

BELIEVE IN MARRIAGE

"I don't believe in divorce." I've heard that several times throughout my life. You could say Jesus didn't either. He certainly warned against putting your spouse away. It's good to know God's expectations. He created Adam and then Eve from his rib. The two became one flesh. Jesus taught, "What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate." Jesus' teaching on divorce and marriage afterward was controversial; nothing has changed today. Yes, marriage is for life, and unless your spouse is unfaithful, divorce is against God's will and intention for marriage.

The best advice I can give to the unmarried is to marry someone who is faithful and a friend. This will save you a lot of heartache. Faithful because they will share the same spiritual goals in life and marriage. Marry your friend because, surprisingly, that is overlooked so many times. Generally speaking - don't rush marriage. Know who you're marrying. See them in good and difficult moments. Don't let loneliness or insecurities override red flags.

Our goal for marriage needs to be greater than, "I don't believe in divorce." Here's one: Believe in marriage. Believe in its beauty. Believe in its purpose. Believe in its gift. Believe in its message. Yes, there's a message in marriage. God is represented in 3 persons, yet He's 1. You know this. I can't help but see how God made mankind male and female, yet they become one. It's not the same as God, but it's close. And it would be foolish to ignore the fact that God's people, both in the Old and New Testament, have been described as God's bride. When you look at such passages, you see the love and devotion of God. Such passages reveal the attitude and goal that makes a marriage thrive, not just survive.

What do we believe in?

- A loving and compassionate God: Ezekiel 16:1-14
 - He was committed to an unfaithful woman. Also seen in Hosea 1-2.
 - He was tender to her and willing to overlook her sin, as seen in Isaiah 54:4-8.
 - Israel was special because of God's love. Israel was unique only because they were chosen by God.

What do our marriages teach?

- Our marriage says something about God: Ephesians 5:22-32.
 - Our marriages are made of two flawed individuals, but they find value when they're recognized by God and rooted in love. Love grabs our attention.
 - Jesus' love cannot be matched: Philippians 2.
 - Love acts on behalf of the other: 1 Corinthians 13:4-7.
 - Do we listen with the intent to change?
 - Are we in auto-drive mode? Routine isn't bad unless you have a bad routine.
 - Do we listen to our spouse's needs? When hearing brutal truths, let's not be like David or Judas.
 - What are your blinders?

- What distance was Jesus willing to go? What level of commitment did He bring to the table? Was it about Him or about us? It's all about Him, but He was all about others (God and His people).