... He hides both the offense and the offender.**

Listen up single people. You have been looking for someone you are attracted to, someone who is good looking on the outside. That is all well and good, but I challenge you today to set your eyes on their ability to cover.

I am drawing to a close. In a few minutes we will be offering you a chance to come to talk to God. Before we do I want to share with you my experience in marriage counseling.

## **Musician**

I have on many occasions sat at a kitchen table with a man and woman. Every situation is different but this picture often remains the same.

There is the husband, sitting there downcast, full of shame and embarrassment. He doesn't want to look you in the eye.

There is the wife, looking off to the side. She often has a mixture of fear and anger. She is tries not to say much because she is afraid of what she might say if she gets started.

At some point the man says to the room, not directly at his wife, but to the room... "I am sorry. I wish I would have never... I would do anything to undo this. If I could go back in time I would make sure this wouldn't happen. I don't know how to undo this but I want so bad to undo this..."

And this is the moment where your pastor says the two most spiritual words. "Shut Up." That always seems to get people attention. The husband looks up and the wife over, because no one knows what is about to happen.

I say to the husband "You are so focused on your failure that you are missing the greatest gift you will ever receive. There is a gift at this table so much greater than undoing your failure."

You see gentlemen, we think because we are at this table with our failure made known; this is when she realizes we are imperfect and that we don't deserve her love so she is going to leave us.

This is the place in your relationship where you realize that she has a love to give that you could never deserve. The love you don't deserve is far greater than the love you perceive that you have earned.

I tell the dude that she is at this table, not to punish you, but to build this life with you. She is here to love you. She is here to cover you with grace, and all your "I wish I could undo it" talk is keeping you from receiving what you could never earn.

## Grace is the greatest gift

Grace is something you could never earn. When someone fails, someone has a reason to drop the hammer of judgment on them. Instead of lifting up a weapon, your spouse puts their love on display by raising up a covering.

**The greatest gift you can give your spouse is not a failure free marriage. The greatest gift you can give or receive is the covering of grace for every failure.**

1 Peter 4:8 (NIV2011) Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.

Are you having marriage problems today? There is no failure that can't be covered.

I invite you to love your spouse with grace today.

I invite you to take every failure and hide it within yourself, and cover it... and cover it... and cover it...

Do you know that God will hide your sin today? Do you know that He will cover you?