

Biblical Marriage

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[0 : 00] What is the best gift that you ever received for Christmas? You got it in your mind? I'm sure there's probably something that came right to mind.

And it would be interesting to have some of you share what that gift was. We don't have time for that. And so I'm sure if you have considered it the best gift you ever received at the time that you received it, boy, you were excited.

It brought you much delight. And we could also conclude that the one who gave you that gift, hopefully you're making that association as well, as you think of what was the best gift I ever received.

Well, yes, so-and-so gave me that gift. There's an association between the two. And we can conclude as well that that person or those people that gave you that gift, they knew a great deal about you.

And what specifically would bring you great delight? And out of their love for you, they bought that gift and they gave you that gift.

[1 : 15] Well, this morning we want to talk about a great gift that was given to really mankind by God.

God is a great gift giver. Probably one of the first verses, if you were brought up in church, that you learned and memorized was what?

There we go, John 3.16. For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son. Even back to the King James version that a lot of us older timers have memorized that verse in, that he gave. Even in Mark 10.45, Jesus makes a statement about himself. So we're seeing this great giving God in the Father, in the Son, in the Holy Spirit.

For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many. The greatest gift that any man can give is his life, to lay down his life for his friends.

[2 : 28] And then John 14.15-17, just a portion of those verses. And as Jesus states, And I will ask the Father and he will give you another helper to be with you forever, even the Spirit of Truth, so that Holy Spirit, willing to be given as well, to enable God's people, God's children, to continue on.

And then the Holy Spirit himself is one who gives gifts. As we see in 1 Corinthians chapter 12, gives gifts of service to God's people, to be used in the building up of the body of Christ, the church.

So this morning I want to focus on a special gift given by God. The original receiver of this gift was also very excited.

And even today, those who know God as the giver, and know the various features of this gift given by God, they received this gift with an enhanced delight.

I say enhanced delight because this gift really is given in common grace to all mankind. But those who know the giver of the gift receive it with an enhanced delight and joy because they know the giver of this gift.

[3 : 59] Even receiving it with excitement, but also with great celebration when they enter into this gift.

Now this isn't a riddle, or I guess it could be, is it coming into focus what this gift is? Any guesses? Marriage it is.

Marriage, that gift from God. So I hope to unwrap this gift this morning so that you can see and leave with a greater focus of, first of all, the giver.

And the glory of God in giving such a magnificent gift. This gracious, loving, sovereign, wise God who knows how to give gifts.

But then also to see the glory and wonder of the gift itself. Again, both going together. James 1.17 says, Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of light.

[5 : 09] That was a title that they used to use of God in ages past. The Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.

You know, what we see in the skies, the sun, the moon, the stars. There's different phases that they'll go through. There's a variation, twinkle, twinkle, little star.

We say that. Variation, not with God. No shadow of turning with God. He's the giver who knows how to give good gifts.

This is the God that we serve. A quote from John MacArthur's commentary. The perfect, flawless, holy goodness of God results in his doing and giving only what reflects his perfect holiness and truth.

So as we start thinking of this gift of marriage, we really couldn't start in a better place than starting with God.

[6 : 15] The giver of the gift. As we start with him and understand who he is, it really is going to determine how you respond to the gift that he's given.

Really, how you're going to handle this gift that he's given for his glory and our enjoyment. And so very important, starting with God, the giver of the gift of marriage.

First of all, he's the only God. Isaiah 45.5. Isaiah had a message from God to King Cyrus. Cyrus wasn't a believer in God, but God had a message for him.

And in that message, he said, I am the Lord and there is no other. Besides me, there is no God. I mean, that's a helpful, essential truth Cyrus needed to know.

I mean, the most influential thought or idea in any person's life in reality is, what do they believe about God?

[7 : 23] Well, it affects everything in life. So Cyrus, as all people, needed to understand, now all these other things out there, entities out there that claim to be worthy of your worship and focus and priority in life, you have to understand, there is no other God.

I am the Lord. There is no other. I mean, that's a truth expressed in love for the individual who needed to hear it. And at that time, was confused, looking to other entities for what only God can provide.

He's the only God. Jesus said this in his prayer. He referred to God as the only true God. In 1 Corinthians 8.6-8, when Paul wrote to the church in Corinth, he wrote and reminded them that though people worship little g, gods, there really is only one God.

He says, yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things, and for whom we exist. One Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and through whom we exist.

You get the idea here. Trying to help them understand something of the true nature of God, this one that these people at this time confessed that they knew. It's always helpful for us to be reminded of the reality and the truth of who God is.

[8 : 51] We always have to bring that back into focus in our daily walk. So he's the only God. He's the sovereign God. He's the one who rules over all.

He's the one who has all power, all authority. 1 Corinthians 29.11, in David's prayer before the nation of Israel, he said, Yours, O Lord, capital L-O-R-D, sovereign God, Lord, Yahweh, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty.

And I'm getting the idea he could have kept going on and on and on, trying to help them understand the transcendence of the God, this God who is their Lord.

He's just running on words, heaping word upon word, descriptive word, so that they could begin to understand and be reminded of, this is the one and only God, your Lord.

For all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and you are exalted as head above all. So wouldn't it be an honor to get a gift from this only God, this sovereign God, this majestic God?

[10 : 07] I'm sure it would be. You know, we are people who like to speak about, Oh, I got this gift from so-and-so. You know, and we think, Whoa, that elevates the gift higher and higher and adds greater significance to the gift because, again, who it came from.

But he's the all-wise and all-knowing God as well. Romans 16, 27, in Paul's closing remarks in this letter to the believers in Rome, this is what he writes.

To the only wise God be glory forever through Jesus Christ. Amen. So now we're beginning to put some more features with this only God.

It's great to know that he's the only God, but how does he exist? What is true of this God? And so throughout the scriptures, again, we see this unfolding of this truth from God to the people who know him intimately by faith in Jesus Christ, that they would really know him more in his fullness. So God, his word, unwraps for us a little bit more something of this only sovereign God. He is also all-wise, all-knowing.

[11:26] Romans 16, 27, to the only wise God. I guess I've read that one already. In 1 John 3, 20, in John's short letter, he wrote, God is greater than our heart.

He knows everything. Wow, that's impressive, isn't it? I'm impressed with some people who seem to know so much, but they don't know everything.

This only sovereign, all-wise God knows everything. Nothing is beyond the scope of his knowledge and understanding.

He's not surprised by anything. He knows all. But not only that, he's the loving God. 1 John 4, 16. So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love. That's who he is. That is his character. It's not like, well, today he's a loving God and tomorrow he's not.

[12:25] It's a steadfast quality and character of who God is. That's simply who God is, amongst many other things. But he's a God of love.

And whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. So the love of God has been eternally active in that relationship within the Trinity, God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

He knows what loving relationships really are all about. And that's just what I've gone through here is just a small representation of really what God has revealed to us in his word about himself.

After you enter into this relationship of knowing God by faith in Jesus Christ, not just facts. Now we're not talking. Pastor John has unfolded a little bit for us in the past weeks what this knowing is. It goes beyond just knowing facts and information. It speaks of an intimate, united relationship between the two.

[13:36] God and the person who's repented and come to faith in Jesus Christ. Well, once you know God in that way, then you can grow to know more of God.

As he's revealed himself in his word. And you can delight in God more and more then. Because the more we know of him, the greater delight will be in our hearts because of who he is.

But again, not just him. You'll have a greater delight in this gift, as we're focused on this morning, this gift of marriage. Because again, you know something of, well, this is who it came from.

It's like we could give maybe the illustration of a child who's walking down the road or someplace and finds a brand new bike laying beside the road.

And there's a paper on it that whoever finds his bike can have it. Well, certainly he's excited about having a brand new bike. He has no idea who gave him that bike. We'll compare that to the child who comes down out of his room Christmas morning and next to the tree, there's a brand new bike.

[14:48] Just what he wanted. What he'd been hoping for and looking for. But in this case, he knows there's something special about that bike because it came from a loving mom and dad who gave him that gift.

So, while he might not initially run to mom and dad, he might run and jump on the bike and get the feel of the bike and, could I take it outside and ride the bike?

And, at some point, he runs over to mom and dad and throws his arms around him. Thank you for giving me this gift. And, from then on, he knows this bike is special because it's a bike, but also because it came from mom and dad who know him and gave him that bike in love and for his delight.

So, let's focus and understand that this is God who gives these kind of gifts to us as his children. Really, again, common grace to all humanity. Well, that's the God of the gift. The giver of the gift. Let's take a look now in the rest of the time we have together to look at the gift itself.

[16:05] Well, let's understand, first of all, and this overlaps a little bit of what I was just talking about, it's a gift that's designed and instituted by the giver, God.

It didn't come through some impersonal process of evolution throughout millions and millions of years as people evolved.

It didn't originate as people came to the realization that, man, we need to get a handle on all these people that are out here. I don't even know who's mine and who's supposed to be with me and so on and so forth.

We gotta bring some organization to this chaos. No, it's not something socially constructed by people. It's a gift designed and given by the only sovereign, all-wise, all-knowing, loving God. Personal, relational God. He's the one, again, who knows all that needs to be known about loving relationship. He's the designer of the gift and that in itself should make the gift even more special. [17:20] Again, you know something of this. Maybe it could be your child who gave you something for Christmas and you open the box and there it is.

I made that. I made that for you. You know, or maybe it's your husband and wife who knew just what you needed and just the shirt or whatever and whatever else you have the skills to make and you tell the person I made that for you.

I mean, it lifts the value of the gift to a higher plane. And so we understand that this gift of marriage has been designed and instituted by this God who's revealed himself to us in his word. Jesus affirmed this reality, the origin of marriage, when he had to address a question by the Pharisees to him. In Matthew 19, 4 through 5, he says, have you not read that he created them from the beginning, made them male and female, and said, therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife and the two shall become one flesh.

Now, first of all, let's notice that when it came to this whole matter of this question about marriage, Jesus turned to the scriptures to answer these questions.

[18:49] the book of beginnings, Genesis, in our Bibles it would be Genesis 127 and chapter 2, verse 18.

And I think it's an important point for us to recognize when we're establishing a biblical worldview of this whole topic of marriage. And when we're living in a world that there are so many other views, contrary views, of what marriage really is supposed to be a life.

where do we go? Where do we turn to? I mean, usually when you have something, well, I'll use my vehicle, my truck as an example.

Every once in a while these newer vehicles have technology beyond my skills of understanding and there's something that Carol and I said, we still don't know how to set this on the truck.

We need to get the manual out and figure out how to do that. Why would I turn to the manual? Well, supposedly, those people who made and designed the truck know how it's supposed to work.

[19:57] And so, I wouldn't go to a comic book to, well, here's a comic book, just look in there and maybe you can figure out how to make this work better so that we can enjoy it.

That's kind of like what people do today. The comic book of men's minds and how they think something of such grand design could work instead of going to God the designer and the manual that he's given us in the scriptures to know how it should work.

Well, the people that questioned Jesus about marriage, they were the Pharisees. They were religious leaders. And I expect, indeed, they had read the scriptures.

So, the point Jesus is making is that they disregarded what God's word had already said. They strayed from the pattern that God established from the beginning.

It's like he's saying, you're approaching this topic of marriage like you've never read what God has preserved for you to read. Indeed, that is what had happened in that society even long before Jesus was addressing this question.

[21:10] taking them back to the original. Helping them understand, listen, you have the resource you need to understand and have the answers to these questions.

You're bringing it to me. Haven't you read it? So, we say that to our children. Didn't you hear me? When we know, they indeed heard me in what we said to them, but just drawing their focus to the fact that, yes, you heard me.

Now, the question is what I'm really dealing with is your disregard for what you heard me tell you. Taking them back to the scriptures.

The answer to your inquiry is indeed God's word. Jesus is taking them back to that which is authoritative and that which is reliable.

The word of God. Well, the scriptures, God's word, provides the information we need to know about this grand and glorious gift of marriage.

[22:17] Again, that's why we're turning to the word of God this morning to understand something of this gift of marriage. Well, next, let's take a look.

Jesus also directs them to the one who originated marriage. It was he, God, who created them. It was God, the creator, who said, therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast

to his wife.

The two shall become one flesh. This is what I'm telling you here in the second place flows out of what I've done in the first case.

I created them male and female. Now, the pattern from here on is that man shall leave his father and be united to his wife and they shall become one flesh.

That's the design. They go together in that way. The creator God is the one who declared that they would come together as husband and wife.

[23 : 19] He knows his creatures. He knows, that's why we started with God and took you to, this is foundational truth, if you understand this about this God, this only sovereign, all-wise, all-knowing, loving God, you believe that, then you can have confidence in this, in what he said.

And so that's what Jesus is taking them back to. I mean, it's a wonderful reality to hang on to. It provides the foundational truth on which to build marriage, really.

You've got something firm to stand on as you enter this journey of marriage. God himself and what he has spoken.

In fact, when he saw it in the beginning and established it in the beginning, he said it was very good. Now, some people might question, say, when I taste something and they ask me, what is it like? Oh, it's very good. Well, they don't always jump right in. Give me a spoonful of that, I want it. Are you sure? We don't have to doubt that with this God, who he is and how he's revealed in the word of God.

[24 : 44] We can move into this whole matter of marriage with confidence because of who God is. He said in the beginning, it's very good. God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, again, as I said earlier, knows from all eternity what a united, eternal, loving relationship is all about.

And he's chosen to give men and women this privilege to enter into and experience something of what he enjoyed. I mean, this is helping us to understand again something more of the wonder and glory and the goodness of God.

It's not like, well, this is mine. You know, I've taken a taste of that pie or whatever it is and told somebody I was very good. Okay, give me a thing.

No, no, this is mine. Only for me to enjoy. It's not the way God was. He was and truly from all eternity enjoying the harmonious relationship that exists between the only sovereign, holy God. And in his kindness, he decided, I'm going to create men and women in my image and give them the privilege of understanding and knowing and experiencing something of what I have enjoyed throughout all eternity.

[26 : 08] With me, first of all, but then also with one another. it's a wonderful gift that God has given. I mean, knowing that marriage has its origin in God should give us a sense of great joy, privilege, that we can participate in marriage, great confidence, again, that since God's the designer of marriage, that we can confidently follow the design, knowing that once I get into marriage, it's not always perfect, you know, and, but when I'm in those times, I can have the confidence, now wait a minute, it's not the design.

You know, something's wrong here, it's not going the way I thought and was instructed, something's wrong here. Well, I can be reminded, it's not the design.

Therefore, well, it's got to be me and my partner, my wife, something in there, in the two of us that's not functioning quite right, according to design, is why we're having this trouble.

So, great confidence, but also a sense of fear and reverence. The gift I have, the honor of receiving and participating in, has come from God. I need to take marriage seriously and handle this gift appropriately and with great reverence, in a way that honors him as the designer and the giver of the gift.

So, we don't enter it lightly with little regard and once we're in it, we certainly don't treat it with very little regard. Understanding, there's something bigger going on here than just me and my wife in this situation, my personal happiness and that's what we want to move on onto next.

[28 : 04] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thinking that this gift from the great giver is designed by God, we move next into understanding that it's designed by God specifically for Adam and Eve, male and female.

Go back to Matthew 19. Jesus said, Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female and said, Therefore, man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife and the two shall become one flesh.

So, it was the male and female that God created that he said, Therefore, man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife and the two shall become one flesh.

So, the union of marriage was instituted by God when there was only one man and one woman that he created. He designed and gave this honored gift to a man and a woman.

And this would set the standard for who was to participate in this glorious gift of marriage. It's even seen and established in who the man leaves to be joined to his wife.

[29 : 24] The man shall leave who? Father and mother and hold fast to his wife. It would be a man and a woman who would bring forth a son and the others a daughter and that son and daughter at some time would leave that mother and father that man and the woman and hold fast to his wife.

So, that's the pattern God established and expected to be carried out in the lives of men and women that would come after Adam and Eve. It's the established pattern that God conveyed to Adam and Eve in the beginning.

It's the established pattern that Jesus reaffirms at this time of his questioning. Many, many, many, many years so we can conclude it's still the established pattern today.

that's supposed to be followed that was designed by this only sovereign, wise, loving God. Any other combination, man with man or woman with woman, it's a deviation from the creator's original design and really cannot be recognized as a true marriage union.

Well, let's move on. take a look at this designed gift from God and its purpose.

[30 : 49] What is the purpose of this marriage? Well, number one, to glorify God, to magnify that which is magnificent about God.

The heavens, certainly we see that in creation. The heavens declare the glory of God, that which is magnificent about God. I just cannot comprehend certain things about God.

I trust that as you've seen some of those pictures from the James Webb telescope that they're starting to receive, the first one that they received back was pretty much the portion of sky that the picture is of.

They described it as if you held a grain of sand in your fingers at the end of your outstretched arm. That's the size of the area that they took the picture of.

And then within that area they said there are thousands of galaxies. I mean, it blew my mind when I saw it and realized this goes beyond anything, of course, that my puny mind could comprehend.

[32 : 02] The heavens for me are declaring that which is magnificent about God. Glorifying God.

They're doing that day after day. They pour forth the speech and on and on as you know the verses go. Creation is doing that. But also within the realm of mankind that's our purpose.

Paul reminded the believers in Corinth whether you eat or drink, whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. So people being made in the image of God and after his likeness have the unique privilege to know God and put on display some qualities that exist in God.

Thinking, reasoning, willful choices, loving others, knowing the difference between good and evil and on and on. As a man and woman enter into marriage union, they have that unique privilege to put on display and enjoy something of that relational bond of love and communion that exists between God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

From eternity past, God has been doing that and has given man and woman, husband and wife, that glory to enjoy together.

[33 : 18] I think this is one of the reasons why it was not good for Adam to be alone. A quote from John Henderson's book *Catching Foxes*, now this isn't a hunting, trapping book, it's taken from the Song of Solomon.

It says, a gospel-guided journey to marriage. It's a book Carol and I tend to give out. If somebody invites us to come to their wedding, they can count on it.

We're going to give them this book and if they send us an invitation far enough ahead, which they do these days, we'll get the book, give it to them now so that they can start reading this book and understand what they're moving into, the glorious gift, the purpose of the gift.

He says, Adam has no one of his nature and substance to think about. He has no one in his likeness to love, serve, and honor. And so, with Eve with him, he could now show in a greater, fuller way something of that harmonious, beautiful relationship that exists within the God.

The purpose of marriage goes beyond the self-focused view that many couples enter marriage with. In the same book, Henderson had been counseling a couple who entered marriage with none of this understanding and of course, as a result, were struggling and came to the point, well, that is it,

we're calling an end to this.

[34 : 51] And so, he brought them back to the beginning, understanding purpose. He says, no one had ever told them that life and marriage did not exist first and foremost for them. No one had ever told them that they're not actually the main reason for their own existence.

They had never heard that marriage did not exist to be a delivery vehicle for their appetites, dreams, and personal needs. Most of us, I would guess, began dreaming of marriage not as a way to sacrifice our desires and wants, but as a way to fulfill them.

I'll go far beyond that. If that's all you're settling for as you enter marriage, you're not going to experience the enhanced beauty of the gift as it's designed by God and understanding we're here to glorify God together and as we do that this is going to be the wow factor for us in years to come.

Well, love for God and his glory is the firm foundation block on which to build marriage, but it's also instituted to display and help explain the relationship between God and his people.

In the Old Testament, we see that relationship described as a covenant relationship. Numerous places in the Bible we read of the different covenants that God had with the people that he loves.

[36 : 14] So marriage pictures God's covenant relationship with his people. A lot of times people think, oh, covenants, contracts, those are impersonal things. They weren't.

I mean, they reflected something very personal about God and about the others who were involved in this relationship with him. In fact, the covenants are a deep sign of deep love and commitment between a man and a woman.

They're willing to make this declaration of love and commitment public in their vows to each other before God and others to see and hear. I mean, such a covenant really is to be taken seriously with a real sense of permanence and on and on we could go about that.

Well, Israel's also depicted as the Lord's bride and God as her husband. Isaiah 54 says, for the maker is your husband. Wow, that's bringing that relationship, that understanding of God, this one who transcends everything, very down, close, in a very personal way.

even though he's a sovereign God, wants him to understand that, wants you to understand and view and think of me as your husband. The Lord of hosts is his name, for the Lord has called you like a wife deserted and grieved in spirit.

[37 : 43] Jeremiah speaks of very similar language about God. Let me keep moving here in the New Testament. Jesus portrays himself as a bridegroom and the church is his bride.

You're familiar, Luke, well, it's a different passage to Luke 5. Jesus said to them, when, again, here we go again, these Pharisees were coming around again, questioning, how come you disciples are eating when all these other people are fasting?

And this is what Jesus said to them, can you make a wedding guest fast while the bridegroom is with them? That's who Jesus was. The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them and they will fast in those days.

But then, in Ephesians 5, 25 through 7, these are the verses we're very familiar with in describing and Jesus picturing husband and wife relationship to the relationship that he has with the church.

The church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands.

Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her. The same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies, he who loves his wife loves himself.

[38 : 54] And then he brings this other verse in, therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife. Another quote from John Henderson's book, human marriage brings to light what is hidden in the scriptures prior to the coming of Jesus Christ.

It provides a visible picture of an invisible reality. The physical relationship gives body to a spiritual truth. The temporal covenant points to an eternal covenant.

Marriage is a visible, physical, temporal covenant that pictures and bodies and points to the eternal covenant between Christ and the church. The unique and significant relationship between a husband and a wife provides an opportunity to showcase the splendor and the beauty of God's redeeming love.

Christ's union with the church is one eternal reality to which marriage points to. Again, elevating this whole gift of marriage to a level that goes far beyond just selfish desires and plans that we might have.

An honored opportunity. God, by his grace, will enable us to live out that picture.

[40 : 15] I've got to keep going here. Well, what else pictures this relationship between Christ and the church? Certainly, the attitudes and actions of both the husband and the wife.

Husband, love your wife as Christ loved the church. Give yourself sacrificially. Give of yourself sacrificially for your wife's welfare as Christ is the head of the church.

You're the head of your wife. Provide her with a loving servant leadership with the view of helping her grow in godliness, holiness, and Christ-likeness. Love her as you love yourself, he says.

That means give her the same care and attention that you would normally give to yourself as you move through your day, through your week. You're thinking about her. I know you're thinking about yourself.

Man, I'm hungry. You know, I'm tired. We think a lot about ourselves and do things about the conclusions we come to about my condition.

[41 : 16] Do we do the same thing, men, as we move through the week with our wife? I wonder how she is. Is she tired? I'm tired, but she's got to be tired. Dear, let me do that.

You go ahead. You sit down. You rest. You get the idea. Dwell with her in an understanding way. Be considerate of her and honor her. That's what Peter was telling the men in 1 Peter 3 and we see it in Colossians 3.19.

Well, what about the wife? Submit to your husband as the church submits to Christ. Submission is good. It's not demeaning. Everyone's called to be in subjection to somebody else.

In marriage, the wife willingly submits herself to her husband because she relishes the privilege that she has and displays the relationship that the church has with Jesus Christ.

That's her goal. Her goal is to show that which is magnificent about her God, Jesus Christ. So she looks forward to this opportunity. She's the husband's helper.

[42 : 21] This also is not demeaning. Over and over in the scriptures, we see God referred to as our helper. So being a helper is a good thing. August 5th is coming up here and Carol and I will be celebrating, can you believe it?

We can't. 50 years of marriage. Wow. We can't be that old, can we, hon? She was very young when we got married. She's been helping me for 50 years and I've needed a lot of help over 50 years.

She's done that faithfully and I trust that it has brought her joy. Maybe not all the time. She wrestles with that sin nature and that flesh as I do as well but she's been a great helper over those 50 years.

Well, the next purpose is to produce an ongoing generation of people to glorify God. We see that in Genesis 1. It says, be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it.

God designed that it would be through the intimate physical union of a male and female in marriage. that would be the way in which future generations would fill the earth and of course those future generations would need to be brought up in the nurture and the instruction of the Lord so they could know this God and how to subdue the earth in such a way that it would magnify that which is glorious about God.

[43 : 48] So, I don't want you just to produce these children but later on we understand and in the Old Testament as well. Throughout your whole day. Tell them about me.

Tell them about God. Bring them up. Make disciples. Teach them how to beg. Everything I've commanded you within marriage. Well, there are many more things that we could tell you about marriage.

You know what it is. Sometimes you get a gift and it's a big box. You open it up and there's a smaller box in it. Oh, this is great. No, there's more in there. There's more in here?

So, you take the wrapping out and pull something else out. Is that out? No, there's more in there.

There's more in here and so it is. You know, we've just touched on a little bit of this great and magnificent gift that God has given us.

Dig into the Word. There's more here. He didn't tell me about this. There's more here. Learn more of this glorious God, the giver, and this gift.

[44 : 55] Well, and then we just finish up. There's a culmination of what marriage pictures. We read about it in the first Thessalonians when Jesus will come back to be united with his bride.

His bride will come and meet him. I mean, you're excited on your wedding day. I was when I saw Carol coming down the aisle. Well, that was wonderful to see.

to experience. This is in grandeur because what was happening in our marriage day was just a picture of that which is glorious, more glorious to come.

And it's a final coming together of the bridegroom Jesus with his bride. You ready? I mean, Carol was ready.

She didn't come down in her jeans. She was ready. Are you ready? For that culmination of that meeting with the glorious bridegroom Jesus Christ.

[46 : 01] For those of you that are believers, yeah, you're ready. But keep that bridegown spotless. Live for his glory.

Those of you here this morning that don't know God, there's a greater gift that you must receive first. that's a gift of that relationship with Jesus Christ.

Coming to him, repent. Turn from your ways that lead you away from God and the enjoyment of his good gift. Repent and come to him.

Know him. Enter into the joy of that relationship and the joy of the relationship you can have with another in this glorious gift of marriage.

Let's pray. Father, this morning, we do want to give thanks. What a privilege and honor that we have to come before you.

[47 : 02] The only sovereign God you've opened the hearts of many here this morning that we could know you in such a way. and now to give us the privilege and honor of enjoying many of your gifts.

We thank you in particular this morning we've dealt with marriage. Singleness itself is good and can be used to honor and glorify you. You've been kind and gracious in so many ways.

Now as we leave here and go to the morning service, help us to sing songs that are worthy of your exaltation as God and then to listen to your words to us through our pastor to receive them with gladness knowing that they come from you as this God in Jesus' name.

Amen. Thank you.