

# Pastoral REFLECTIONS

May 22, 2022

## Not God's Divine Design

Divorce is and will always be a difficult issue to explain biblically and to experience personally. This is because divorce has never been God's divine design. So, there is nothing in the divine design of marriage that allows for a systematic and strategic process for carefully organizing divorce to not be destructive. The potential for damage, in the case of divorce, is tremendous because it is the very foundation upon which everything is built. Therefore, marriage must be entered into soberly. The benefits of marriage to the individuals involved, is not fully realized until the purposes of God are established.

A person by the name of Edward Gibson explained the decline of Rome in the following manner: (1) The rapid increase of divorce; the undermining of dignity and sanctity of the home, which is the basis of human society. (2) Higher and higher taxes and the spending of public money for free bread and circuses for the populace. (3) The mad craze for pleasure; sports becoming every year more exciting and more brutal. (4) The building of gigantic armaments when the real enemy was within the decadence of the people. (5) The decay of religion—faith fading into mere form—losing touch with life and becoming impotent to guide the people. Do these five reasons for the fall of Rome tell us anything about our present national situation? [1] A nation fell because the foundation of all society was destroyed. Could you imagine what divorce can do to a church?

Marriage was not made with divorce as a part of it like a car having a spare tire or like having two kidneys if one fails. Marriage is attached to vows that are made to God (Deut. 23:21-23); it is attached to sexual intimacy that causes two people to become one flesh (1 Corinthians 6:16). It takes two people to make a child or children so that a family can be developed. It takes two people to effectively raise a child or children. When something is designed to be stuck together like glue it cannot be divided without damage being made on individuals, children, a nation, and the church.

"Marriage is to be held in honor among all, and the marriage bed is to be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge." Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, "I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU," so that we confidently say, "THE LORD IS MY HELPER, I WILL NOT BE AFRAID." (Hebrews 13:4-6; NASU)



## UPCOMING Events



**LEGACY YOUTH SUMMER RETREAT**  
Y'all get ready for lots of fun!! The Legacy Summer Retreat at Crystal Beach is coming soon and you don't want to miss it! Grades 7th-12 are welcome to attend. Beach, games, food and fun will be non stop from July 25th-27th. Cost to go will be \$90. Deposit due May 29th. Payments in full due July 10th. Register on the events page of our website or for more information, contact Allison Pryor at [aepryor1@gmail.com](mailto:aepryor1@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!



**SPARK - FAMILY BIBLE ENCOUNTER**  
**JUNE 7th, 8th & 9th at 6:30 p.m. each**  
**Night Dinner Served at 5:45 p.m.**  
Don't miss the 2022 Family Bible Encounter at Living Word! Bring the Entire Family for SPARK, a fun-filled week with activities, games, crafts, workshops, guest speakers, and more! Register on the **Event Page of our Website** or contact Mrs. Sylvia Edwards for more information at [sedwards@lwfellowshipchurch.org](mailto:sedwards@lwfellowshipchurch.org)  
Reignite The Spark for Christ! See You There!



**KINGDOM BUILDER'S MEN'S MINISTRY**  
**MOVIE DAY—SHOW ME THE FATHER**  
Join us for a Watch Party Sat. June 18th from 12- 3 p.m. in the Legacy Sanctuary. Come and get a fresh perspective on the roles fathers play in today's society, get new perspectives on your earthly father, and learn how to better relate to God, your father in heaven and above all. For more information visit the **Events Page of our Website** or contact James Thompson at [thompson929@gmail.com](mailto:thompson929@gmail.com)



**Acts 2 Houston—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](http://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

"Built To Last"  
1 John 4:15-18

Click on the "Resources" tab and click "Sermon Notes"

Call to Discipleship

Please remain seated at this time

Benediction

Children are now required to check-in upon arrival. Please report to the registration desk located in the children's wing.

**Infants—6th grade**

**MIDDLE SCHOOL - HIGH SCHOOL**  
**2:30 4:00 & TUESDAY NIGHTS**  
SUNDAY  
EFFECTING TODAY FOR TOMMORROW  
youth ministry of LIVING WORD FELLOWSHIP  
e 7:30 PM

## Built to Last 1 John 4:15-18

### A. The Foundation (v. 15):

- To confess means that someone emphatically agrees and proclaims as fact, an inward conviction, that Jesus was begotten of God and is fully man and fully God.
  - verse is chapter 4:1-3 – It is impossible to love a person forever if you are not saved (4:7-8).
- Anyone who makes such a declaration vividly demonstrates that they are steadfastly standing firm, despite whatever troubles they may be experiencing, in the conviction of the totality of who God is based on the Word of God.
- Because this believer willfully chooses to hold to the Word of God, no matter what, this person will continuously function under the authority of the Lord God.

### B. The Framework (v. 16):

- John says, over a period of time, he has grown to a full understanding or realization of the love of God so that he now functions productively because of God's love.
- Those who live in God have a complete unreserved trust and confidence in the promises of God so that no matter what they may experience they would 'look beyond all difficulties to God and His promises.'
- We are the direct object of God's love. It provides to us what we need which is portrayed in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. His love is the central focus of what love is all about (1 John 2:5; 4:7-9, 19).
- The totality of who God is finds its full description in the manner that God directs His will towards caring for our needs. This process is continuous, meaning it never ends.
- The believer who chooses to remain steadfast in however God chooses to supply their needs remain in the will of God and as a result continuously experiences God's divine agape love.
- A believer that remains faithful to God's Word, no matter what they may have encountered, trusts God to care for them and remains in the sphere of God's love constantly being loved by God. John said this in John 15:9-10; *"Just as the Father has loved Me, I have loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love."*
- The totality of all that God is, continuously and steadfastly dwells in the believer who faithfully trusts in God's Word which is demonstrated by their willingness to obey the Lord each day no matter who maybe hateful towards them.

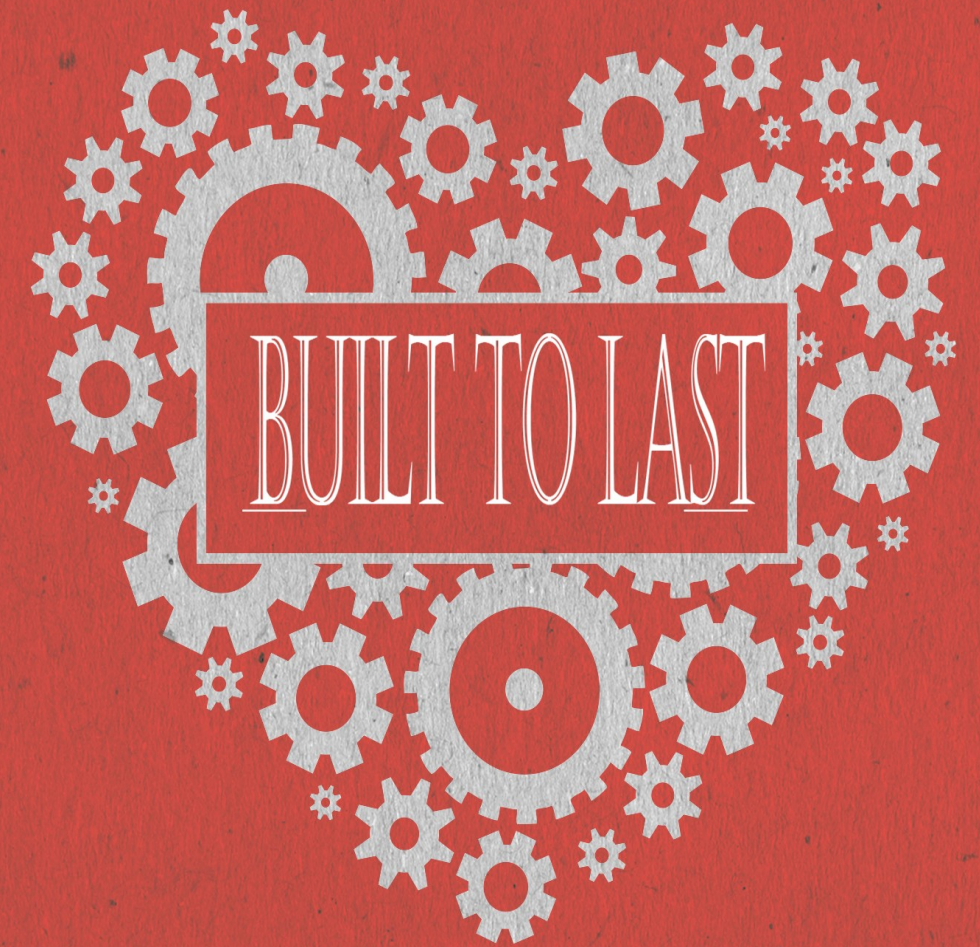
### C. Perfected (vs. 17-18):

- A believer who willfully and consistently obeys God's Word, because God is love, this believer completely experiences the character of God. This empowers them to love anyone, even an enemy (Romans 12:4-16).
- When love is keeping God's Word and a believer faithfully does so, that same believer, who has surrendered to God's Word, "no longer lives" (Galatians 2:20). The nature of Christ is who they are, and the nature of Christ is love, so this believer, being controlled by the Spirit of God, loves everyone they encounter. (1 John 2:3-6)
- At the time of the rapture and the Beamer Seat of Christ this believer remains in fellowship with the Lord because they were willing to deny themselves and live in the very nature of Christ. In Philippians 2:21 Paul talks about what he would gain as a blessing in heaven, not punishment.
- To willfully choose to walk in God's Word means that we decided, no matter our troubles, no matter who hates us, to remain steadfastly committed to the work of God in us (Philippians 2:13). This obedience is an expression of our love for Him because He first loved us.
- The love that causes no fear completely becomes who the believer is. This is the purpose of all that Christ is seeking to accomplish in us. Loving anyone is in His strength so we can love anyone.
- This kind of love aggressively ('to hurl with a lot of force'), decisively removes any or all anxiety, guilt, or nervousness when the believer comes before God in prayer.
- The person who lives in fear live terrified of God rather than focused on growing in Christ. Growing in Christ, by abiding in His Word, leads to experiencing the love of God towards us (John 15:1-11).
- When we abide in God's Word we experience more and more of His love (His promises become a daily experience); we grow spiritually. The fruit of that growth is to become more like Him which means we can always love anyone (Matthew 22:36-40) because this love is directed by His Spirit through His Word.

## PRAYER REQUESTS

**Grieving:** The family of Lyndia Tarkington, Dana & Nikisha Doyle & family, Greg & Georeba Odums & family, Phillip Baillou & family, Curtis Wiley, Tomitra Wiley & family, and Christopher Chapman & family.

**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, Betty Goode, Willie Phillips, and Charlie Williams.



## 1 JOHN 4:15-18