

**Series:** Before and After You Say "I Do"

**Message:** Why Marriage?

**Scripture:** Selected Scripture

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Because Marriage is God's idea.

Genesis 1:26-28; 2:18-25

Because Marriage points us to a bigger picture.

Ephesians 5:1, 15-16, 22-33

Because Marriage shows us the heart of the covenant.

Genesis 15:1-21

Hosea 2:14 (This is from The Message paraphrase)

*"And now, here's what I'm going to do: I'm going to start all over again. I'm taking her back out into the wilderness where we had our first date, and I'll court her. I'll give her bouquets of roses. I'll turn Heartbreak Valley into Acres of Hope. She'll respond like she did as a young girl, those days when she was fresh out of Egypt. "At that time" - this is God's Message still - "you'll address me, 'Dear husband!' Never again will you address me, 'My slave-master!'... And then I'll marry you for good - forever! I'll marry you true and proper, in love and tenderness. Yes, I'll marry you and neither leave you nor let you go. You'll know me, God, for who I really am..."*

Hosea 3:1

*Then God ordered me, "Start all over: Love your wife again, your wife who's in bed with her latest boyfriend, your cheating wife. Love her the way I, God, love the Israelite people, even as they flirt and party with every god that takes their fancy..."*

Hosea 6:4-6

*"What am I to do with you, Ephraim? What do I make of you, Judah? Your declarations of love last no longer than morning mist and predawn dew. That's why I use prophets to shake you to attention, why my words cut you to the quick: To wake you up to my judgment blazing like light. I'm after love that lasts, not more religion. I want you to know God, not go to more prayer meetings."*

The joining of a man and woman in matrimony is a supernatural event, founded upon a mutual exchange of holy vows. The saying of them requires about thirty seconds. But keeping them is the work of a lifetime. To keep a vow, however, does not mean to keep from breaking it. If that were the case, marriage vows would be broken the day they were made. This is where a vow differs from a mere promise or resolution. A resolution, once broken, must either be forgotten or made again. But a vow retains its power and validity irrespective of conduct. It is not like the signing of a legal contract and not like any other form of human promise. A person cannot promise to love another person; he can only vow to do so. A vow is, per se, a confession of inadequacy and an automatic calling upon the only adequacy there is, which is the mercy and power of God. To keep a vow, therefore, means not to keep from breaking it, but rather to devote the rest of one's life to discovering what the vow means, and to be willing to change and grow accordingly. So a married person is a kept person, kept in the profound protection of vows that have been taken before the Lord. This is not the protection of a lazy security and comfort; rather, it is the protection of an inexhaustible forgiveness" - *The Mystery of Marriage by Mike Mason*