

March 2025 Marriage Conference 1 of 3

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Preacher: Nick Schamberger

[0 : 00] Well, God bless everybody. I'm so glad that we are all here, that you all came. You know, back when we, when we had planted the church, we've just been here two years, and right from the beginning, I've always wanted to do, like, things like this.

I want to do a men's conference. I want to do something like this. We didn't really have the space, and then now we do. And it's like, praise the Lord, let's do this. And, you know, you can think, well, you know, Jared, are you qualified to speak on marriage?

Well, I mean, I'm married. And so my good friend, Nick Schomburger, we've known each other about 20, 20 plus years, been a really good friend for 20 years. He's a pastor, third chapel pastor up in New York.

And that's definitely more his area than it's been mine. Not marriage. I mean, you know, he's been married a couple years longer than me. But so I thought it might be great to bring him down. But then it ended up, okay, I'll teach a teacher session too.

I'm like, Lord, what do I have? And he's like, well, you got the same thing you have Sunday morning. And Wednesday night, you know, I was thinking it's not about experience or expertise. It's about what we come to God's word for, to be equipped and to be edified.

[1 : 08] And there's lots of time to fellowship we're going to have this afternoon and evening. And that's where you can look out the people that have the experience or the experts, talk to one another and let the fellowship happen as God softens our heart with his word, as he speaks things into our heart.

And then as we continue steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, the two link together so well. So let me just pray us in and let our hearts be settled before the Lord.

Father, thank you so much, Lord. Lord, we come into your courts with thanksgiving and into your presence with praise, Lord. This is the day that the Lord has made. We will rejoice and we will be glad in it, Lord. We will sing a new song to God.

We will make a joyful noise unto the Lord because you have dealt bountifully with us. We will speak of all your wondrous works. Lord, worship is an aspect of life.

It's not just about singing or playing an instrument. Lord, you tell us that the Father must be worshiped in spirit and truth, and he's seeking such to worship him in spirit and truth.

[2 : 06] So, Lord, we want to sing words that are true, but, Lord, we also want the heart to be with it, Lord. We don't want to just go through the motions. You tell us, Lord, that you will inhabit the praises of your people.

What an amazing promise. Lord, if you would please, Lord, be so gracious, Lord, as to meet us here now, Lord, to settle our hearts and prepare them for the work you want to do through the word, through fellowship, through prayer, through communion, Lord.

What a wonderful time to be together, Lord. These last days to be couples, Lord, to be married one in Christ, Lord, to be a new creation, Lord. Lord, help us to understand what that means even more and to let you infuse our marriages with your love and your grace.

We love you, we praise you, and thank you. In Jesus' name, amen. Amen. It is. I feel so privileged and blessed to be able to be here with you guys.

My name is Nick Schomburger. I'm up from New York in Seneca Falls, New York. Well, actually, Waterloo is where I live, but the church is in Seneca Falls.

[3 : 10] As Jared said, we go back 20-plus years. They lived also up in Waterloo. Our families grew up together.

The kids all grew up together. We would do every Wednesday night when the girls were in dance, I think, all together. We'd pick them up from dance, and I'll have dinner together.

Then I'll go to church at the end of the days. And so I can safely say, well, you know what, I guess I don't have an idea how many hours you and I have spent talking even just on the subject of marriage alone throughout these years.

If you ask me, did I ever think I would be here doing something like this? I don't know. It's hard to imagine doing it in North Carolina. I know, but we didn't know Jared was going to be sent down here by the Lord either at that time.

So I'm going to have you guys open your Bibles to the book of Ruth. Before we jump into Ruth, we're going to, we'll start in chapter one, but I think it's very important for us to remember something.

[4 : 17] And we're going to do a little bit of interactive here as we go along. The medium of every relationship God wants for us to have, whether it's a relationship with our friends, our spouses, family, coworkers, bosses, enemies, is what?

It's love. Yeah. I thought I wanted to say it. Love. It's the exact same medium for all relationships that he has. And it's the relationship he has with us and we're supposed to have with him.

And it's very important for us to remember that because we have this tendency to separate out things and compartmentalize them. And of course, I think we can all recognize the relationship we have with our friends is different from the relationships we have with our enemies, correct?

Even if love is still the same medium, it's not the same relationship. Um, and the way I like to say it is each of these types of relationships has love as its medium, but the boundaries on how we express that love is different.

So we take our enemy. If our enemy is in need of water, what do we give them? If our enemy is in need of food, what do we give them? If our enemy is in need of physical care, what do we give them?

[5 : 40] That's very clear scripturally. That is how we express love. But does it mean you have to tell all your deepest, darkest secrets to your enemy? No.

Does it mean you have to be physically affectionate with your enemy? No. In fact, you would probably be quite unwise to share your dark secrets with your enemies.

So there's a boundary on how you express the love. Whereas when you think about your coworkers, you're to love them, but there are, go through it in your head.

There are boundaries that get put on there. Sometimes your workplace puts those boundaries in place for you and says, no, we don't allow you to have this kind of relationship with them. We don't allow physical affection shown in the workplace or whatever it is.

Friendship. Friendship. Even within friendship, we have some friends that we are much closer with than other friends, though we consider them all friends. And those will have different expressions of it.

[6 : 41] I have friends that I don't give a great big bear hug to. I have other friends that I do. Doesn't mean I love one friend any more necessarily than the other.

I just show love equally to all of them. And of course, then you get into the realm of the expression of sexual love, where that gets expressed in the sexual relationship that is reserved for one relationship only, marriage.

It's inappropriate in any other relationship. So you get the point, right? These boundaries that will happen in every relationship. That's what makes marriage unique amongst all relationships.

Love has no boundary in its expression in the marriage relationship. And it's important to remember that because it makes it also the single most challenging relationship to express love because you have to now express it 24-7 to somebody.

And that's very difficult. You see, one of the advantages of friendship is how often do you see a friend? You might only see them if they're a really close friend.

[7 : 59] You might see them six, seven, eight hours a week. Maybe you go to church with them. It's a friend at a workplace. Maybe you see them a little longer. But where you get free expression and have to exercise all that love, it's very limited, to be quite honest.

And let's put it that way. It's like, how many of you are grandparents? How many of you find it easier to be grandparents than parents? Right. Why? Because the responsibility and expression of love to your grandchildren is limited to a time.

That's the famous thing. Oh, yeah, I can sugar them up and send them home. I don't have to show the expression of love with discipline when they're melting down on the floor.

I don't have to worry about that. I don't have to sit up at 3 a.m. with them because they're not feeling well. So it's a little easier. You get the perks without all the responsibility. But it's all love still. So I would like to lay that out to begin with because I think that's going to set a foundation for understanding everything else we talk about today. That we need to understand this love that we're going to talk about needs to be expressed and should be expressed in marriage in every facet of our life.

[9 : 15] Now, in the book of Ruth, many of you I know, if not all of you, are going to be familiar with this. We do not have time to read through the whole book of Ruth and actually do some teaching on it.

So I'm going to do some summarizing. The book of Ruth begins by introducing us to the family of Elimelech. This is a family that lived during the time of Judges in Bethlehem.

And we are told there's a famine in the land. Do a little addition. Two plus two equals four. Time of Judges. There's famine in the land, which means we are not in one of the good times of Judges. We are in one of the many, many, many, vast majority bad times of Judges, where there is God bringing judgment on the people of Israel because they are not following after him.

And Elimelech's great idea here is, I know, let's just leave the promised land. Let's just leave our inheritance and go to Moab because they have food.

[10 : 17] And so he brings his wife and he brings his sons with him to Moab. And there in Moab, they break another commandment besides leaving their inheritance.

They break the commandment and he gives his sons foreign daughters. Now, you'll get the sense that Naomi and Elimelech, as you read through this book, don't have a particularly close and devoted walk to the Lord.

They are not like, God forbid we leave his land. We need to repent to find his blessing instead of just, hey, where's the escape route? Times are bad. Let's just skedaddle, get out of here.

Instead of repenting as they ought to have. But they go, they break further laws. But fortunately, God is gracious. Fortunately, Romans 8.28, that God works all things together for good, for those who love him and are called according to his purposes.

And even, yes, he will work things for good for people who don't necessarily love him as much as they should. We've all seen his mercy and grace in our lives that way too, right? How many of you can say you've gotten good things from God when you did not deserve it?

[11 : 33] Right? We can all say that. You're going to see that because one of the sons marries a woman named Ruth. And she's going to be a special kind of girl.

But judgment is still going to find this family. And Elimelech is going to die. And Ruth, I'm sorry, Naomi has left a widow with her two sons and their wives.

And in time, the two sons are going to die as well. And the life that was sought to be preserved by fleeing God's land where there was judgment going on is lost anyway.

Number one lesson we can learn out of that is you can't escape God's hand. Right? David talks about in the Psalms, where could I go, Lord, to flee from you?

And Elimelech thought he could go to Moab, but he couldn't. And he came. And so now we have Naomi left. And Naomi is about to go home and says, well, there's literally nothing for me here, so I might as well go back to Bethlehem.

[12 : 39] And she starts the journey, and her two daughter-in-laws follow her. And she turns to her, guys, I have nothing for you. Don't you get it? I can't marry you off.

I have no kids. Even if I had a husband tonight, would you wait 20, 30 years to get a husband from me? Just go home.

And Orpah, the one, does. But Ruth would not. So I'm going to read to you what Ruth says.

Very famous, verse 16, verse 16 and 17. Very famous lines. But Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave you or turn back from you, from following after you.

For wherever you go, I will go. And wherever you lodge, I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God my God. Where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried.

[13 : 42] The Lord do so to me, and more also, if anything but death parts you and me. Don't those sound like those could be wedding vows?

Right? Yeah, but she says that to her mother-in-law, right? Because love doesn't change. Love is the same heart no matter what. She is devoted to her mother-in-law, and so what is she saying?

I'm not going anywhere. I'm going to stay here with you. Where you go, I go. Where you live, I will live. Your people, my people. Your God, my God.

Where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. And may God so do to me, and more so, also, if anything but death parts you and me. It's interesting.

Ruth is now a widow, and yet this heart is still in her. We're going to have a love story develop. We all know that with Boaz coming into the picture. But one of the really important things for us to see, and why I wanted to come here first, you cannot compartmentalize your life.

[14 : 51] First thing in marriage, if your walk with the Lord is not manifesting love in other parts of your life, you cannot expect it to manifest love in your marriage.

There is no separating these things. Ruth is going to make a tremendous wife for Boaz. Why? Because she was just a loving woman.

And she loved people she did not have an obligation to love anymore. She was released from the family. She could have stayed at home. In fact, she's got, honestly, a bitter mother-in-law.

When you see what her mother-in-law says, I'm always blown away when you read Naomi actually says to them, guys, go back to your gods. Could you imagine as a Christian?

Could you imagine as a Christian, let's say, God forbid, but your son marries a Muslim woman. And the Muslim, your son dies, and you say, just go back to your Islam.

[15 : 56] It shows you where Naomi's walk with the Lord is. The idea of being a witness and bringing the Gentiles to a true belief in the true and living God is not in her mind at all.

But love of Ruth didn't matter. She's going to be faithful all the same. I want to look at some of these specific ones, too, because this is going to touch on the expressions of love within our lives.

And we're going to apply them here now towards marriage, but in light of what she says here, because they would make great wedding vows. Do not entreat me to leave you or turn back from following after you, for wherever you go, I will go.

That is an interesting point she's making here to who she views as an authority in her life. Will we travel and follow with our spouse where they go?

Particularly when we talk about in this case, we could apply this to wives. Will you go where your husband goes? Will you follow where your husband goes?

[17 : 13] And of course, men, as husbands, we have to say the only way that we can in good conscience turn around and ask our wives to follow us is if we are following the Lord. Because as it says in 1 Corinthians chapter 11, God is the head of Christ.

Christ is the head of man. Man is the head of woman. It's a pecking order. And it's important to note, everybody in there, except the father himself, has an authority.

Right? Every one of them has an authority. So before a woman can say, and in this world it's become very popular to say, well, I don't think it's right that someone should be in charge of another in a marriage.

Really, because Christ felt it perfectly appropriate to be submitted to his father. And he's our example. And husbands, right?

You're answerable directly to Christ for the leadership and the direction in which you go. This is such a foundational thing in marriages. Husbands, you want your wife to trust you.

[18 : 25] Show her you're willing to follow the Lord. Wives, you want your husband to lead. Encourage him to follow after the Lord. We don't want to be subversive.

We don't want to undercut. We don't want to start questioning. Right? And in the same way, men, we don't want to give them reason to doubt. We want them knowing we seek the Lord.

We want them knowing we're willing to be obedient to the Lord. And then it's going to go on and say, wherever you lodge, I will lodge.

That's a dwelling, right? We're talking. I will dwell with you in closeness, in intimacy, in union, under the same roof. There's a huge difference between having friends.

There's a huge difference between going to visit friends and living with people. Right? Big difference. I was, so I had to, funny story. My oldest daughter, Cosette, so who we used to say, right, you and Cosette are six months apart or three?

[19 : 31] Not even. Actually, six weeks apart. Like six weeks apart in age. So it gives you an idea, since you all know Lily, where she is. And she was, she now works full time at the Ark Encounter in Kentucky.

And she was up visiting the other day and we were talking about one of her friends who was just moving out of the house. And she had been away at a, I guess we'll say like a Bible school. And she was having a hard time coming home. I said, well, you know, it's always hard to come home again once you've been out on your own. And my daughter says, she goes, yeah, like, I don't think I could ever.

And then she stopped as she realized what was about to come out of her mouth to me. And I said, it's okay. Yes, I get it. You don't think you could ever come home and live here again like that. And I said, because we don't think we could have you back and have you live here again. No, I did not say that to her. But there is a truth to, once you get out there, once you're doing your thing, it takes a special kind of love and fellowship to be able to live under the same roof in harmony.

[20 : 39] And it takes a willingness to do that, to lay down our own desires, to lay down our own way of doing things all the time. And to be quite honest, not annoyed with people when they get in the way of the way we want things done and what we're planning to do.

But here Ruth talks about that willingness, because that's what God actually wants in our marriages. And in general, when you think about it, just in the body of Christ.

Why do you think he says so many times in the Bible, submit yourselves to one another. Do not seek your own, but seek the good of each other instead.

It's pretty straightforward. And marriage is just the perfect place for that to show where we get that opportunity. And that can be done by both husbands and wives.

Do we seek to make your spouse's life as easy as possible? Or do we seek to make it more difficult chasing what we want in our own lives?

[21 : 44] I am 100% convinced. And I'm convinced because the Bible teaches it. The not so well kept secret, because God has published it clearly to everybody who wants to hear it.

Of every relationship is you look out for the well-being of the other person in the relationship. So think of it like a suspension bridge. One side holds up the other side.

The minute we start looking out for our own well-being, the balance that is supposed to be in place is gone. And so when we are living next to each other, day in and day out, have you ever noticed how easy it is to start focusing on the I?

Oh, gosh, I wouldn't have done it that way. I hate it when they do that. I want it this way. I hate the color of this room. I want this color, right? All these different things that creep in on all these different levels.

Could you imagine what, even for those of us here in this room who have good marriages that have passed the test of time to this point, could you imagine how different even your marriages would look if every day those questions instead of, what do I want to do today, where I wonder what could make my spouse's day a little better?

[23 : 05] I wonder how I could bless them today. I wonder how I could reassure them of my love for them. I wonder how I could encourage them to walk after the Lord a little more. I mean, I ask that question.

I think, man, why do I ask it here and forget it? Like all next week, I'm going to forget to do that all day long. So these are the things that are easier to say since my wife couldn't come with me this weekend.

And she's not here. I asked Jared, is this going to be recorded? Because I'll speak very differently if it is. No, sorry. That's not true. She's heard everything I have to say already.

So then we get to your people shall be my people. Another part of the intimacy of marriage, right? Guess what? Look at your spouse. And you know it. Every one of you knows it. Most obvious thing I'm about to say, their family became your family. For some of you, that's easy. For some of you, that's hard.

[24 : 04] But they are now your people. There's an acceptance of them. I'll never forget when Andrea, my wife, and I were about, a little before we got married, my father-in-law picked me up because we were, I can't remember where we were all going, but he was just picking me up on the way.

But, and before we got out of the car, he said, I want to talk to you about something really quick. He says, I want you to know I love you. And I want you to know you're a son to me now.

I was like, thank you. I'm like, okay, that's great. It could have been a lot worse. But he then said to me, he goes, I want you to know why. Because you are going to be one with my daughter.

And you now take my daughter's place. You not replace her, but you step into that same place in the family. It's obviously always stuck with me.

Because I was hers, I now became his. And he viewed it that way. And likewise, because she became mine, they all became mine as well. And we have so many marriages.

[25 : 13] And I've done a lot of marriage counseling through the years. That family becomes an issue. Family becomes a source of frustration.

Family becomes a source of conflict. They become dividing points because we will have, I'm sure none of you have ever had anything like this said or felt in your marriages.

But like, you're choosing your own family over me. They become sources that become problematic. But they're not supposed to be. Because they are supposed to be accepted in and loved.

The same as your own family is accepted in and loved. Your God, my God. What a beautiful picture of the walk we're supposed to have together with our spouse.

You can look at this. And I know I'm saying what a lot of you already know. That God desires us to grow together with him. We worship together. We bow down the will of our lives together that he has.

[26 : 20] And if that is not happening together, then eventually there's going to be separation that kicks in. Where you die, I will die.

And there I will be buried. It's very interesting, that statement. Where you die, I will die. Well, we can go to marriage to the death do us part.

Till death do us part. And how wonderful that is, this mindset of, listen, nothing separates us. I am just committed. I am in. I am all in. No matter what comes.

The only thing that separates us is death itself. But Ruth, in her sentiment, takes a step further because she's saying, even after you die and are buried, I am going to remain there.

And then I'm going to be buried where you are buried. Wow, that's a really, like, that goes way out, right? This goes way out there.

[27 : 20] This isn't the idea of, yeah, I'm here and I'm not going anywhere till you're gone. And then maybe I'll go back to Moab. And then maybe I'll go do my own thing. This is a devotion that goes even beyond.

And so the Lord do so me, and also if anything but death parts you and me. Now, when we consider, again, this is just the relationship with her mother-in-law, who she no longer has any real legal bounds to because she's been released, if she would, take it.

We're going to see her be introduced to a man named Boaz. See, time is going to pass between chapter one and chapter two. We don't know how much time, but since they have returned home to Naomi's home, Ruth has been faithfully serving her.

In fact, so much, we're going to find out that the reputation of Ruth has gotten around. A reputation like, who would do this? Look at how amazing she is to her mother-in-law.

And so in verse one of chapter two, it says, There was a relative of Naomi's husband, a man of great wealth, of the family of Elimelech, and his name was Boaz. So Ruth the Moabitess said to Naomi, Please let me go to the field and glean heads of grain after him in whose sight I may find favor.

[28 : 45] And she said to her, Go, my daughter. And she left and went and gleaned in the field after the reapers. And she happened to come to the part of the field belonging to Boaz, who was of the family of Elimelech.

Now behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem and said to the reapers, The Lord be with you. And they answered him, The Lord bless you. And Boaz said to his servant, who was in charge of the reapers, Whose young woman is this?

So really quick, Boaz shows up. I mean, this tells you something. And when the first thing you hear from a guy is, The Lord be with you all. He's talking to his workers, right?

I mean, any of you own a business here? Anybody? Okay. Could you imagine, though, of all you workers, if your first thing your boss said when he came into work was, Hey, the Lord just bless you all.

Thanks for being here, doing your work today. That would be weird today, right? That would be strange. People don't do that kind of stuff today. But this is the first thing coming out of Boaz's mouth.

[29 : 48] And they're all comfortable. They're like, The Lord bless you too, boss. This is the type of relationship the man has. So it's interesting how we're introduced to each of them outside of their marriage relationship and who they are.

Now behold, Boaz, sorry. Then Boaz said to his servant who was in charge of the reapers, Whose young woman is this?

So the servant who was in charge of the reapers answered and said, It is the young Moabite woman who came back with Naomi from the country of Moab. And she said, Please let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves.

So she came and has continued from morning until now, though she rested a little in the house. So he takes notice. I've never seen this girl around here before.

Who exactly is she? Now she's following the law of the land. She has permission to glean. They had to give her the right to glean. It was God's welfare system.

[30 : 47] Perfect mix. People didn't get something for nothing. And the rich weren't allowed to keep everything for themselves, right? It was a great mix. You had to work for it still. And there wasn't allowed to be a greedy accumulation of wealth in his land.

And this is what she does. And this is, it is the young Moabite woman, he says. They've all been talking. They know about this Moabite woman by her reputation. Then Boaz said to Ruth, You will listen, my daughter, will you not?

Do not go to glean in another field, nor go from here, but stay close to my young women. And let your eyes be on the field which they reap and go after them. Have I not commanded the young men not to touch you?

And when you are thirsty, go to the vessel and drink from what the young men have drawn. So she fell on her face, bowed down to the ground, and said to him, Why have I found favor in your eyes that you should take notice of me since I am a foreigner?

And Boaz answered her and said, It has been fully reported to me all that you have done for your mother-in-law since death of your husband, and how you have left your father and your mother and the land of your birth, and have come to a people whom you did not know before.

[32 : 04] The Lord repay your work, and a full reward be given you by the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings you have come for refuge. And she said, Let me find favor in your sight, my Lord, for you have comforted me, and have spoken kindly to your maidservant, though I am not like one of your maidservants.

And now Boaz said to her at mealtime, Come here and eat bread, and dip your piece of bread in the vinegar. So she sat beside the reapers, and he passed parched grain to her, and she ate and was satisfied, and kept some back.

And when she rose up to glean, Boaz commanded the young men, saying, Let her glean, even among the sheaves. Do not reproach her. Also let the grain from the bundles fall purposely for her, leaving that she may glean, and do not rebuke her.

So she gleaned in the field until evening, and beat out what she had gleaned. And it was about an ephah of barley. So anyway, we see this first interaction. We're going to stop there.

There's a couple of very important things that I want you guys to know. Think about the New Testament description of what a wife should be.

[33 : 18] I have been to so many weddings where a pastor will bring out the meek and humble spirit, and everyone chuckles, right? Like, ha, ha, ha, ha, do you know her? And there are plenty of women who have meek and humble spirits.

Don't get me wrong. But it's always a chuckle because this goes against our culture, right? The idea of a meek and humble woman. But isn't this throughout every interaction Ruth has with Boaz?

You see her meekness and her humility. First of all, she goes as a servant for her mother-in-law. And she's just hoping to get some food.

And then when she finds kindness from Boaz, she's blown away. It says she falls on her face before him. What have I done to find favor in your sight?

This is not a woman who's saying, finally, someone noticed what I've done. All right, the Lord's finally repaying all my good I've done. There's nothing of that heart in her.

[34 : 22] This is pure humility. And it's funny how when we read in the New Testament sometimes, and even as a pastor, I can get to those verses and be a little hesitant, like, how is this going to go over in the crowd today?

The meek, humble spirit, the submission, all of these talks, because it just goes against a lot of what's even in the church today. And it sounds so bad. And yet when you read it happening in Ruth, does it look bad?

It looks beautiful. You realize, like, wow, yeah. No wonder Boaz is like, oh, who is this girl? Because it's attractive. It's something that does exactly what it says in Peter when he's talking about the, if a woman has a husband who's not following after the Lord, be submissive, that meek and humble spirit like Abraham had, because by your righteous conduct, who knows if you will win him back. It's such a beautiful thought. But you see it playing out in Ruth. And like I said, it just looks so right when you see it, but it sounds so against our own heart and our sensibilities and what we're to do. That word submission too, you know, I have, obviously, I think like all of us, I've struggled with what it means to submit ourselves to one another.

[35 : 49] As a husband, I've wondered, what does that mean for my wife to submit herself to me? What does that look like? And I remember just praying about once, and the Lord just showed me, he said, look to everyday examples.

Look to everyday examples. Think of somebody you love that's not your spouse for a second. Just think about it. You know, I could take Jared. Friends forever. Jared, I love you, man.

But I'm over there. I'm staying with them. I'm visiting. And if Jared's in the kitchen and I say, hey, Jared, can you grab me water? What's he going to do? Right.

He's going to, if he loves me at all, it's so easy to say, sure, I got it. You want ice in it? You want, right. We all can see. If someone asks you who you love to grab something, do something for them, or even says, hey, grab me a water while you're over there, what do we do?

We submit. We just do it. It's the most natural thing in the world to submit to people we love. It's very hard to submit to people when we're not feeling loving to them. Right?

[36 : 55] I mean, okay. Confession time, guys. I know. Wives, close your eyes. Don't look. How many of you men have known when you've made some missteps in a day in your marriage?

Okay. Hands up for this one. Come on. I want to see it. If you know you've made some mistakes. Have you ever thought twice about requesting something of your wife when you know she's not happy with you? Maybe I'll just get that myself right now.

Now, I don't think that impugns any of you women to say, like, we honestly think you'd throw it at our heads when we walked in or when you walked in with it or anything like that. But we become a little sheepish about that because we all understand how submission really works.

It's just an outpouring of love. When we love someone, there's submission. Jesus would say to himself, if you love me, you will obey my commandments. And so now men, look at this.

I mean, because if we were to make a movie of the book of Ruth and we've got this scene where Ruth and Boaz met, how would Hollywood handle that? What would happen?

[38 : 05] Would Ruth be the most beautiful woman in the field? Of course she would. And Boaz would be riding in on his horse and then he would do something like...

He couldn't take his eyes off her because she's so beautiful. And they would change the lighting and all of that stuff. And that's what would be the attraction. They would show us the attraction is the beauty.

And I'm sure she was a beautiful woman. I'm not saying she wasn't, but we're never actually told Boaz noticed her beauty. He noticed a woman who had never been in the field before, asked who it was.

And then he starts doing what Hollywood would play it off as a guy trying to flirt with a girl. Do really nice things for her. Hey, let me get you some water. Hey, here, let me get you your meal.

Let me carry it over just so I can talk to you a little bit more. Let me do this. Let me do that for you.

But that is not what the Bible says happened at all. Why did he do this for her? Because he had heard of her reputation and her service and her heart and her love for her mother-in-law and everything about him that loved the Lord said this should be repaid with kindness.

[39 : 19] She should feel accepted because she has put herself under the wings of God. I will treat her as someone who has put herself under the wing of God and she is going to know the love of God through me.

Is men, I'm like, sorry guys, we gave it to the ladies first. It's our turn. Do we look at our wives that way?

Do we see the godly woman in her and say, I want to bless her for that? I want her to just be so blessed. I mean, it's so interesting for this whole talk of submission.

Notice what Boaz is doing for her. At the dinner table, he's the one serving her. He's the one bringing her her parched bread. He's giving her the seat, showing her where she should sit. He's the one going out of his way to make sure she has no trouble getting the food she needs for her and her mother-in-law. So you can see how this is a good foundation for a marriage to come up. [40 : 23] Now, we don't have time to get into all of it, but we're going to kind of skip ahead a little bit. We're going to know, Naomi says, finds out what Boaz had said, hey, don't go anywhere else because he had asked her, listen, just only come to my field, please.

I think he kind of knew how she would be treated potentially in other fields. I says, just please stay here. Stay with my people because I want to bless you.

And so Naomi says, hey, he's a close relative. And then the whole plan gets hatched. He could be our kinsman redeemer. He could be the one. He could be, remember those husbands I said I could never get for you?

I might actually be able to get a husband for you after all. As kinsman redeemer, he could buy, redeem you and all of our family land and restore us to what we walked away from trying to run from God.

We're going to touch on that in our third session a little bit tonight because the book of Ruth is so beautiful for that because it not only shows us what God will do, but it shows us what do we do when something goes wrong?

[41 : 33] What goes wrong in a, what can go wrong in a marriage? There's going to be a redemption that God can work. They never thought to see it coming. But I want you to see, what I want to really get to here is Boaz's heart and attitude.

So the plan is there, go to the threshing floor. They're having their feast at the end of harvest. So this would have been a little bit later. This isn't like the next day that it happens. This plan is hatched. Wait for him to lay down, hide yourself.

When he lays down, go sleep, uncover his feet and sleep there. Now, I have no idea why. Like there's all sorts of crazy ideas out there. There is absolutely nothing really, no matter what people will tell you.

I've never found anything that is a definitive Jewish tradition that can be explained this way. The best that I've ever seen that makes the most sense is, yeah, he would eventually wake up because his feet were cold.

Which I don't know. I've had, have you ever done that? You wake up and realize your sheets are all messed up and it like bothers you in your sleep. And so you wake up. And that's the best suggestion I've ever heard why to do this. But there is nothing proven throughout Jewish traditions and literature that this was a regular thing of how a woman proposed to a man.

[42 : 44] So, she does this and he wakes up startled and she basically proposed, said, listen, you are a close relative.

Take me under your wing. Saying, basically, you're the kinsman redeemer. Will you redeem us? And that means marry me as well. And look at his response.

Blessed are you of the Lord, my daughter, for you have shown more kindness at the end than at the beginning. And that you did not go after young men, whether poor or rich.

Which implies she is young still and she would have probably been in her mid-twenties about this point if she got married at the standard age, 10 years passes and they come back.

So she's probably in her mid-twenties. You did not go after them, rich or poor. And now, my daughter, do not fear. I will do for you all that you request. For all the people of my town know that you are a virtuous woman.

[43 : 43] Now, it is true that I am a close relative. However, there is a relative closer than I. Then he's going to tell her, stay the night, gives her performance. I will perform the duty for you.

He says, I'm willing. As long as it works out for us to do this, I'll do it for you. But again, notice what he goes to. One, he's surprised. Not just to find her there.

He's surprised. Wait, I thought you'd be more interested in other guys than me. Because, guess what? By most accounts of traditional teachers of the church, he's old.

He is probably in his 50s here. Yeah, it's one of those things in our culture we go, ooh, that's kind of gross. But, back then, it wasn't really all that weird at all for them, so we have to accept it.

But it was enough of an age difference for him to be like, I'm really surprised you're going after a guy my age and not a younger guy. But what you see is what they value in each other.

[44 : 45] Ruth is valuing a man who cares for her, a man who loves the Lord, and a man who rightfully is in the position to provide. And he is valuing a virtuous woman.

Proverbs 31 had not been written yet, but you have a Proverbs 31 woman here. Now, all of you here are already married. So this is not to say, hey guys, go out and find a spouse like this.

This is to say, it is never too late to start prioritizing the right things. How you look at each other, what you see in each other, the things that you allow to define your relationship.

See, all these areas of closeness that God wants us to have in our marriage, all the areas that love can be expressed, in the same way, Satan is going to want to get in there and divide.

He's going to want to allow our flesh and our passions and our desires that are sinful to not fulfill the godly side of this and to do what God would want us to do.

[45 : 58] And I'm going to pick out some pretty common examples to just show here for some application. And I know, let me put it this way, I get it, roles can be reversed in marriage.

There are stereotypes that I'm going to go to and I know not every one of you fit these stereotypes and I hope most of you don't have these problems, but you will recognize them. All right, do we have honey-do lists from wives to husbands represented in this room?

Do we get frustration when honey-do lists are not met in right time? And the question that we can ask ourselves though is, instead of focusing on all of those things, does my husband provide for us? Does my husband put those wings over us? Does he work for us? Am I starting to demand him to work every spare minute for me?

Instead of, hey, you've had a hard day, can I bless you with some rest right now? Don't worry about that. I know you wanted to get that done, but boy, you look beat. You just take an evening.

[47 : 09] Let's sit down, let's talk a little bit, let's play a game, let's go out to dinner, whatever it is. Is that there? For men, we have our own things, we have our own expectations that go into there.

For some men, and I know some, it's a little, maybe sounds outdated more to the 1950s or such, but do you have expectations of what the house should be like when you get home?

Do you have expectations for meals? Do you have expectations for, honestly, well, we're all married here, so we'll say it, even in the sexual relationships? Do we fail to take into account the kindness and love and effort that our wife has put in throughout the day to other places, being the godly woman that she is and giving honor to that?

And instead of seeking, hey, what about mine in this? Can we seek what is hers, her blessing as well in this? And there is always a marriage, we've all heard it said, the give and take, right?

And that's the beauty of like the suspension bridge idea. You each uphold each other, which creates, like it says in Ecclesiastes, the time and the place for everything.

[48 : 25] There is going to be a day that it's appropriate for the husband to walk home and say, you know what? See, you've had a hard day. Nope, I'm all about serving you today. I don't want you to give a single thought to me.

Let me serve you. And there's going to become a time and place that that's reversed, right? How do we know? Let the Holy Spirit lead you. Can you imagine if the church actually could live this out, the only fights in marriages would be who gets to submit to who.

It would be the only fights that there are. And I want to just, we'll close that first session with this thought and try and just wrap it up a little bit.

I decided to use Ruth and Boaz in here because I wanted you to see that one, we can't simply compartmentalize our life.

Is there a pattern in our life? Is there a pattern of seeking the good of others, a pattern of submission, a pattern of selflessness? Because you can't just make it appear in your marriage.

[49 : 31] See, those are individual things of the heart. And they're all a result of simply love. We get love from the source of love.

I mean, every one of us, do any of you think you have love down pat? You do it perfectly yet? No, of course we don't. We don't do it perfectly. But it's really cool when you start piecing together the steps.

All right, we're supposed to all love each other. Well, I'm failing in that. I'm struggling to love. Maybe some people even here are looking and going, yeah, you know what? I'm not loving my spouse very much. I'm just not.

I'm annoyed with them all the time. I'm upset with them all the time. I don't know why. I don't mean to be. I just am. And no, guys, you know what? And women too, I'll say, that's not just emotions being, that's not hormones.

That is a matter of the heart. Our heart has to be right with God. If we are not able to show love to the people we should be showing love to, aka everybody, we need to go to the source of love.

[50 : 40] Because love is the fruit of the Spirit, isn't it? That's what the Bible says. The fruit of the Spirit is love. It's actually singular. It is not, is love and everything that follows.

If you actually compare that fruit of the Spirit list to 1 Corinthians 13, you realize he basically lists 1 Corinthians 13 after love. The fruit of the Spirit is singularly love and it looks like this, this, this, this, this, and this.

So, okay, so I need more love. I guess I need the fruit of the Spirit. Well, there's very good news because, I'll let anyone answer this who can. How do we get more of the Holy Spirit?

According to Jesus. How? Ask. Right. Anything else with it besides ask? And, and then what, what will God do?

God will just give it little by little? No, he promised an overflowing if we sincerely ask him for the Holy Spirit. So, if we are struggling in this area, ask the Holy Spirit of God and let the fruit of it just come out of us.

[51 : 50] It's amazing the transformation that that can do in our life to simply love. As one of the biggest mistakes I see when people come to marriage counseling, they often sit there and think, well, if my spouse would just stop doing this, this, this, and this, and then the spouse turns around and says, yeah, but you do this, this, this, and this, and I wouldn't do that if you didn't do this.

And what you realize is, no, people are not here for marriage counseling. People are here for behavioral retraining. And they're under the mistaken idea that if you would just behaviorally retrain your spouse, you can be happy.

And I could love you that way. The biggest problem is we call that conditional love. God's love that we are supposed to have is not conditional. It is unconditional.

It's the kind of love that says, I'm in for the long haul. Where you die, I die, and guess what? I'm getting buried right next to you. However long that takes, it's a kind of love that says, your people are my people now.

And it is not based on the things we have been taught to look for it from. It instead is based on all of these values that the Lord would have.

[53 : 06] And so that is my encouragement after this first session to you. If you have found any of these things creeping into your life, or even if you have it, it's good to do a check and remind yourself, what are you appreciating about your spouse?

What are you valuing? What do you even think they're there for? Let the Lord just kind of work from there.

So, we have a break. We're going to close in prayer here in a second, but I want to just throw out there, this is till 4.15. One of the, this break will be for the next 25 minutes.

One of the ideas behind these breaks is that if the Lord chugs your heart on an area where you just know, you know what, yeah, this is something I need to get better with.

And even if your spouse doesn't know you need to get better in it, maybe it's a hard attitude and you've just gotten really good at hiding it, this is the time we want you guys to take with your spouse.

[54 : 05] Just grab a row, room, wherever, and talk about, pray about it now. Don't wait till you get home. Don't wait for something to change your mind.

Don't sit there and say, wow, my spouse has no idea I'm thinking this and I'd rather not drop that bombshell on them because that bombshell is going to explode at some point if it's not dealt with. Now's the time to do it. Even if most of you sit here and go, yeah, my marriage isn't in trouble, don't let it be. Take away every little seed that could bear bad fruit down the road.

So Father, we thank you for this beautiful picture of a marriage and really a beautiful picture of two people who love one another and not just each other but just have love emanating from them.

And Lord, give us more of your spirit that we could love better. Give us more of your spirit that we would have the discernment to see where there might be dangers. and Lord, we also pray that you give us soft, tender, loving hearts for our wives and our husbands that we would serve one another, care for one another and put the needs of each other first.

[55 : 22] In Jesus' name, Amen. Amen.