

Divorce and Remarriage

by Tim Conway

This sermon delves into the topic of divorce as addressed in the Sermon on the Mount, emphasizing the importance of righteousness surpassing that of the scribes and Pharisees. It highlights the Pharisees' focus on legalistic aspects of divorce, contrasting it with God's heart for reconciliation and faithfulness in marriage. The sermon draws parallels between human marriage and God's relationship with His people, showcasing God's unwavering commitment and call to faithfulness despite human failings.

Duration: 55:17

Scripture: Matthew 5:31, Matthew 19:3, Deuteronomy 24:1, Hosea 2:14, 1 John 1:9, Revelation 21:2

Topics: "Divorce", "Faithfulness in Marriage"

Description

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Transcript

Known as the Sermon on the Mount, which comprises Matthew chapter 5, 6, and 7. This afternoon we are in verses 31 and 32. I'm reading from the English Standard Version. Verse 31, it was also said, whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.

But I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of sexual immorality, makes her commit adultery. And whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery. Now I think we all want to remember where this is coming from.

Verse 20 is actually the heart and soul of this whole Sermon on the Mount. Jesus says, I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. The scribes and the Pharisees were actually very outwardly moral people in that day.

They were considered by the average guy as being the standout of morality. These guys held the standard. These guys were counted to be like priests and pastors and nuns.

They were counted to be, you know, if anybody is getting to heaven, these guys are. So you have to remember that that's the backdrop against which we find verses 31 and 32 that deal with divorce and a

certificate of divorce and adultery. And so, let's pray.

Lord, you are that holy God that we just sang about. We sang about the triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We sang about all the glory being to Christ.

And we know that as we come to think on marriage, we have a divine husband. Even John the Baptist said that he rejoiced because the groom had come. We see it in one of the parables.

The bridegroom comes. He comes when it's not expected. Even our Lord Himself said it, at a time when you think not, Lord, we await your coming.

We know that even as we're waiting right now, there's a period of time before Carlos and Natasha get married. So we have this lapse of time before us. From now until the sky is rent and Christ descends and every eye sees Him, and the nations are gathered before Him and they are separated as the sheep from the goats.

The wise virgins from the foolish. And the wise ones will be taken in and the door will be shut. Such finality.

Oh Lord, I pray for the people in this place. Lord, we want to be on the right side of that door when it shuts. I pray that you'd have mercy, Lord.

Have mercy upon this land, upon us in this time. Have mercy upon the lost. Have mercy upon our lost children.

Lord, have mercy. Prepare us to be on the right side of the door. Exercise your arm.

Flex your arm. Your arm is not shortened that it cannot save. And put us on the right side of the door when it slams shut.

Lord, we know that there is a point of no return. There is a time when that door will be shut and then all invitations. Right now there is a free invitation whosoever desires, whosoever is thirsty.

But the day is coming when you'll no longer extend that invitation. Lord, I pray, give the lost ears to hear. Please, Lord, have mercy in this day.

Lord, make this text come alive to us. I pray this in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen. So, what is true with these two verses, verses 31, 32 out of Matthew 5? Is that it is an abbreviated portion of Christ dealing with divorce.

The fuller version is found in Matthew 19. And so, we want to look at this. Because listen, one of the basics of hermeneutics is this.

You want to interpret the shorter by the longer. Why? Because longer portions, longer, more expanded dealings with certain topics, or if you have parallel versions of something, the longer is always going to give you more detail. It's going to help explain it.

And indeed, that's what happens in Matthew 19. So, go over there. Go over there to Matthew 19.

Because Jesus basically says the same things here that He says in Matthew 5, only with a lot more detail. In Matthew 5, Jesus is simply teaching. There's no interaction.

There's no back and forth. There's no dialogue. There's no debate.

In Matthew 19, that's exactly what we find. We find that there is discussion back and forth between our Lord and the Pharisees. Now, here's the thing.

Before we even read this, I want you to tune in. I want you to ask yourself this. As we read this portion, what is it that the Pharisees are most concerned with when it comes to this whole matter? Matthew 19, verse 3. Pharisees came up to Him and tested Him by asking, is it lawful to divorce one's wife for any cause? Now, just get that.

Notice the question. I mean, think about it. If you had... Now, of course, they didn't believe.

But if you had the Messiah at your disposal to ask questions to, you know, we often think about, well, if we had such and such preacher, you know, if this guy, if that guy, I would ask him this question. They have the Lord Himself. They have He who is living wisdom before them.

And out of all the questions that they could ask Him, is it lawful to divorce one's wife for any cause? Now, you know, there is a reason why they're asking it. Why they're saying it this way. He answered, have you not read? They would have found that insulting.

If anybody knew the Scriptures, these guys prided themselves in knowing it. And for Him to say, have you not read? But the reality is, even though they had read it, they hadn't really read it. But have you not read? I mean, have you not read that portion of Scripture that would answer your question? That He who 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, one of the things I want you to recognize here. He calls this fellow here, a man.

Hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. He never mentions the word marriage. But back there in Genesis, when we see marriage, it's the idea of two becoming one flesh.

So they're no longer two, but one flesh. You see what they're emphasizing. You see what He's emphasizing.

What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate. You see, they're not done. They still want to debate this thing.

And there's a reason. Why then did Moses command one to give a certificate of divorce and send her away? He said to them, Because of your hardness of heart, Moses allowed you to divorce your wives. But from the beginning it was not so.

And I say to you, Whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality and marries another, commits adultery. Now remember the connection. Unless your righteousness exceeds theirs, you won't enter the kingdom.

That's the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount. These guys are actually asking Jesus questions about what's right and wrong when it comes to marriage and when it comes to divorce. But listen to the tone.

Have you ever noticed people give themselves away? I often notice this. People give themselves away by the questions they ask. And that can be good or that can be bad.

Yes, and sometimes it can be neutral. But people give themselves away by the questions they ask. As these guys do.

I mean, does anyone notice anything missing from their questions? I mean, think about it. Can I divorce my wife for any reason under the sun? And when he basically says, No, you can't. God joined these two together.

This is how He designed marriage in the beginning. And then they say, Well, hey, Moses commanded us to give a bill, a certificate of divorce, and He basically commanded us to send her away. And Jesus said, Because of the hardness of your heart.

But do you notice where they don't go? I mean, their questions show zero lack of concern for the wife. It's not there. I mean, it's almost like, Well, you know, our wives, they've committed such horrible, horrendous crimes.

She's just backed me into the corner. I mean, this is the dilemma. How do I get rid of my unclean wife? How does that happen? See, what they're prying the Lord with is how little does it actually take for me to get rid of my wife.

I mean, no concern for the wife. Just tell me what the law will allow. You see, that's what legalists do.

That's what people that just have a form of religion do. They have a form of godliness, but they lack the power thereof. People like this, what they want to know is what they can get away with.

They want to know, well, where's the limit? What's the limit I can go up to and still make it into heaven? I don't really have any concern for my wife. I don't have any concern for love for her. I don't have any concern for how God prepared all of this in the beginning.

There should be one man and one woman and they should come together and the two become one. I don't care anything about that. Just tell me, where's the line? How little can my wife actually do and I can get rid of her? That's what they're asking here.

No concern. Just tell me what the law will allow me to get away with. Josephus.

This is very interesting. Josephus actually was there in 70 AD. He's a Jewish historian.

He's a Jew, but he actually was very partial to the Romans. And in 70 AD when Jerusalem was being taken, he was on the outside of the wall. He was with the Roman forces.

But he rode around the city. He was very interested in the Jews. And you know what? He wrote specifically about what the rabbis taught in that day about marriage and about divorce.

And he lived about the same time as this dialogue is going on, just a little bit after. And he claims that it was actually being taught by rabbis there and it was being debated that a man who divorced his wife could basically do so for any reason whatsoever. And you can see, these guys are absorbed with that kind of thinking.

You know that's the dialogue they had. Well, you know, my wife, I've been married to her I'm not really attracted to her anymore. I mean, listen, basically this is you understand what these guys were doing.

You don't want to put your wife away just to be single. This is basically their way of being legal. Just tell me how the law will get me out of this marriage so that I can remarry.

That's obviously what these guys wanted. Now, all of this was based on an Old Testament passage. Listen to it.

I'm going to have you turn there in just a little bit. But listen to it right now. Moses said, when a man takes a wife and marries her if then she finds no favor in his eyes no favor because he has found some indecency now don't you like that word? Moses basically said this a man has a wife and if he finds some indecency in her it's basically some unseemly thing and he writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house she departs out of his house see this is what they're basically this is where they're coming from some indecency, some unseemliness some uncleanness, some filthiness the Pharisees took this term and they ran with it I mean, they tried to stretch this in every way possible the widest possible mean to include just a trivial offense on the part of the wife she could be counted unseemly now this is one of the things that Josephus says so if you read commentators I remember years ago I heard John MacArthur preach on this and he said basically if she burnt the toast you know that's that is what Josephus said that if the wife burnt her husband's food that was grounds you see this is what these guys before these guys ever got to Jesus with this question this is the kind of thing that's going through their head remember scribes and Pharisees your righteousness has to exceed that they had a form of righteousness they were down to the letter of the law well Moses commanded us we've got to give a bill this certificate of divorce these guys is it lawful to divorce one's wife for any cause you can see for what you can see what they are by the question that they ask when Jesus answers with his resounding no don't separate that which God has joined together they're not satisfied they've got to push things even further and you see where they go why does Moses command a certificate of divorce and command us which the command modifies both and send her away you see how they view Moses they basically viewed Moses as yeah you guys I mean you have lots of reason you know women you know how they are and this is the idea that they had and of course women were treated far more as property in these times but certificate of divorce you see that that's something that Jesus mentions in both Matthew 5 and Matthew 19 and I'll tell you this he mentions it in both places because that was at the heart of the issue they emphasize this the Pharisees were big on the certificate of divorce listen to it Matthew 5 31 it was also said whoever divorces his wife let him give her a certificate of divorce Matthew 19 they said to him why then did Moses command one to give a certificate of divorce and to send her away you see Matthew wants us to see it in both places the Pharisees laid their emphasis right there as if that was the most important thing there was really only one factor it really mattered to these guys get that piece of paper into her hands of that poor discarded wife that was it this was the thing that was stressed this was the thing they emphasized it was the thing the very center of the whole deal as far as these Pharisees were concerned and all the while they just missed the meaning of marriage listen to how they talk why then did Moses command one to give a certificate of divorce and send her away now I want you to turn to Deuteronomy 24 go there now because he deals with this in the first four verses and I want you to see what Moses actually said I actually find this to be a remarkable commandment of the Lord because God does require something in these verses but not what they thought Deuteronomy 24 verse 1 when a man takes a wife and marries her if then she finds no favor in his eyes because he is found some indecency in her now I know I'm reading from the ESV and some of you have different translations but one of the things

that you do want to make sure that you see here is we've got a bunch of conditional clauses I mean I want to emphasize this even if your Bible doesn't say it but these are conditional when a man takes a wife and marries her if she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some indecency in her if he writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand if he sends her out of his house and she departs out of his house and if she goes and becomes another man's wife and the latter man hates her and writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house or if the latter man dies who took her to be his wife then you see it's an if then then her former husband who sent her away may not take her again you see there's a finality there they cannot come back together again after she's been defiled for that is an abomination before the Lord and you shall not bring sin upon the land that the Lord your God has given you for an inheritance now what I want you to notice is there is no command this not even an encouragement and you can see how they spun this thing as though Moses commanded men to divorce their wives under certain conditions and commanded them to send her away but it says nothing of the sort God never commanded anybody to divorce their wives what you have here is this why then did Moses command for one he didn't he allowed it there's no question about that he made a concession but Jesus is going to tell us why in Matthew 19 verse 8 he said to them because of your hardness of heart Moses allowed you to divorce your wives from the beginning it was not so and I say to you whoever divorces his wife except for sexual immorality and marries another commits adultery I think this is an entirely fantastic thing I mean God committed divorce but it's not because he approved of it here's the thing men because of the hardness of heart were divorcing their wives and you recognize what happens here God does two things really he does three things for one he forces this thing to be public you actually had to get a legal document and a man even like I'm sure your society here in the US you need a notary you need some kind of legal involvement there somebody's got to get involved in creating this God forced this to be public he forced it to be irreversible so you don't want to do this hasty because there was no return and you know what else he did he protected the women because in that day can you imagine this if a husband just set his wife out and she went out and she ended up she has no protector no provider and if she all of a sudden finds another man and the first husband says she's an adulteress they're going to kill her what that bill did was it protected her so what you have to recognize is God is making a concession here but he's seeking to constrain and put guidelines on what was happening because of the hardness of men's heart is it a lesser of two evils scenario yes you know we get that kind of thing in scripture like the man who has two wives there was actually mosaic legislation for how to deal with both wives especially the wife that wasn't liked as much and her children there's also we have commandments in scripture given for slavery you see a lot of times scripture gives us these concessions that are meant to basically put these restraints on situations where because of the hardness of men's hearts things aren't like we want them to be yes it's a lesser of two evil scenario but here's the thing the very fact these guys are debating this shows this they don't care for their wives all they want to do is figure out how to get by the letter of the law and go through women at their whim and Jesus is saying the whole thing wraps around hardness of heart whereas when you go back to the sermon on the mount blessed are the pure in heart you see unless your righteousness surpasses this you always have people that want to look good they want to look like oh you know they've just done this thing what mattered supremely to these guys was that they gave the writing of divorce I mean can you see it can you see them in the marketplace can you see him he's out there he's divorced her he sees his wife former wife can you imagine the situation he doesn't even want to make eye contact with me hey don't give me a guilt trip look at that she's got the piece of paper in her hand I don't care she has no provider no protector I did it by the book you people that know not the law you're cursed don't you talk to me see that's how these guys were no feelings no care and you know what it's like it's like Moses almost anticipates this now she goes to the second guy and if he gives her a

certificate of divorce it's almost like once you get into this thing and this woman has already had one husband how much easier is it for the next guy to say you know it's Jesus exposes the whole thing for what it is and I'll tell you what it is it's all adulterous now you need to see it for what it is these Pharisees weren't aggressively debating all this in a vacuum these guys I'll tell you this what I mean by in a vacuum you can be certain these guys that are talking to Jesus they divorced wives maybe not every single one of them but a lot of them listen they're not debating this simply to be theologically right and win a theological argument that's not it these guys are seeking to justify their own actions these guys had basically found what they thought was listen if you're arguing about whether or not you can divorce your wife for burning your food they basically said there was rabbinical teaching that if she burned your food you can divorce her if she I mean listen they took that word indecency or unseemliness just to mean if I don't find her attractive anymore I can give her a bill of divorce and send her on her way you can believe it these guys are debating this and these guys are bringing this up with the Lord Jesus Christ because these guys were going through women they were moving from one wife to another you can be sure they've given their bills of divorce oh they were exact on that I you know I don't can you imagine these Pharisees I mean you know they had the garb and they had the tassels and Jesus he talks about they had their long beards and you can see these guys you know stroking their beards and these guys like to pray publicly and these guys like to give publicly and oh boy they were big on their certificates of divorce but they were not faithful to the wives of their youth they prided themselves in knowing the law keeping the law but you know what Jesus you know what Jesus is basically saying you guys are adulterers that's exactly what he's saying and it's helpful to hear both Jesus statements on this listen to it in Matthew 5 I say to you everyone who divorces his wife except on the ground of sexual immorality there is one exception everyone you want to get that everyone who divorces his wife except on the ground of sexual immorality makes her commit adultery isn't that interesting he doesn't just say if you divorce your wife you are an adulterer he says you make her become an adulteress and whoever marries that divorced woman commits adultery that's Matthew 5 now he says it a little different in Matthew 19 he says I say to you whoever divorces his wife except for sexual immorality and marries another commits adultery now remember marriage it's not called marriage in Genesis when God creates this relationship he defines it this way the two you basically have a man and he parts from his father and mother and he clings to this woman and the two become one and you know what Jesus does from that imagery the two become one it's not just imagery it's reality he basically draws the inevitable deduction that to divorce one's partner and marry another it's adultery adultery unless it's for the sake of sexual immorality or to marry a divorced woman if you marry a divorced woman you commit adultery you see this is what he's saying a person may obtain a divorce in the eyes of the legal court system in the sight of men we may get the legal document you guys have them we have them in the US you send divorce papers you sign the signature and it goes off and some judge has to make this thing final but you know what Jesus is saying that doesn't matter you can have all your certificates of divorce they can have the right signatures the right stamps all the right legal intricacies can be just in line with whatever the law says and he says this that doesn't do it anyone who divorces his wife is at fault because he's causing her to commit adultery if she marries someone else since that first link you see the two become one and what he's saying is this you can in the sight of men come up with your certificate of divorce but God has not relinquished that oneness and so what happens is when the wife who's been divorced goes and marries another man and now there's intimacy there she commits adultery how is that? because God still counts that union with that first husband as valid that's clearly what he's saying and if somebody marries her he commits adultery why? because the union with the first husband in God's sight is still valid and if that guy that divorced her goes and he marries same thing you see what's happening here before God he is in fact marrying another when a man puts his wife away he divorces her

and another man comes and marries her what Jesus says is there's adultery right at that point you know why there's adultery at that point? because he is in fact marrying another man's wife that's what adultery is that's clearly what he's teaching the only exception he allows for is when there's fornication in other words if the wife has been unfaithful she's already violated that union and only then that's the only exception he gives but therefore God is joined together let not man separate God joins them you recognize this marriage is not a civil contract the civil authorities don't come in here I don't know I mean I wanted to rejoice with you two on Friday but you know that service with no mention of God I don't know how that made you all feel but I can tell you how it made me feel I abhor that I was happy for you two but the absence of God in these civil ceremonies God created marriage they didn't and the truth is man just thinks well he can bring them together and he can separate them and our courts make it all legal but you know this marriage is when God unites a man and a woman and what God has joined together Jesus says don't let man separate men are trying to do that all the time marriage is something in which two persons become one flesh there's an indissolubility about that it's not to be dissolved you recognize divorce sounds a whole lot like divide God Jesus clearly said don't separate what God has joined separate divide divorce when God made woman for man that was his intention that the two would become one that's what he indicated that's what he ordained the law which God laid down was that the man leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife and they become one flesh there's a new relationship established there something new something distinct well I mean if this is true how do we explain the fact that God allowed divorce in Deuteronomy 24 well just what I told you the hardness of men's hearts it was meant to seek to bring some restraint to the chaos just like God has sought to bring restraint in slavery in scripture and restraint when a man had two wives the reality is that even the way Jesus is speaking allows somewhat for the hardness of men's hearts you say what do you mean I mean this even when you say except for sexual immorality you recognize people want to jump on that just like the Pharisees wanted to jump on the other brethren I'll tell you this was a man commanded to write a bill of divorce if he divorced his wife yes but that is a far cry difference from God commanding men to divorce their wife absolutely what therefore God has joined together let not man separate but I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife except on the ground of sexual immorality do you remember what was said about a man and a prostitute listen to this do you not know that he who is joined to a prostitute becomes one body with her for as it is written the two will become one flesh isn't that interesting that Paul would extract that out when he's dealing with the Corinthians about the fact you know in a lot of that pagan worship they had temple prostitutes and he's saying the two become one in other words a man and a wife the two become one but when one of them is unfaithful they become one with somebody else you see how that union is violated that's how these things get separated and there is an allowance based on sexual immorality but you recognize this even though that relationship is violated it doesn't mean that it's severed I mean God doesn't say that if a man or a woman are unfaithful to their spouse all of a sudden they're not married He doesn't say that now Jesus may say hey it's permissible at that point to divorce your wife based on fornication that's true but the truth is it's not a command I mean even if they've been unfaithful even if a husband's been unfaithful Jesus is not commanding divorce Jesus permits it when fornication's taken place you know the fact is in the Old Testament if that happened the woman would be stoned what Jesus is clearly saying is that if a man pursues that if his wife has been unfaithful she's joined herself with another man that the man may pursue divorce basically he doesn't say that that man ever commits adultery and you see what he's basically saying it's the same as if his wife had died if somebody divorces his wife or a wife divorces the husband for the sake of sexual immorality it's like the offending spouse is dead and the innocent man is therefore I mean he's free he's entitled to remarry he never says that that man will commit adultery if he remarries it's the others but he's only permitted to do so but even this is like I say it's an accommodation of the hardness

of man's heart listen do you find it significant that God sets himself forward as the divine husband both in the old and in the new in the old God is the husband in the new the God man is the husband man and do you find it interesting that when God's spouse in the old testament is real do you recognize how often she's unfaithful she is unfaithful over and over and over and over again and do you know what's interesting in Isaiah God himself says speaking of Israel where is your mother's certificate of divorce with which I sent her away question mark do you know what he's saying after all the things your mother that's how he's describing Israel that's the terminology he's using you know what he's saying there he's saying after all that Israel has done where's the certificate of divorce in other words I never gave her one and in fact he raises up a man like Hosea he says Hosea I want you to be a living example of my heart towards my people you know the story brethren you know what God did he wooed her back he spoke kindly to her over and over when you get people that are preoccupied with the terms of divorce even in the church you get people that's it they've already made up their mind they want to come to you they want to discuss you know do I have grounds but you know you start talking like that you can be guilty of the same phariseeism that Jesus is condemning listen to this Chrysostom you may recognize that name one of the early church fathers he basically looked into the sermon on the mount and he saw these words it was also said whoever divorces his wife let him give her a certificate of divorce but I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife except on the ground of sexual immorality makes her commit adultery whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery you know what Chrysostom did he took those words and he recognized you never want to read the sermon on the mount except you keep the beatitudes fresh in your mind and he said this he said he that is meek he that's a peacemaker he that's poor in spirit he that's merciful how shall he cast out his wife now listen I know that you can get into situations where you get a partner they're unfaithful and they just they leave but you know often times you get that unfaithful partner and they apologize and they seek restitution and you hear what he's saying he says this he that is used to reconcile others how shall he be at variance with her that is his own so the thing is when somebody wants to start dialogue about divorce and the biblical warrant for divorce it's best that we press them with that righteousness that exceeds the scribes and the pharisees because that's how they talked what are the grounds what are the grounds listen we have a covenant keeping God he makes a covenant a new covenant with his bride and you can't think do you know God repeatedly tells us he is long suffering and he is slow to anger if you will simply take note to me it's amazing Israel is so unfaithful the times that they're faithful are just these little gaps by and large they're unfaithful and God yes his patience does finally have an end when people continue to rebel that he seeks to woo her back again and you know how Paul says it when he says the two shall become one flesh he says the mystery is profound I'm saying that it refers to Christ and the church do you think of Hosea he raises up this prophet and he says Hosea I want you to be a living illustration of my commitment to my wife he says Hosea go take to yourself a wife of whoredom and have children of whoredom for the land commits of course earth the fields don't commit great whoredom it's the people that live in that land it's Israel the land commits great whoredom by forsaking the Lord so Hosea went and took Gomer Gomer means corruption the daughter of dibilaim which is interesting because usually in scripture it's you're being given the father but you know what dibilaim means it means the price of a wench what they speculate is that she probably didn't know who her father was she was probably the daughter of a prostitute prostitute and so he went to the dregs he took a woman who was a prostitute the daughter of a prostitute most likely and he took her for a wife this is what God wanted brethren this ought to hit right home it ought to hit home with us concerning the relationship that God has with his people and the relationship he wants us to have with our wives what happens is he said she conceived and bore him a son why did God have his prophet do such a thing why in a very unique manner commanding him to take a wife like this a wife of whoredom and in doing so you know exactly

what happened Hosea is acting out on the human level the relationship between God and his people Israel who had committed spiritual adultery by leaving their own divine husband and her lovers were false gods and despite Israel's cheating ways I want you to hear this the Lord didn't give up on his bride in fact God sends Hosea to woo not just his adulterous wife but to actually call Israel back to God himself listen to this plead or contend with your mother again he deals with Israel as being a mother plead that she put away her whoring from her face and her adultery from between her breasts lest I strip her naked and make her as in the day she was born make her like a wilderness make her like a parched land and kill her with thirst she has played the whore she has acted shamefully for she said I will go after my lovers notice what she said I will go after my lovers these are false gods who give me bread and my water, my wool, my flax my oil, my drink you know that's why people pursue idols because they believe that those false gods actually give them things listen to what God says she did not know that it was I who gave her the grain the wine the oil and who lavished on her silver and gold which they used for bail the Lord didn't send her away she ran away and God God is devising ways of wooing her back therefore behold this is God speaking in Hosea 2 I will allure her and bring her into the wilderness and speak tenderly to her brethren this is how God is with sinners this is how God is with his wife and I will betroth you to me forever I will betroth you to me in righteousness and in justice in steadfast love and in mercy I will betroth you to me in faithfulness and you shall know the Lord and so the Lord has Hosea take back Gomer because Gomer after he married her she obviously ran away and all of her whoring the Lord said to me go again in other words he had already gone to her taken him to be his wife go again you see that's what we would say to all men that God is the living example you go again you fight for this thing go again he wants him to give his love to that woman who's loved by another man and is an adulteress even as the Lord loves the children of Israel though they turn to other gods and love cakes of raisins so I bought her this is Hosea talking I bought her for 15 shekels of silver and a homer and a letheq of barley and I said to her do you recognize what's happening she's on the slave blocks he's buying her and he says you must dwell as mine for many days you shall not play the whore or belong to another man so will I also be to you I mean what you want to see do you imagine God hovering over you with this grim glowering face better not mess up better never never be any fault or failure or God's going to get you is that the picture that God shows us in scripture listen if we have eyes to see the song of Solomon I halfway intend at some time to bring some messages from there Christ speaking to his church says oh my dove in the clefts of the rock in the crannies of the cliff let me see your face let me hear your voice for your voice is sweet and your face is lovely Christ wants to see you and you know what scripture says we have this advocate we can come and confess our sins God's not going to run us off God's not going to forsake us God's not going to leave us just because you messed up yesterday or this morning look he came to save sinners he came to save the chief of sinners and he doesn't run now listen the day is coming when the door will be shut but that day is not yet and still he bids people to come and be part of his new Jerusalem bride come and be washed by him listen marriage is not for the weak a lot of people think it's a neat thing you know let's run out and get married it's not for the thin skinned it's not for the easily offended it's not for quitters it's not for the uncommitted do you know this world abounds in quitters now marriage gets hard I don't love her anymore I think God just wants me to be happy and I'll tell you what God wants God wants you to be faithful to that marriage covenant as he is faithful to his marriage covenant God obviously sets himself out as the example of commitment you know people don't like commitment today marriage is a commitment and I'll tell you even when spouses have been unfaithful you're saying oh there it is she did it now I've got the grounds when all that's really driving it is lust you've already separated in your heart you just you want to run on to greener slopes you know what people don't remember the vows you know we typically when people get married even if it's in that civil deal did you guys take vows there what did you have to vow now see they're not acknowledging God but

you know God holds us to these things did we not when we took our marriage vows did we not say before God for better or for worse and yet it seems like so often as soon as things are worse I'm out of here hitting the road for richer or for poorer sickness and health till death parts them that's how we vow and you recognize love is a determined commitment to seek the others good that's what God's doing to us even when we're not faithful and God created marriage because it's a picture of His relationship with us and you know He doesn't take it lightly you know these Pharisees they walked around they thought we're keeping the law and Jesus steps in and He says the whole lot of you are adulterers you've smashed do you recognize in the end depart from me you workers of lawlessness you have people running around thinking they keep the letter of the law they're doing everything by the book and they can justify and Christ says in the end of it you guys aren't faithful at all you guys aren't doing at all what God intended to be done all that men would walk carefully when they make their vows before the Lord God I mean do you recognize marriage when you think about all human relationships I know that relationship between children and parents it's extremely important but there's an intimacy about this relationship I mean there's a sacredness intimacy

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