

Relationships Are Everything, Part 2

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Preacher: Marvin Wiseman

[0 : 0 0] to open your Bibles to the Sermon on the Mount, and we will be looking at the last chapter of the Sermon on the Mount, chapter 7, in the Gospel according to Matthew.

And we will begin reading with verse 24, so if you would stand please, let us give reverence to the Word of God and follow along as we read.

Matthew, chapter 7, beginning with verse 24. Jesus was concluding his Sermon on the Mount, and he said, in conclusion, Therefore, everyone who hears these words of mine and acts upon them may be compared to a wise man who built his house upon the rock.

And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew and burst against that house, and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded upon the rock.

And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not act upon them will be like a foolish man who built his house upon the sand.

[1 : 1 9] And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew and burst against that house, and it fell, and great was its fall.

The result was that when Jesus had finished these words, the multitudes were amazed at his teaching, for he was teaching them as one having authority and not as their scribes.

Thank you. Be seated, please. Needs to be noted that when we dip into the Gospels for something like this, we are looking not for a go and do likewise in every case, but we are looking for principles that are established there that are cross-dispensational.

And we do make an issue of what we call rightly dividing the word of truth, and that needs to be given consideration every time we open the Scriptures because there are things in the Bible that are not intended for us or not written to us.

And when you look, for instance, at the law of Moses, we realize that we are not under the law, but we are under grace. Nonetheless, there are principles there that are cross-dispensational and are beneficial to every and all generations, no matter when they lived.

[2 : 4 4] And here, we've got another example of that. Even though it is in the Gospel of Matthew, where we find a heavy emphasis on the preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom, nonetheless, there is a principle that is abiding here, and it doesn't make any difference what dispensation that you're talking about.

It is applicable. And the principle has to do with having a sound foundation under whatever it is that you're building.

And the text reveals the idea that whatever the superstructure is that you erect on the foundation, its real stability is not in itself, it's in what it is built upon.

No superstructure is any stronger than the foundation that is under it. If the foundation is weak, you can put a beautiful, splendid, well-structured superstructure upon it.

But it's going to come crashing down once the foundation gives away. So that's the principle that Jesus is giving here, and the foundation, of course, simply has to do with the words that he has expressed to them.

[4 : 0 0] And in connection with this, a number of years ago, we developed a series of messages called Marriage on the Rock. I dare say that some people have misunderstood that sometimes, and I've even heard by way of scuttlebutt that these CDs have been placed in restaurants in different establishes, and a half a dozen or so in the community, and they are there free for people to take, as they will.

And some have kind of shied away from them because they thought that what was being talked about was a marriage on the rocks. And some people may think, well, I already have one of those.

What do I need to hear about that for? So we're trying to make it plain to those who do not have a foundation for the phrase the marriage on the rock. And we're talking about a marriage that is based upon the principles that Jesus Christ has set forth in the scriptures, and that if these principles are heeded and applied by the husband and the wife in the marriage relationship, then you will have a marriage on the rock.

And the rock is that solid foundation of Jesus Christ and his word. So in the series that developed, which was originally for radio, we tried to make a careful distinction between Christians who are married and a Christian marriage, and they are as different as night and day.

There are a lot of people who are Christians and married, but they don't have a Christian marriage. Being a Christian, even if it is true of the husband and the wife, doesn't mean that you have a Christian marriage.

[6 : 03] It just means you're two Christians who happen to be married. So these were originally designed for radio, and that's why each segment is just three and a half minutes long.

But the CD itself contains 20 such segments. And the idea is for people, as they listen to the content, and like I said, it's very brief, just three and a half minutes, theoretically and ideally, for the husband and wife to hear them together, same time.

Problem with the radio is, many times the husband and wife are not both available when that program is on the radio because the wife may be in the home, the husband may be working, and they can't be together.

So that led to the distribution of the CDs as they are in addition to the radio. And that also means that they contain a little bit of repetition because most of the people who were hearing these originally heard them 24 hours apart.

So a little bit of review was appropriate. But for husbands and wives who were listening to them now, and I really recommend this, because for those who already have a Marriage on the Rock, and I know many of you do, this can be a fine-tuning kind of thing, a little bit of a review.

[7 : 32] And I would recommend it. And because of that, we've put together a six-pack of these, and you will find them on the table in the rear. There's at least a dozen sets back there.

But all I want you to do, if you will, if you're interested in taking them, is to take the whole six-pack. Don't break up the packs. There are six sessions there, each one with 20 segments, which means you've got 120 tracks, 120 tracks that you may listen to, three and a half minutes each.

And if you do that and go through them, as recommended, I think you will be amazed at the benefit to be derived from that, because the idea is, husband and wife together, if at all possible, you listen to just three and a half minutes together.

Shut the CD off, and you discuss what I said. You may not even agree with what I said. That's okay. But you'll still learn something.

I don't require that everybody agree with it. And you can discuss that, what's there. And very often, very often, what will happen was, husband and wife look at each other, got that, yeah, yeah, yeah.

[8 : 52] Well, there's no disagreement there. You agree with what was said. There's nothing to discuss, but it's a little bit of a reinforcement. And it also contains some solid evangelistic content, because many of the people who are listening to these, who pick them up in restaurants, and other doctors' offices, and other places throughout the area, many of them are not believers.

And many of them have marriages that are in difficulty. So they may see this as a rescue opportunity for their relationship, and it can be that. And included in it is a clear understanding and presentation of the salvation that is available through Jesus Christ, which most people simply are not aware of.

So it has a two-fold purpose. That is one of strengthening marriages and equipping people to bring to the marriage relationship the things that will provide for the stability of it and the enjoyment of it. How many times, in fact, this is part of my mantra. Every time I conduct a wedding, and I've lost track of how many there have been over the last 50 years, but I manage to include this, I think, in every marriage ceremony, at least that's my intent, that marriage, marriage between a Christian man and a Christian woman, is designed by God to be as close as you will ever get while you're still here on this earth.

As close as you will ever get to heaven while you are still here on this earth. But I'll tell you this, just being Christian, husband and wife being Christian, does not mean you have a Christian marriage.

[10 : 51] So we explain what is involved and what is provided for us just by virtue of the fact that we are in Christ. No couple, both of whom are Christians, ought to be willing to settle for anything

less than an absolutely outstanding, fulfilling, wonderful marriage relationship.

You are entitled to that just by being in Christ. The potential is there, but often it is not realized. So what these CDs are designed to do is step by step go through all of the principles that are involved, and I'm not going to belabor them now.

But they are critical, they are scriptural, and if these things are understood and applied in a marriage, it doesn't get any better than that.

That is absolutely the ultimate. So it is provided for you just by virtue of being in Christ. And it is a takeoff on the idea that relationships are everything.

I can't emphasize that enough. God made us for relationships. You realize, before we ever were brought into the picture, before angels were ever created, God was involved in a relationship.

[12:19] The Father, the Son, and the Spirit of God comprise one God, three persons subsisting in one God, not three gods, one God.

No, we don't understand that because it is existence. Deity exists on a plane that is outside our sphere of comprehension. So we just can't get into that.

And when God talks about, the Bible talks about God and God having a son, doesn't mean he has a son the way we have sons, with a sexual interaction with another party that produces an offspring.

That's not deity at all. But that's what we think of because that's our frame of reference and that's all we know. But you must understand that God operates on a sphere that is totally removed from ours, not even close, because that which separates, what shall I say, that which separates one from infinity is what we're talking about.

And God is at the other side of that infinity and we are the one. So we try, and the scriptures, in so many ways, bring things that God has to reveal to us down to our level so we can grasp it and understand it.

[13:45] God cannot talk to us on his level. It would be like you trying to communicate with an ant. I think it would be a utility.

Do you know what you would have to do? You would have to have the ability to become an ant. What's the likelihood of that?

Not very good. But that's what it would take. And the principle is this. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself.

God became human flesh and came down to this earth as one of us and did for us what needed to be done that none of us could do.

That's what he did. It is the condescending God and it is all predicated upon his love for us because God is all about relationships.

[14:56] Father, Son, and Spirit have enjoyed a relationship on a plane that is totally beyond our ability to understand because it has been and is a perfect relationship.

There is no competition in the Godhead. There is no pecking order in the Godhead. They are equally eternally subservient one to another in a way that is just beyond our ability to understand. So, the principle of relationships begins with God's very own nature and being and for reasons that we still don't understand God decided to create.

All we know is what we're told in Revelation 4.11 that tells us that God is worthy to be praised to receive honor and glory and majesty dominion and power because thou hast created all things and for and by thy good pleasure they were and are created.

And that word pleasure, of course, is related to pleased and it simply means God was pleased to create angels. We don't know how many but a lot and then he was pleased to create humans but he only created two of those and yet he instilled within them the capacity to reproduce themselves.

[16:35] Why? Because of relationships. God is sold on relationships. Connections. Connections. I've often said it and it bears repetition and I trust that you'll never forget it God God was so sold on relationships and their value that he actually sent his son all the way from heaven to earth for the sole purpose of reestablishing a broken relationship.

Think of that. It's a connectedness that God is all about. We find our greatest satisfaction, our greatest joy, our most sublime experiences in somebody else.

God is all in this connection that we find a fulfillment and if that is lacking we are impoverished in many ways.

In connection with that God has established what I would call a principle of spiritual solitude in that marriage for instance is for most people but it's not for everybody.

There are different reasons that God has deigned not to include every single human being in a marriage relationship. some are blessed with a singularity.

[18 : 22] They may or may not consider it blessed but they stand before God with the same kind of status that those do who are married. So somebody who is single or never married really need not feel left out because God has ways of compensating for the absence of that mate in and of himself.

God is not shortchanged and neither does he allow any of his to be shortchanged. So singleness can be and is if approached the right way blessing in the same way that a marriage can be.

And God is the partner in the same way that he is the father to the orphan and he is the husband to the widow. So that's the way that works. But God has provided this wonderful thing called marriage because of relationships of a connection and of course it has to do as well with the practical aspect of perpetuating the species because built into the physical composition of maleness and femaleness originally was all of the genitalia and equipment that was needed to produce one like themselves.

and today we're talking about what? Six billion that's with a B people throughout this globe and that is in addition to the billions that have gone on before all as a result of these two individuals who started.

by the time you get to Genesis chapter six we find the original creation in a great deal of trouble. The Nephilim have pretty much taken over.

[20 : 16] These are referred to in Genesis six as the giants in the earth at that time. And God told Noah that he was going to wipe out civilization as it existed and start all over with him.

He gave him 120 years to build that ark. And as a result there were eight souls that were saved by water, saved from the flood and afterwards they began producing and reproducing and those who were immediate contributors to who we are and what we are today were Shem, Ham, and Japheth and we know that it was Shem that was selected to be the tribe that would produce the nation of Israel and eventually 12 tribes and that out of the 12 tribes one tribe would be the tribe of Judah and that would produce Yeshua, Jesus, the Messiah.

And what is he all about? He is all about relationships. relationships. God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life.

What good is everlasting life if you're not going to have it with somebody? It's all about relationships. If you put that foremost, it will serve you well.

and in a marriage relationship it is more about living for the mate than it is living for yourself.

[22 : 07] This is called a self-sacrificing kind of relationship and when you have that you are on the path to having a marriage on the rock.

when each partner in that marriage loses that automatically ingrained self-centeredness with which we are all born as a child of Adam when you lose that and learn to minister to the needs and cares of the mate guess what they do?

they do the same thing and reverse the direction to you and you have a husband who loves his wife sacrificially that means he puts her interests and her needs ahead of his own and not only does he put her needs and interests ahead of his own but he doesn't complain about it.

he enjoys it. He enjoys serving it. Now wait a minute. Well let's go to Ephesians 5. Ephesians chapter 5 something there that is often overlooked and by the way this is a passage that I'm sorry to say that the women's libs would just as soon cut out of the scriptures because they don't appreciate it but it's because they fail to overlook just one simple verse here and in Ephesians 5 where Paul gives the formula for a marriage on the rock it's a beautiful thing.

Well I'm just going to begin with verse 20 chapter 5 and verse 20 Paul says always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God even the Father and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.

[24 : 12] Now think about that. Later on in this same passage he's going to talk about wives being in subjection to their husbands and that's the part that really grates on some of the women's libs.

But here in this verse he's talking about a mutual kind of subjection. Do you know when a husband puts his wife first he is subjecting himself to her?

This is a two way street. It isn't just the wife who is submissive to her husband. There is a mutual submission here but there is also a necessary order and that involves headship and authority and let's read on.

Verse 22 wives be subject submissive to your own husbands as to the Lord.

Why? Why should she? Because the husband is the head of the wife as Christ also is the head of the church he himself being the savior of the body but as the church is subject to Christ so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything.

[25 : 34] Well there we've got the wife's responsibility. What about the husbands? Guys listen up this is for you. Husbands love your wives.

How are you supposed to do that? Well you do that as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her. when Jesus was on that cross whose interest was he putting first?

Certainly wasn't his. It was others. It was you. Me. That's the most stupendous thing about this cross thing.

thing. It's why Paul said I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.

What's he talking about? He's talking about the center piece of the universe. He's saying everything that is anything flows from this. This is the really big item.

[26 : 45] This is it. Do you realize that we have been involved and just as the United States we have been involved in what is called two world wars. And there were millions of people in those two wars that suffered and died as a result of the war from injury from bombing from starvation from all kinds of things.

Millions of people. But do you realize that the millions of people who have lost their lives in all of the conflicts of all of the wars all of them does not compare with that single solitary life that hung on that cross.

You get the perspective? Somebody right now is saying oh come on Marv that's quite a stretch. No it isn't. No it isn't. We're talking about God creator become flesh as one of us submitted himself to death the death of a cross the distinction the difference between well we talked about an ant before didn't we?

Let me ask you this how many ants does it take to equal the value of one human life? We're talking about the difference between a human and deity.

We're talking about the difference between a creature and the creator. Think of that. Put God in that perspective.

[28 : 36] he who was creator of all became as one of us. How did he do that? How did God the creator come to this earth be born as a human being to have a body capable of death and then three days later because his father was satisfied with the payment that he made raised him from the dead.

Do you realize what we're talking about? My oh my oh my and why did he do that? Just one reason because of relationships.

God became flesh and came to this earth for the sole purpose of reconnecting broken relationships. Think of it. And that's what gives us a gospel to preach. That's what gives us a John 3 16. That's what gives us an Ephesians 2 8 and 9.

That's our message. That's what this is all. Do you realize what life is all about? Is relationships.

That's why we are heart broken when one is severed and we have to send a loved one on and we stay behind and the pain is so exquisite you cannot explain it.

[30 : 28] That is the high price you pay for loving but it's worth it.

It's worth it. Some of you who've sent on a mate like I have like Marie has like Jane has you know that pain is indescribable when they leave you but if you had a marriage on the rock it was worth it. It was worth it. Those who love love the most pine the most when the loved one is gone and the reason we do is because relationship has been broken severed the pain is indescribable but it's worth it.

We have today kind of a social phenomenon that's taking place it's been underway now for a number of years and it's called marriage without living together without the benefit of marriage and as it just this is another thing that I've been wrong about I've been wrong about so many things that have happened in our culture I remember it's embarrassing I remember when it became a little bit more popular for young people well they weren't all young but most of them were young people wanted to live together but they didn't want to get married they didn't want to tie the knot and very often it was reduced to something like it's just a piece of paper you know marriage license just a piece of paper do you feel that way about the deed to your house it's just a piece of paper yeah well

of course not but you know when it first started happening

I said to myself in all of my mustard wisdom I don't ever go anywhere that won't fly well I was wrong again and it did catch on and it has swept the nation and not only here but it's gone abroad too where people it's just a piece of paper you know and besides you need you need to find if you're really you know if you're really meant for each other and the only way to do that is to give it a trial run so you you move in together and you live together as husband wife and you see how it's going to go and hey we can always get married if we want to you know later we can always do that but if we decide that this really isn't working we're not meant for each other then he goes his way she goes her way and they don't have to get a lawyer and they don't have to go to court and it's all so smooth and so simple and it also lessens the likelihood of even trying to work out problems to stay together because you can always bail out and if the going gets a little rough you can just so long and move on to somebody else and you know what that sounds pretty good that's a low risk relationship you can see how it's appealing and the more who do it the more legitimacy is ascribed to it and pretty soon nobody even balks at it nobody is even surprised and do you know this is one of the negatives that has taken a powerful toll on our nation and why do people do things like [35:10] I'll tell you one reason they do it is because very often the boy or the girl the man or the woman entering the relationship may be coming from a difficult upbringing where their mother and father fought like cats and dogs and there was no peace and no anything you know and they don't want to go through that and how do they know their relationship won't be like that so they've got bad memories of it and they don't want to lock themselves into anything and that's the rationale that is often given for it and frankly I can understand that because if you grew up as a child in a really dysfunctional family with a lot of pain a lot of rejection a lot of sorrow a lot of indifference and all the rest of it there is a legitimate fear that that's the way it's going to be when you get married so don't tie that knot don't make it permanent don't make it legal and if you decide that you're in a bad situation you can always bail out and I can understand their thinking about that but the remedy is for the marriage on the rock and there won't be any temptation for bailing out because in that union you've got fulfillment satisfaction enjoyment that is virtually indescribable that's what God has made available for every man and woman who is in Christ you just need to know the principles and be willing to apply them there are going to be people who get those CDs and they'll listen to maybe the first one or two and they'll decide hey this isn't going anywhere

I don't want to do this I don't want to get any because what we talk about is the essence of marriage is spiritual it isn't physical it's spiritual physical is important absolutely it's very important it's economics too it's social too it's all of those things but the essence of it is spiritual what does that mean you'd be surprised how many people think well that means you go to church every Sunday no it doesn't that's not what we're talking about when we say it is spiritual we mean there are spiritual realities truths principles that are to be put in place inculcated into that relationship and when the husband and the wife are both tracking on those principles man you've got a relationship that is out of sight it doesn't get any better than that that's what those CDs are all about and it's an opportunity for a kind of private at your convenience marriage seminar that you can take husband and wife can listen to at your convenience at your leisure at your own schedule whatever and it can make all the difference in the world in your relationship so that's what we're talking about when we say relationships are everything

United States of America is undergoing a crisis in marriage relationships and in the nuclear family right now it is being fractured and we need to understand no nation on earth can rise above the level of the quality of its marriages and if you are a nation with marriages in trouble the country is in trouble and that's where we are the solution spiritual and by that I mean the understanding and application of the principles and I want to just share this with you before I conclude because here is where the rubber meets the road when it comes to hearing and understanding these principles some are going to say whether the husband or the wife or maybe even both of them are going to say

I can't do that I can't do that but what they mean is I don't want to do that I don't want to do that it is not a question of ability it's a question of the will so in case some of you get those and hear these principles put forth you will have a little bit of background as to how they are laid out and what is involved I don't know how many there are back there is probably at least a dozen I know many of you have already heard them so but if you want to get them again and have a fine tune up that's fine I don't need to know who takes them and who's got them and who's listening to them doesn't

matter to me at all here's a little packet right here they're just six CDs and it is accompanied by an explanatory letter and the principles that are in it and as I've said these are available in a dozen different places free of charge for folks whose marriages have been radically revolutionized for the good and the beauty of it is these principles will work for anyone willing to apply them and it will provide a marriage on the rock which will be as close to heaven as you're going to get without being there father we're truly grateful for principles that you have provided we recognize how dear and valuable relationships are to you and the extreme length you went to solely for the purpose of repairing and nurturing relationships much about this like everything else that we don't understand but we do understand enough that you've provided to be willing to apply it and to benefit from it and that is our prayer for each and every one here today or listening by the internet or however they may come across the content thank you for having built in to the marriage union those principles that have your signature upon them because we know they guarantee all that you have promised we bless you for it in
[42 : 23] Christ name Amen man