

Wisdom on Marriage

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[0 : 0 0] And turn in your Bibles to 1 Corinthians. Chapter 7. And we're going to read three different sections.

! Chapter 7.

Verse 7. I wish that all men were as I am. But each man has his own gift from God. One has this gift, another that. Now to the unmarried and the widows I say, it is good for them to stay unmarried as I am.

But if they cannot control themselves, they should marry. For it is better to marry than to burn with passion. And then jump down to verse 25.

We'll read 25 through 35. Now about virgins. I have no command from the Lord, but I give a judgment as one who by the Lord's mercy is trustworthy.

[1 : 1 5] Because of the present crisis, I think that it is good for you to remain as you are. Are you married? Do not seek a divorce. Are you unmarried? Do not look for a wife.

Do not bear with you. But if you do marry, you have not sinned. And if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. But those who marry will face many troubles in this life.

And I want to spare you this. What I mean, brothers, is that the time is short. From now on, those who have wives should live as if they had none.

Those who mourn as if they did not. Those who are happy as if they were not. Those who buy something as if it were not theirs to keep.

Those who use the things of the world as if not engrossed in them. For this world in its present form is passing away. I would like for you to be free from concern.

[2 : 1 1] An unmarried man is concerned about the Lord's affairs, how he can please the Lord. But a married man is concerned about the affairs of this world, how he can please his wife.

And his interests are divided. An unmarried woman or virgin is concerned about the Lord's affairs. Her aim is to be devoted to the Lord in both body and spirit.

But a married woman is concerned about the affairs of this world, how she can please her husband. I am saying this for your own good. Not to restrict you, but that you may live in a right way in undivided devotion to the Lord.

And then down to verse 39. A woman is bound to her husband as long as he lives. But if her husband dies, she is free to marry anyone she wishes.

But he must belong to the Lord. In my judgment, she is happier if she stays as she is. And I think that I too have the spirit of God.

[3 : 1 7] Thank you. Pastor Jason. Well, tonight we are leaving Proverbs totally, but we are not moving on to Proverbs chapter 8.

We have had several pretty heavy lessons on adultery. We need those lessons. God would save us from heartbreak, so he is very clear and very insistent and very strong in warning us against adultery.

But that negative, that command, that warning is not everything that the Bible says about marriage, about romance, about sex. So I thought we could take a week and go over the more positive side of some of what the Bible says.

So I'm calling tonight's sermon Eight Bits of Wisdom on Marriage. Eight Bits because I have eight points, and they're called bits because none of them are very big.

I'm not going to say everything that could be said, but I hope I say enough to be suggestive to you. I want you to, if you do want to know more, I should say, if you want to know more, I hope that you'll study the text for yourself, that you'll think about it for yourself, that you'll pray about it, that you'll talk to your parents, that you'll talk to us, your pastors.

[4 : 43] I would love to talk to you about any of these things. My goal tonight is to merely suggest and prompt, maybe to remind you, to encourage you, to help you, to think biblically about this whole area.

Now, some of the things that we're going to talk about, especially the very first thing, might not directly apply to you.

We're going to talk about marriage and some of your whether to be married or not to get married. That's the first point. So some of you are already married.

That point is not going to be up for debate. But if that does not apply to you directly, I hope you can see that it certainly does and will apply to you, at least indirectly, especially if you have children and you're raising children.

Your children need you to think biblically, to teach them, to set an example, to guide them in what they think in this whole area.

[5 : 46] And your children need you to be on the same page as God is, or you are going to end up hurting them. You are going to end up leading them astray.

So if this does not directly apply to you, I hope you can see that you still need to know it. You still need to know it in order that you can teach others that you could have a good relationship and words with those who are around you.

So we all need this. It's good for all of us. The world has its own ideas about marriage. And we have a very, we are absorbent beings. We are absorbent creatures, and it's very easy for us to just absorb what the world says and thinks.

They're very, they're just their general worldview about marriage. And so we need this. I was, this struck me just this past week.

I was watching, you know, the sitcom Frasier the other night, and I was struck by how much Frasier, the main character, said, I was trying to be true to my feelings.

[6 : 50] I was trying to be true to my feelings. I was trying to follow my feelings in this whole area. Now, are feelings irrelevant when it comes to romance?

If any one of you is saying yes, I'm sorry, you're completely wrong. Feelings are very relevant. But are feelings in the place of God?

Are they of preeminent? Does the Bible say anywhere, well, you need to be true, you need to be faithful to your feelings, you need to follow your feelings, as if those are accurate barometers all the time of what is right and wrong.

That really is a ridiculous notion. If we think our immediate emotions, what I'm feeling in this moment is what is deciding, right or wrong, what should I do, or my desires, that really is a ridiculous idea.

And that whole idea is a form of idolatry, of putting something of myself in the place of God. We are really no better than some sort of Hindu bowing down to an idol in a rainforest in India, when we say, I have to follow my feelings in this area of marriage and sex and romance.

[8 : 05] That is the state of romance and marriage and sex in our culture. It's becoming increasingly and obviously unhinged, disconnected from reality, from the fabric of reality that wisdom is based on.

That really is the only explanation for so-called homosexual marriage. That's the only real explanation for such these ideas of easy marriage and divorce or so much premarital living together.

When the world scientists, when they're being objective, when they're doing their science, and so sociologists and scientists study this, they see that what the world does and what the world says is good and wise, it doesn't work.

It doesn't work. When they look at it objectively, they realize, wow, this is really bad. This is bad for the participants. This is bad for children. This is bad for society. But we do have this ability and this power to convince ourselves that what we want is a good idea.

What we want should be what works. And so we say that it does. And really all of that is completely unhinged, disconnected from reality.

[9 : 39] Now, you want real. You want to be grounded in reality. You don't want any unpleasant surprises or great disappointments.

So you want to be grounded in truth. What works? Well, God, our maker, God, our designer, the one who knitted us together in our mother's womb, the one who created our minds and our hearts and our emotions, he tells us what works.

And what he tells us, this works, what he says, this works. It really does work. And it doesn't disappoint. So wisdom is living in harmony with the fabric of reality.

And this book tells us how to live in harmony with that reality. How to bring blessing to ourselves.

Do you want that? Blessing for yourself? I hope you do. Blessing to others. Well, doing marriage and romance and sex God's way is not a chain around your neck.

[10 : 47] It is not a death sentence. It is not a death sentence. It is not a prison sentence. It is not a weight on your back. It's freedom. It's life.

It's really living the way our good God said, this is the best way for you to live. And then walking in these things. It's a great reward.

Besides any sort of eternal rewards that we're talking about, the mere obedience to these things just brings reward, brings what is good. So that's what we want to look at.

Eight bits of wisdom. Eight bits of wisdom. And like I said, we're not going to say, I'm not going to say everything that needs, that are not, hopefully it needs to be said. I'll say that.

But not everything that could be said. Number one, you see it right in front of you, right in the text that I had read. Charlie asked me right before the service, he said, like, what are you doing?

[11 : 41] Why are these passages? And maybe you were wondering the same thing. Well, here they are. This first point, this first bit of wisdom is from 1 Corinthians 7, 7 through 8. And Paul says, I wish that all men were as I am.

But each man has his own gift from God. One has this gift, another has that. And now to the unmarried and the widows, I say, it is good for them to stay unmarried.

And then over in verse 25, he says something very similar. Now about virgins, I have no command from the Lord, but I give a judgment as one by the Lord's mercy is trustworthy.

So he's saying, this isn't a command, but I think I have good judgment, and this is my judgment. I think I have good wisdom here. Because of the present crisis, I think it's good for you to remain as you are.

And so here is the first bit of wisdom. What we need to hear, it might be surprising, it's this, that in many regards, it is preferable to not marry. It's preferable to remain single.

[12 : 48] That is the case if you are single and never been married. And Paul comes back and says, that's the case too if you are a widow.

It's preferable in most circumstances, or in many circumstances anyways, to not marry. Now that cuts right across the bow, against the grain, of so much of what is the worldview, the idea, what is going on in conservative Christian circles.

Outside in the world, marriage is extremely looked down upon. And maybe perhaps someday we, as a church, or as a group of conservative Christians, will get to the place where marriage is just poo-pooed completely, and then we're going to have to emphasize something else.

But I think we need to hear this. Singleness is not necessarily, it is not an affliction.

Paul calls it a gift. Now it might be a gift that we only have for a short amount of time. It might be a gift that we have our whole life, but Paul calls it a gift to be single, to enjoy that singleness, I think is especially the gift that he is talking about, and that he himself has.

[14 : 10] And this just puts out there and makes us consider and think that marriage is not the end-all, be-all, of life.

It's not the end-all and be-all of what the Christian life is about. That's not it at all. Not that at all. Paul has some practical reasons.

And again, as we read through 1 Corinthians, you saw that there was no, not really any, this is right or wrong. It's not sin or righteousness. He just has these pragmatic, practical, wise reasons.

Those who marry will face many troubles in this life, and he says, I want to spare you those. Marriage does bring a cart full of troubles, all of its own, that married people have, that single people just don't have.

Marriage can be full of troubles and difficulties. Marriage, he says, it brings about, in a way, in a God glorifying, in a good way, it brings about divided loyalties.

[15 : 15] And that they're not wrong, divided loyalties, but what he is saying, by necessity, is that the married man, the married woman, is thinking, and has to think, how can I please my wife?

How can I please my husband? And then, how can I please the Lord? Well, a single person only needs to think about pleasing the Lord. And that opens up all sorts of opportunities and freedom that a married person just cannot have.

So the single person is much freer, has greater opportunities, is much less encumbered, has more options than a married person does. So Paul says, my apostolic wisdom, again, this is not a command, you're not doing wrong if you get married, but his apostolic wisdom is that it is preferable, if you can, if you may, to not marry.

So moms and dads, maybe you need to think about that. Young people, maybe you need to think about that.

And moms and dads, I just want to talk to you for a moment, maybe you'll have a godly daughter or a godly son. and they come to you and they say, I have no intention of getting married.

[16 : 44] And I can really imagine that you would feel a bit shocked if they said that and maybe disappointed and maybe, especially here we are in Christmas season and you're seeing sort of your Christmas fantasies and ideas and thoughts of what would be and your plans for grandchildren, they just disappear.

And in that moment, in that decision, I think you're going to have to bring your heart to this text, moms and dads, if your child says that.

And you're the one that's going to need to change and change your mind, not your single daughter or son serving the Lord. again, young people, I think you should talk with your parents about this.

Talk about it together. What's right for you? How are you made? What is God doing in your life? And I pray and I hope that the Lord would teach us all, both the older generation and the younger generation, to pursue and to live all out for Jesus Christ.

That is what Paul is really after. That's the first bit of advice. It's preferable to not marry. The second bit of advice is found throughout the whole book of Song of Songs.

[18 : 08] Now, we're not going to turn there. I'm going to read a little portion of it. But did you know that the book Song of Songs is a wisdom book? It's right there in there with Job, which is a wisdom book, and Psalms, which is its own sort of form of wisdom, and Proverbs and Ecclesiastes.

Song of Songs is a wisdom book. It's meant to teach us about romance and marriage and sex with God's wisdom, with God's insight, with God's mind.

And something that the woman in these poems says three times at least, she says again and again to the daughters of Jerusalem.

And so we're talking about teenage girls specifically, to these daughters of Jerusalem. This is what she says.

You see it for the first time in Song of Songs, chapter two. She says this, Like an apple tree among the trees of the forest is my lover among the young men.

[19 : 13] I delight to sit in his shade, and his fruit is sweet to my taste. He's taken me to the banquet hall, and his banner over me is love. Strengthen me with raisins, refresh me with apples, for I am faint with love.

His left arm is under my head, and his right arm embraces me. Daughters of Jerusalem, I charge you, I abjure you, by the gazelles and by the does of the field, do not arouse or awaken love until it so desires.

Do not arouse or awaken love until it so desires. Now here's the second bit of advice put into English so that we can understand it, and it's this.

don't rush into emotionally charged relationships. Don't rush into emotionally charged relationships. That's what she's saying.

I gave you that whole context of this woman swooning in love because that's what she is. She's swept off her feet. She's eager for her man.

[20 : 25] She's yearning for him. He's holding her. He's embracing her, and she's lost in his love. She's moved, and she's lost in his caresses, and her advice is don't rush into this.

Not because it's bad, but because it's so good. It's so strong. It's a rushing river, and it will sweep you clean off your feet.

And that's not a bad thing. That's just the reality of being in love. And she's saying there is a time and a place for romantic emotional connections.

She's not saying it's a bad thing, but she's saying there's a time and place. And it's not when you aren't ready for marriage.

It's not when you're 13. It's not when you're a sophomore in high school. It's not when you aren't ready to seriously pursue marriage.

[21 : 38] Now, she isn't saying wait until you are married before you let yourself have these feelings, because honestly then people wouldn't get married. You generally in our culture you get married because you love this person and you love them and you have these feelings for them.

She's saying, though, that you have to be careful. Be smart. Don't rush things. Hold yourself back until it's safe.

Again, I want to encourage moms and dads and younger people to have a conversation. Talk with a trusted adult, because those of us who are married, we understand how amazing and how wonderful and how great it is to be in love, to have those feelings that she's talking about, to be swept away, but we also know how dangerous it is and how it has a way of wearing down all your defenses and making you not think clearly and not do what you should do.

And so it's really wonderful and it's also very dangerous. And so don't rush into romantically charged relationships.

There's a time and a place for it. And the word of God is saying just make sure that you're letting yourself feel those things at the right time.

[23 : 07] Third advice, pray for a good spouse. Pray for a good spouse. Proverbs 19, 14. Houses and wealth are inherited from parents. But a prudent wife is from the Lord.

Prudent wife is from the Lord. I can tell you from experience, a prudent wife is a gift from the Lord that keeps on giving and giving and giving better than any lands or money that you could ever get. And I'm not going to brag about my wife or embarrass her or I'll get in trouble, but from experience, a prudent wife is better than all of those other things that you could ever get from your parent.

And where do those prudent wives come from? It says it comes from the Lord. It's a gift from him. And so right now, young men and young ladies and parents, let's be praying for prudent husbands and prudent wives.

Again, we want to remember our first bit of wisdom that we talked about, that marriage is not necessarily the thing for our children or necessarily the best thing for us, but if it's God's will for us to marry, then pray, Lord, you say a prudent wife, a prudent husband is from the Lord, then please give me that kind of husband, give me that kind of wife.

God loves to give good gifts to his children, but he also loves to be asked for things. And so we share, we are wise if we ask for a prudent husband or wife.

[24 : 33] Fourth bit of advice, if you're a Christian, marry in the Lord. Lord. This really isn't advice, it is a command. It's a command.

First Corinthians 7:39, Charlie read it for us, a woman is bound to her husband as long as he lives, but if her husband dies, she's free to marry anyone she wishes.

Again, you see a lot of the emphasis on who you marry is put on you. Who do you want to get married? There's none of this extra pseudo, extra spiritual trying to discern God's will about who I should marry.

No, do you wish to marry this person? And the only caveat in this passage is the next line, but he must belong to the Lord. He must belong to the Lord.

He must be a Christian. Not just in name, but he really belongs to the Lord Jesus. Jesus has taken a hold of this man's life, and transformed it.

[25 : 37] And now currently, he's the Lord of that person, the owner of that person. 2 Corinthians chapter 6, Paul tells us that we shouldn't be unequally yoked.

In that passage, it's not talking specifically about marriage. It's just talking about don't be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common?

Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? So Christian young person, you are light. You are righteousness. You can't attach yourself to wickedness.

You can't attach yourself to darkness because you aren't darkness. You aren't wickedness. In Christ Jesus, you have been made the light of the world.

In Christ Jesus, you have been made righteous. You belong to the Lord. And so the general principle in 2 Corinthians 6 about not being unequally yoked, which more or less is necessary for us to think about, is talking about more than marriage.

[26 : 52] It's talking about everything. It's a principle that applies in one way or another to our whole life. And that general principle in 2 Corinthians 6 of don't be unequally yoked, Paul particularly, specifically applies it in 1 Corinthians 7 and says, when you marry, Christian, you marry in the Lord.

And it's a command. But it's also, I guess we could call it advice, because it's going to save you from heart break and division, confusion.

It's going to save you from all sorts of miseries. So, single Christian, you need for Jesus sake, out of sheer obedience, if that's what it takes, out of sheer obedience for your own happiness, you need to make this a hard, fast rule.

I will not romantically involve myself with the unbeliever. Not a little, not 1%, not any. I will not get myself involved with the unbeliever.

I will not consider an unbeliever. I will not let my emotions get wrapped up in an unbeliever. We can talk about that second point again. I won't let myself get drawn into feeling in a certain way about an unbeliever.

[28 : 21] you have to say it's not a possibility. It's not, it's just simply not an option. It's like that side of the road doesn't exist.

You can't go over there. Marry whoever you want, but marry in the Lord. Marry in the Lord. That's the fourth, the fifth bit of advice.

When you marry, obviously we're sort of making a progression here. Now when you do marry, you're just married. Fifth bit of advice.

When you marry, really leave your family. When you marry, really leave your family. And I'm talking about what Moses says in Genesis chapter two.

This is probably the top two or three things that causes marriages to struggle early on. is man and wife don't really one of them or maybe both of them don't want to leave mom and dad.

[29 : 30] Or the other side of that relationship is mom and dad really aren't letting go of their children. So for this reason a man will leave his father and his mother and be united to his wife and they will become one flesh.

So again mom and dad they them those two that just got married they are one flesh it's not a tricycle it's not those two and you it's not husband wife and mom coming along for the ride no they their highest priority their highest priority way above whatever it is to you their highest commitment isn't to you it's to their spouse you aren't number one family in their life anymore your second fiddle so how well can you play second fiddle how well can you play second fiddle how can you get moved off we all like to be the number one chair in the orchestra but can you now be moved off to the side and now you're not first violin any longer can you play the second fiddle the second violin to the glory of

God now young people you might have to stand up to your parents at some point if they won't let you go if they cross some line if they're not having appropriate boundaries but young people on the other side you have to leave you can't go running to mommy or daddy or every time there's an argument you need to learn to stand on your own two feet you need to learn to fight your own battle you need to figure out things for yourself now does that is that sort of like an absolute statement that mom and dad don't know anything of what's going on in your life and you never let them in no I'm not saying anything like that it doesn't mean you can't get advice from mom or dad or even financial help from mom or dad or anything like that it is saying but advice is advice it's not mom and dad don't get to tell you what to do anymore advice is advice and financial help is just that a helping hand it's not what you live on it's not what you are depended upon now this is all fresh in my mind because probably two weeks ago

I had a conversation with a couple they don't live around here at all you don't know them you'll never meet them and they've been married six years and they were having some real tensions in their family about coronavirus and Christmas and babies and they needed to be told you have to stand up to mom and dad you just got to you have to stand up to mom and dad now they're all believers mom and dad and husband and wife has been married for six years they're all believers but some of the things that were going on just are not right we're not right so husband husband man you got to look your father in law in the face and the eyes and say this is what we're going to do and we're not arguing about it this is what we're going to do and we're not arguing about it and I said boy I sure don't envy you that conversation and I really don't but it had to happen

I was really so glad when I heard they got off the phone call with Steph and I and they said to each other well this is a hard thing to have this is hard discussion we might as well get it over with and so they had the conversation and mom and dad took it really well and they even apologized and they repented and they said we need to figure out maybe we putting too much stress on our daughter here and on her marriage and we need to stop and so it really ended well but it was a conversation that had to happen it was something that needed to take place where there was more of a separation a leaving than there had been up to that point so that's the fifth bit of advice when you get married you need to really leave now I'm not going to give you specific directions about what that looks like but put that in your computer and think about that Sixth bit of advice don't marry someone opinionated argumentative and ill tempered

[34 : 09] Proverbs doesn't give us a lot of wisdom or detailed specific Proverbs about your spouse and how to live with them or how not to but there is a refrain and you'll hear it better to live on the corner of the roof than share a house with a quarrelsome wife and again husband wives we can switch the pronouns switch the nouns better to live on the corner of the roof than share a house with a quarrelsome wife and then in the same chapter about 15 Proverbs later better to live in the desert so this guy has apparently moved off the roof of the house and it's better to live out in the desert than with a quarrelsome and ill tempered wife so better to live out with the wild donkeys better to live holding on to some tall rock just for shade and living off a locust and honey and barely scraping by than living with an ill tempered an argumentative a quarrelsome spouse now every couple disagrees sometimes every couple argues everyone gets in bad moods the best of us the sweet of us sweetest of us can be sassy and opinionated and quarrelsome on some days but if that's the way they are young people if that's the way they are if they're exacting and irritable and unable to and will not compromise if they have to have it their way if they're always spoiling for a fight then whatever you do don't marry them it will not be worth it whatever good they bring to the table whatever good they bring to the marriage will be swamped in this and it will be ruined from it you will just make yourself miserable so don't marry an opinionated ill tempered argumentative person seventh bit of advice read song of songs to learn how to do romance read song of songs to learn how to do romance

I've already said it's a wisdom book it's there because we need it it's there to teach us about marriage and sex and romance God's way but it's not a textbook in which that's what makes it so difficult because it comes to us in a form that we're just not used to it's not a manual it's it's not the bestseller on the New York Times bestsellers list about how to do marriage it's none of those things it doesn't come to us like that it's poetry it's a song it's a real song it has a melody and it has tempo and it has feelings and there's ebbs and flows to it and the minute you try to break it down and this is why it's so hard to preach at least preach really well and

I don't think I'm ready to take it on I don't really know how I would do it but the minute you try to break it down into points and into logical connections it loses what makes it so powerful which is the poetry which is the feelings which is this thing that you enter into it it is sort of like trying to preach a mighty fortress is our God without any of the the tune without any of the piano or the organ or whatever you're going to sing it to you strip the tune away and while the words are pretty good still it loses half of its power half of its ability to encourage you and move you and to give you that kind of courage to say I'm going to stand against the world and I'm not afraid of the devil well without the music you lose some of it well song of songs is poetry it has flow it has feelings it has emotions why well because romance husband and wife even boyfriend and girlfriend those kind of romantic relationships they have feelings they have emotions they have ups and downs they have places where you're kind of far away and you're confused and you're afraid and you read about that in song of songs and there's places where there's real intimacy and closeness but you have to learn that and you have to learn it

God's way from the inside and that's what song of songs does it lets you I guess let me put it this way how do you if you're not an expert singer and really trained how do you learn to sing a song well what happens what generally happens is you hear other people singing it and they know how to sing it and they're singing it really well and you start to join in and at first it's a little hesitant and then you get oh I get it and you're starting to pick it up and then you learn how to sing it with them well that's how song of songs teaches romance wisdom you hear these two people these two lovers singing and they're doing romance and marriage and they're navigating these feelings and this emotion they're doing it in God's way with God's wisdom and the more you hear it the more you're sort of following along and hearing it and you're with them they don't know that you're watching they don't know that you're standing by their side they're just they're in love with each other but the more you you hang out with them the more you learn and hear their song the more you learn its tune and the more you're able to join in and if you don't know what

I'm trying to say well just give it a try get into song of songs and say oh this these these two are romantically connected they love each other they're doing romance God's way now listen to how they carry on listen to how they talk to each other listen to how they confront situations listen and listen to how they feel and until you start to hear it until you can hum along and in your own marriage and maybe the parts of your marriage that are way off tune with God's biblical wisdom you can bring them into line ways of thinking ways of feeling ways of doing romance see godliness and marriage it's just not about your head it's not just about thinking it's about feeling a certain way it's about passions joy and emotions and romance to God's glory and that's what song of songs teaches you so that's the seventh bit of advice eighth bit of advice is this remember what ecclesiastes says remember what ecclesiastes says about marriage well what does it say this is our last point ecclesiastes 9 9 enjoy life with your wife whom you love all the days of this fleeting this havel this meaningless life that God has given you

[41 : 59] I don't think meaningless is a very good word for it it's talking about fleeting short it's going away quickly this kind of life that God has given you enjoy life with your wife death now the author's point in all of ecclesiastes there is a certain sting to it there's a certain urgency to what he is saying but it is the prod that we need and like many prods there's a sting to it but it's a prod that gets us going and makes us to live life like we should the sting is this life is short death is sad death can be sudden and death is sure you're not going to be able to be married forever so what do you do you just sit around and wait for it to happen or just don't do anything the author says no he says go eat your food with gladness drink your wine with a joyful heart enjoy your wife whatever your hand finds to do do it with all your might there's three

I think there's three W's there he's talking about wine he's talking about enjoying good things physical things wine your wife and work that's what you should enjoy because you don't get to do it forever and ever and ever you don't get to be married forever one commentator writes this enjoy life all of it with your spouse all the days of your God appointed brief life marriage is for life marriage is for mutual lifelong enjoyment marriage is not made for heaven Matthew 22 30 but that does not mean your marriage isn't of heaven and can't be heavenly so just because it's not made for heaven it doesn't mean that God doesn't have real wonderful intentions and good things for your marriage so what is marriage really ultimately finally all about well

I think significantly it's ultimately pointing us towards enjoying eternal life the marriage supper of the lamb it's a picture it's a living moving breathing picture that every couple has of this is what heaven is going to be this is what it's going to be to be living with Christ forever and that is an enjoyable thing it's a life filling thing and so if marriage is ultimately about pointing forward to enjoying eternal life with Christ Jesus then I ask how can you point to that great joyful reality that is in front of every believer how can we point to that great joyful reality in your marriage if there's no serious enjoyment now how can you say heaven and eternal life is like a happy marriage if you never get around to having a happy marriage that is one important way it's not the only way it's not everything that needs to be said about marriage but it is an important way that our marriages can be of heaven and heavenly because in heaven it's a world of love it's a world of people intimately connected to each other loving each other enjoying each other well that's what our marriages should be pointing to and so remember what

Ecclesiastes says you you only get so long to enjoy living life with your spouse here on this earth and so enjoy it enjoy it and this week isn't this week a perfect week to start doing that it's Christmas I hope most of you and probably most of you all have some days off days off with your family and so enjoy them make the most of them enjoy the time that you have enjoy them to the glory of God let's pray heavenly father we thank you for your wisdom your insight that sets a straight line for us to live and in some places it steps on our toes and says don't go this way in some places it warns us in some places it corrects us in other places it sheds a light on the way that we should go and says you will be blessed if you do this so we thank you for your word we thank you for its clarity for its simplicity for its practicality we we we we need all of those things so we thank you for what you have taught us tonight and

I do pray that you would instruct our minds instruct our hearts instruct our affections and give us desires after the things that you desire for us so I do pray that you would help us all as we go through this week with family and friends and celebrations that we would do these things to the glory of God that we would not somehow think it is wrong or evil to be happy to rejoice in our wife and our husband and our children and our family but give us these things and let us enjoy you and thank you and all of them to your glory I pray unto Thank you.