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"JESUS ON MARITAL CONFLICT"
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MATTHEW 19: 3-12; JAMES 4:1-5 (NASB)

SERIES BIG IDEA: What Jesus taught about marriage radically redefines not only marriage, but how we handle everything connected to it.

I. JESUS ON MARRIAGE

1. Marriage is a covenant relationship dissolvable only by death.

INSIGHT: If you know divorce isn't optional, irreconcilable differences begin to look not so impossible.

2. Marriage isn't the ultimate life experience.

INSIGHT: If singles are full recipients of God's blessings, then marriage and sex are not essential to a happy life.

3. Marriage is to teach us to love like God loves us, which means marriage is all about learning to love another sinful person.

TRUTH: God's purpose in marriage is not just to make us happy in a companion, but to make us holy by teaching us to love like God loves.

II. UNDERSTANDING YOUR CONFLICT STYLE

Marriage conflict styles:

1. Peacemaker

INSIGHT: Peacemakers tend to sidestep issues that need to be dealt with.

FAULT: They work to keep the peace when what is needed is making peace.

2. Sulker

3. The Stuffer

4. The Litigator

TRUTH: To all you litigators... you're such a blessing to live with in an imperfect world.

TRUTH: Conflict is so emotional and complicated that winning an argument at home does not actually win in the relationship.

5. The Screamer

NEVERTHELESS TRUE: People who come from families who were screamers always marry people who didn't.

III. THE BIBLICAL PRINCIPLE OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

INSIGHT: Intense heated conflict usually involves idolatry.

TRUTH: When a conflict gets heated to the point that it leads to relational breakdown...normally idolatry is present (James 4:1).

QUESTION: How do you throw water on a raging relationship fire?

ANSWER: Acknowledge the anger and rage is in you because you feel deprived of something you're entitled to.

INSIGHT: The intensity comes from feeling that you aren't getting what you want in the relationship.

TRUTH: An idol is something that takes the place of God in your life. It controls you. You depend on it for happiness in life.

TRUTH: God may use marriage to fulfill some of our needs, BUT He is still the one in charge of meeting them.

QUESTION: Whom do I trust to meet the basic needs of my life: my spouse, my friend, or my Creator?

INSIGHT: The first step to deescalate any conflict is to acknowledge your sin and turn back to God.

CLOSING: Rapid fire directives:

1. Christ-like confrontation overlooks a lot (Prov. 19:11).
2. Christ-like confrontation is gentle (Gal. 6:1).
3. Christ-like confrontation listens twice as much as it talks (James 1:19).
4. Christ-like confrontation brims with hope in the Gospel.

TRUTH: What many need in their broken marriage is the power of hope.

INSIGHT: Hope comes from knowing that God has a plan for your marriage.

TRUTH: The Cross and the Resurrection are God's answer to irreconcilable differences!