

Pastoral REFLECTIONS

May 15, 2022

Core Love Never Fails

Marriage has become many things. People spend their lives together, having kids, buying a house, raising a family, etc. Marriage, however, is simply about relationships. It starts this way in Genesis 1:26. “Let us make man in our image” and it continues this way in Ephesians 5:22-33. The creation of mankind, the development of male and female to be husband and wife is based on how God, the Father, God and Son, and God the Holy Spirit function. Man is developed from “our image”. It is when the relationship between the husband and wife is strong that the relationships between the children are also strong.

Relationships are like knitting a blanket. It is an integrated process that takes time and forms one picture, called family or friendships. Its core is trust and love and true love never fails (1 Corinthians 13:4-8). This is because the person who established it is at the core of it, God. God states that He is love and that love comes from Him (1 John 4:7-8). For anyone to have a long-lasting relationship God must be the center of what they do. When God is the center of what they do His love is perfected in them (1 John 2:3-6). To have a relationship without God is for two people to try to get along based on their understanding and their strength. This is impossible because the very nature of the flesh is that it is weak and all that comes out of it leads to dissension and strife (Galatians 5:16-21).

Relationships require people to provide each other with mutual respect. Paul puts it this way; “Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.” (Philippians 2:3-5)

Relationships experience unity when each person is committed to submit to the will of God, seeks to experience the Spirit’s work in their lives (Galatians 5:22-25), develops good, respectful communication, (Philippians 2:1-2), and respects the differences that exist (Romans 14). Each relationship will endure good times and hard times when individuals, out of their commitment to God, remain committed to each other.

The Spaniards were besieging the little town of St. Quentin, on the frontiers of France. Its ramparts were in ruins; fever and famine were discriminating its defenders; treason existed among its terrified population. One day the Spaniards shot over the walls a shower of arrows, to which were attached little slips of parchment, promising the inhabitants that if they would surrender, their lives and property would be spared. The governor of the town was the great leader of the Huguenots, Gaspard de Coligni. He tied his answer to a javelin and wrote, “We have a king!”

“We have a king” we must allow Him to rule no matter what we face in relationships because “His love” never fails.



UPCOMING Events



Kingdom Builder's Men's Ministry
Men's Health Matters Event Sat. 5/21 9 a.m.
Join the Men's Ministry and Dr. Stephen Thomas for this awesome event focused on Men's Health. Get information and ask questions. Dr. Thomas will be available to give information, insight and to get us on the health track because our health matters. For more information, visit the events page of our website or contact James Thompson at thompson929@gmail.com



600 Club 3-Month Giving Campaign
Living Word Family, please give to the **600 Club Giving Campaign** over the next three months so we can replace everything lost in the recent fire, including the lawnmower tractor trailer which keeps our grounds in compliance with city codes. Also we will improve the parking lot at the Christian Outreach Center, which has been feeding over one hundred families 3-5 times a week throughout the pandemic. To give, use the envelopes and boxes around the church or give online by clicking on the give tab and choosing the **600 Club** dropdown in the menu. Thank you so much for your continued support!



LWCA FUN FEST & OPEN HOUSE
May 21st 10 am-2 pm
The Living Word Christian Academy is hosting a FUN FEST at 6601 Antoine Dr. Houston, TX 77091 with an Open House of their Exciting After School and Summer Enrichment Programs. **FREE** Pony rides, Bouncers, Art activities. Snacks, Music, Train ride, and Fun for the entire family. Special Limited Time Offer of \$75 per week! These Christian-based programs are for ages 5-11. **Register Today at** <https://bit.ly/3LMHoid> and for more information call (713)-686-5538



The Opened Bible Academy
Come and learn how you can take FREE classes in divinity, theology, ministry leadership and more. Informational Sessions will be Sat. May 21st at 1:00 p.m. and Thursday June 16th at 7:00 p.m. Applications are due at the end of June and the Academy starts in July. Don't miss this opportunity. More information at www.the-oba.org



Acts 2 Houston—One Church—One Cause
June 4th—5th 2022
Bayou City Fellowship Church
Spring Branch Campus
1400 Brittmoore Rd. Houston, TX 77043

Stand Against Human Trafficking with our own Pierre Cannings. **Sign Up to Serve** in various service projects on Sat. June 4th at 8 a.m. and to **Worship as One Church** on Sunday, June 5th at 5 p.m. Register here at www.acts2houston.org/register



ORDER OF WORSHIP

Announcements

Communion

Visitor's Welcome

Worship In Giving

Offering boxes are located at all perimeters under crosses

Special Music

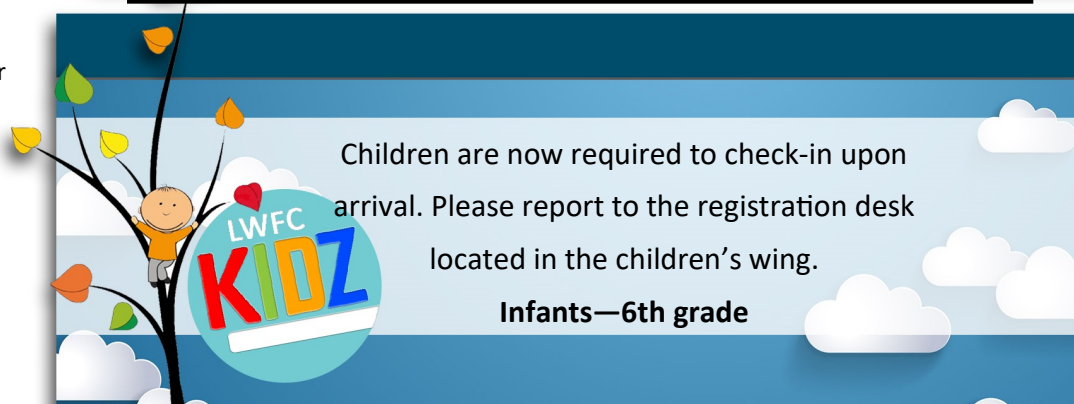
“Unconditional”
Matthew 19:1-6

Click on the “Resources” tab and click “Sermon Notes”

Call to Discipleship

Please remain seated at this time

Benediction



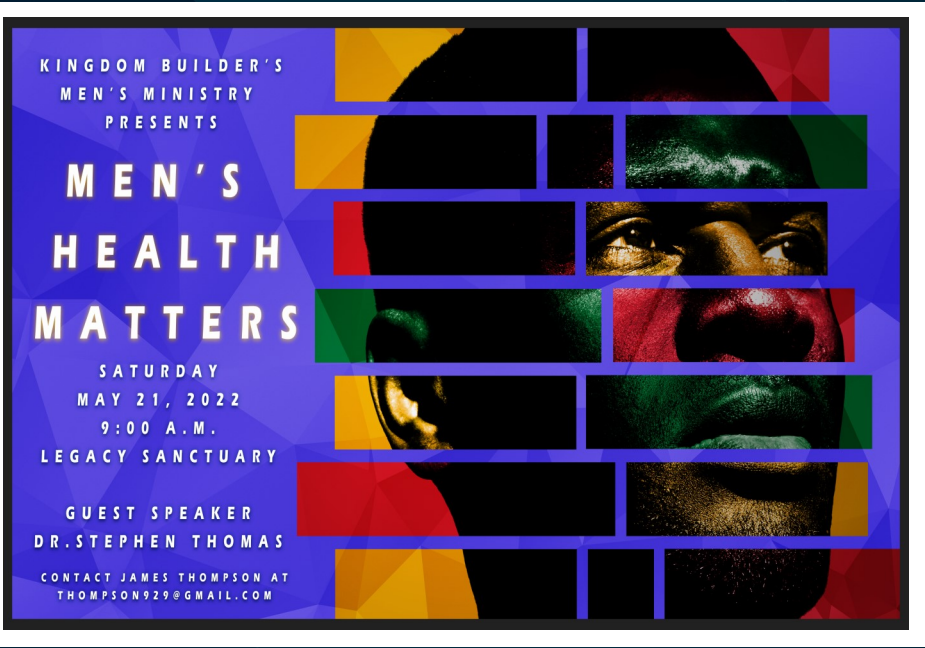
Unconditional
Matthew 19:1-6

A. Is it a Contract? (vs. 1-3):

1. After teaching on forgiveness, Jesus expresses His inner thoughts about divorce in response to the question from the Pharisees. Forgiveness is required in marriage, so that there is no divorce.
2. The crowds desired continued fellowshiping with Christ, so they cleaved to Him as He moved through this region.
3. The large crowds cleaving to Christ because of their growing faith in Him attracted satan especially since Herod not too long ago killed John the Baptist on the issue of divorce and remarriage (Matthew 14:1-21). The Pharisees purposefully approached Christ to take up this matter. They did not just happen to come up.
4. Before the many witnesses, and the large crowd, the Pharisees sought to prove that Jesus was not approved by God. In other words when He is properly (Pharisees are the authority) scrutinized, He will be exposed to be a sinner.
5. The Pharisees questioned Christ to see if, (based on the instruction provided by the books of Moses), He had the proper interpretation because if He didn't then He is not of God, and if He said what John the Baptist said, He could be killed by Herod.
6. The Pharisees wanted to know if a man can release his wife from the bonds of marriage for any reason as the group who supported Hillel had stated.
7. "For any reason" literally means it is all up to the husband's discretion. It can be irreconcilable differences, not a good cook or playmate in the bedroom. It did not matter what it may be. It is all up to what he desires. The woman was powerless even when it came to whom she married. She takes a lot of risks with no protection.

B. A Divine Commitment (vs. 4-6):

1. Jesus purposefully chose not to ignore them, especially since this subject came out of no where, and willfully engaged addressing them directly before the crowd who had been supernaturally blessed by His works. The crowds experienced Christs' supernatural power and were open to His teaching. Pharisees only wanted to trap Him so He could be killed.
2. Marriage was not just organized by God it was produced out of nothing and was generated by a spiritual being. God is the designer; He is the source that empowers it and the One who directs how it functions because it only exists because of Him. In other words, He indirectly says to the Pharisees, focus on God's intent from the beginning.
3. Christ uses this divorce question to teach us God's supernatural intent for marriage.
4. Made is the keyword because it explicitly demonstrates that God was purposeful in bringing about the structure He created for marriage. Remember God made man so He could have continued doing that every day, all day. He designed everything to be resident in Adam and Eve; His entire plan.
5. God was purposeful to design the role of a male and the role of a female to execute His divine plan that would vividly portray His nature and characteristics. This is why the writer of Hebrews says; "Marriage is to be held in honor among all, and the marriage bed is to be undefiled....." (Hebrews 13:4).
6. It is on account of God's reason for marriage that a man (a mature male) must leave the persons he is told to honor (if he does not his life will be cut short) and lead the development of God's plan throughout the earth. This highlights a man's major reason for his existence.
7. When a man does not have the gift of celibacy this is his purpose as designed by God (1 Corinthians 7:1-5).
8. The first thing the man is doing when he forsakes his parents is to fasten like glue, where he sticks to the side (mindset is forever) of his wife with a forever mindset. Remember this is why God took the rib from his side (Genesis 2:21-23). He intended for them to walk side by side forever.
9. The man leaving his parents and joining his wife is all directed by God, must be done by the man, and is established by the man's efforts. This causes the man to repeat the marriage he came from, further extending God's plan repeatedly. The purpose is not to forget the parents because if he did, he is worse than a sinner (1 Timothy 5:3-8).
10. The direct focus, once a man fulfills God's direction by leaving his parents, is to become intimately engaged with his wife. Sexual intimacy solidifies the covenant of the marriage (1 Corinthians 6:16-18) making it one flesh. A child coming from this, highlights this.
11. The man and wife are going to have the same identity this is why historically the woman took the man's last name.
12. God is the one who designed sexual organs to make all this work, so it is God who created, God who directed, and God who empowers the process.
13. Notice the contrast of God, let no man separate. How can man separate when it is God? One flesh is a husband and wife in sexual intimacy, so adultery and homosexuality are actions that a man (man is generic, it can relate to man or woman) does outside the will of God so that's why man can separate. Man in his sinful flesh can willfully go against the will of God.



PRAYER REQUESTS

Grieving: The family of Alonzo Barnes, Dana & Nikisha Doyle & family, Greg & Georeba Odums & family, Phillip Baillou & family, Curtis Wiley & family, and the family of Lyndia Tarkington.

Health and Healing: Lurlean Lane, Florence Wiggins, Retha Amos, Octavia Scott, Margaret Baptiste, Cici Sharpe, Eunice Johnson, Jeffrey McQueen, Barbara Gordon, Eric White, Ella James, Pat Crawford, Lisa Roberts, Birdie Williams, Jon Heard, Lakessia Davis, Rutha Patrick, the Tillis family, Rudy Mazin, Janice Collins, Noah Cain, Betty Goode, Willie Phillips, and Charlie Williams.

