



**Sermon Notes: "Beyond the Certificate"**

Matthew 5:31-32

2.2.25

**Big Idea:**

Kingdom Marriage flows from heart transformation, not religious performance.

**Historical Context:**

- School of Shammai (Conservative View)
- School of Hillel (Liberal View)
- **POINT:** Jesus moves beyond legal debate to restore God's original intent for marriage. (see *Matthew 19:4-6*)

**Understanding God's Heart in Divorce:**

- Sexual Unfaithfulness
- Abandonment by an Unbelieving Spouse
- Abuse

**Notable Takeaways:**

- Sinful human beings are able to twist God's good provisions to their own sinful ends.
- Jesus radically elevated marriage from a social contract to a divine covenant, protecting the dignity of both husband and wife.

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**So What?**

1. **Singleness / Those Considering Marriage:** Build Before You Buy
2. **Married Couples:** Tend the Garden Daily
3. **For Those Affected by Divorce:** Move from Broken to Beautiful

### **For Study, Reflection, Discussion:**

1. Review the sermon notes from Sunday. Was there a particular point that stuck with you? *What* was it and *why* did it resonate with you?
2. The sermon's big idea states "Kingdom Marriage flows from heart transformation, not religious performance." How have you seen the difference between these two approaches to marriage?

### **Read Matthew 5:31-32**

3. Jesus points back to God's original design for marriage in Genesis. How does viewing marriage as God's design rather than just a human institution change how we approach it?
4. The sermon discussed how people can twist God's provisions for their own ends. What are some ways you've seen this happen with marriage and divorce in our current culture?
5. Pastor mentioned that divorce was a "gracious gift of God to meet the pain and difficulty in our world filled with hard-heartedness." How does this perspective change your view of divorce while still maintaining the sanctity of marriage?
6. How can our church better support:
  - Singles preparing for marriage.
  - Couples strengthening their marriages.
  - Those healing from divorce.

### **Specific Action Step:**

***This week, evaluate your view of marriage and relationships. If you're:***

- **Single:** Write down three ways you can prepare for a potential future marriage **and/or** consider three ways your calling of singleness can be a blessing to God's Kingdom (see the examples of Jesus and Paul)
- **Married:** Choose one small daily action to intentionally strengthen your marriage
- **Divorced:** Take one step toward healing by sharing your story with a trusted friend or counselor
- **All:** Commit to praying for marriages in our church family

### **Don't Forget:**

- Superbowl Party February 9<sup>th</sup>!
- Valentines Babysitting Fundraiser: Feb. 14th
- Night of Prayer February 16<sup>th</sup> from 6 – 7:15.
- Be Praying for Disaster Relief Trip to Arden NC: March 23<sup>rd</sup> – 29th.

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### **Prayer:**

Father God,

Thank You for showing us that Your design for marriage is greater than our cultural understanding. Transform our hearts to see marriage as You intended - a sacred covenant reflecting Your faithfulness.

Give us wisdom to build strong foundations, grace to tend our relationships, and hope in times of brokenness. Help us be a church that holds to Your truth while extending Your grace.

Give us courage to live out Kingdom marriage in a culture that often settles for less than Your best. May our marriages and relationships bring glory to Your name.

In Jesus' name, Amen.