



Why We Believe in Beautiful Marriages

Beautiful Marriages

Marriage was God's idea before it was ours. It started in the beginning.

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. He gave rise to the sun, the moon, and the stars. He spoke the mountains, the oceans, and the wild animals into being. But the pinnacle of God's creation came when He breathed life into human beings. His image bearers. The ones who would be His reflection, His agents in the world He created.

God formed Adam out of the dust of the earth. The first human being. But it wasn't good for him to be alone. He needed a helpmate. So, God fashioned Eve out of Adam's own flesh, symbolizing their intimate unity with one another. Because of this unity imbued in the first couple in history, from this moment forward whenever a man and a woman become one another's helpmates, they are united with one another. They become one flesh. They are married.

Marriage is a reflection of the union and intimacy that God gave to these very first human beings. A reflection He wanted to stand throughout history because together, they bore the image of God. But that image would become marred by the effects of sin.

When Adam and Eve disobeyed God and put their desires above His commands, sin was introduced to the world. That sin, that disobedience, would mar the reflection of God that Adam and Eve were intended to carry. Its very first effects were felt not only in their relationship with their Creator, but also in their relationship with each other. A relationship that should be characterized by intimacy and unity became fraught with frustration and isolation. A frustration and isolation that echoes into marriages to this day. But God didn't give up on marriage. In fact, God would take His idea of marriage and use it as an image bearer of humanity's relationship with Him.

As we move through the Library we call the Bible, the image of marriage takes on incredible significance. It is the horizontal relationship God uses to explain His people's vertical connection with Him. He uses it to represent both His joy at being united with them (c.f. esp. Revelation 19:7) and the hurt He feels when His people are unfaithful to Him (c.f. esp. Hosea).

Genesis opens with a marriage between Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Revelation closes with a marriage between Jesus and His bride, the church, in the New Garden of Eden.

Knowing this, knowing that one of the main images God uses throughout all of scripture to describe our relationship with Him is His institution of marriage: we cannot stand idly by while that very example continues to be broken and battered around us. We cannot watch the image of marriage shed the weight that it is intended to carry and be blown about by our whims and fleeting passions. Marriage matters to us because it matters to God. The image of marriage matters because through it people understand God's relationship with them.

We desire for all people to be invited into a living relationship with Jesus Christ. We will work tirelessly to redeem and restore the image of marriage not simply so husbands and wives will have a beautiful marriage with one another, but so that through those very marriages people will more clearly see Jesus's desire to be wed to them. So couples understand the depth of love God has for them. So children see examples of parents being faithful to their covenant with one another and understand their need to be faithful to God and His unshaking faithfulness to them. So marriages between followers of Jesus become beacons of light and hope, not in and of themselves but because they are faithful representatives and image bearers of our God.

We promote beautiful marriages not simply so a couple will be happy, but so our community will become holy. Not because of how it benefits us, but how it benefits the kingdom.

What We Believe About Marriage

We believe God has designed marriage to be a lifetime union of one man and one woman. When Jesus could have redefined marriage, he reinforced it instead. We can do no other.

What We Believe About Divorce

We believe about divorce what both Moses and Jesus believed about it: it is not God's design but given the reality of human sin, it is permissible in certain situations and advisable in others.

We are relentless in trying to prevent it in church and community. We believe that the best way to prevent divorce is to strengthen marriages before crises arrive.

What We Believe About Remarriage

With Matthew 19, we acknowledge that remarriage is allowable in the case of adultery that broke the first marriage.

We also acknowledge that many people come to us as remarried couples whose circumstances may not have been quite so clear. We endeavor to minister to those people well and to build health into their current marriage.

What We Believe About Pre-Marital Sex And Cohabitation

The biblical design is celibacy in singleness and faithfulness in heterosexual marriage. We believe that this design in no way “cramps our style” but instead lifts our spirit. We teach it with much joy as a design grounded in God’s beauty.

Therefore, we believe that pre-marital sexual intimacy not only disobeys God’s good plan but even puts the impending marriage in greater peril than it otherwise would be. We further believe that cohabitation is not practicing for marriage; it is preparing for divorce. Multiple studies from secular sources back up this contention.

What We Believe About Singleness

Scripture teaches that both Marriage and Singleness are a gift from God. Both offer unique opportunities to grow in our living relationship with Jesus Christ and share Him with others around us.

Contrary to much of the US Church culture, being single does not make one ‘other’ or ‘less’ than one who is married. In fact, the Apostle Paul desired that more people would be able to be single as he was (c.f. 1st Corinthians 7) because of the freedom it gives them to advance the Gospel. Whether by choice or circumstance, singleness is to be celebrated and used for the furthering of God’s kingdom as much as marriage is. Beautiful Marriages, is not only a mission for those who are married – but instead is a vision to be shared by the whole church.

Beautiful Marriages end goal isn’t simply to redeem our relationships with one another, but instead to redeem our understanding of and relationship with the God of this universe. Therefore, promoting Beautiful Marriages isn’t solely for those who are married but instead should be communicated and fostered by all to our community whether married or single.