A Higher View of Divorce

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Date: 10 May 2026

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[0:00] Okay, folks, well, it's lovely to see you today. How are we all doing? Okay. If you have a Bible, come with me to Matthew chapter 5. We've only got two verses this morning, 31 and 32, but so big was the topic, we felt it'd be great to devote a whole sermon just to these two verses.

So Matthew chapter 5, 31 and 32. You can use the Pew Bibles or you can scroll on your phone or hopefully you brought your own Bible as well this morning.
If you don't have a Bible, we've got plenty of those at the back. That's our gift to you. You can take it when you head this morning. But whatever we need to do to get God's word open in front of us, please let me encourage you to do it.
So we're going to read this in about 10 minutes time, but let me just try and get us into what's going on in these couple of verses. There was a song that I was singing in the kitchen recently.
And here's the chorus. See if you recognize it. I'm not going to attempt to sing it. Go easy on me, baby. I was still a child. Didn't get the chance to feel the world around me.
[1:07] I had no time to choose. What I choose, what I chose to do, so go easy on me. Anyone recognize the lyrics from Adele?

Yeah. So one of my favorite songs from that album, actually one of her best-selling albums of her career, really. But if you know the backstory to that song, it's her explaining to her son why she ended her marriage with his dad.
A marriage where she said in an interview with Vogue magazine that she was just going through the motions and she wasn't feeling it anymore. That was her precise line to this interview with Vogue magazine.
And I say it because Adele's story, in a sense I kind of feel sorry for her because she's had to kind of live that in the public eye. But her story is so illustrative of the massive shift that's happening right now in our culture.
And statistics would tell us this, about how our society views this whole concept of marriage and divorce. So let me try this on with you for size and see if it connects in terms of the generations.
[2:21] A generation above mine and a few above mine, not without their faults when it came to marriage, we'd have talked along the lines of the primary thing being all about faithfulness.

Skip to my generation and a few generations below mine, or one generation below mine. We are certainly not without our faults when we talk about marriage and divorce.
But we talk a lot more along the lines of fulfillment, don't we? It's kind of what people long for these days, fulfillment. Ours is an age of no-fault divorce.
If you remember that phrase that Chris Martin and Gwyneth Paltrow coined just a few years ago, what was their phrase to describe their divorce? It was a conscious uncoupling. So this is the air that we breathe today, living in Scotland in the year 2026.
Now here's the point. As you think about that trajectory, In our world today, when it comes to how marriage is viewed and looked upon, is the trajectory, is it higher or is it lower?
[3:32] I think it's lower, isn't it? It's lower. It's so important to think about that when it comes to what Jesus is going to tell us to do as his people in his word this morning.

I always love how John Stott, the late John Stott, described the church as it lives in culture. He always had this lovely phrase where he said, just remember it's a lot like fish.
It's only dead ones that go with the flow. And that's exactly what we're going to hear Jesus call all of us here today as one church family, as his people living in this city, regardless of what your relationship status is.
When it comes to God's wonderful intention for this one man, one woman, for life thing that we read about in the Bible called marriage, in a society that's going lower, Jesus is calling us to go higher.

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Now we've only got two verses today, which we're just going to read in a few moments time. We're going to get to grips with what Jesus is saying in its context about divorce.
[4:38] And then because this affects all of us, every single one of us in one way or another, I'm just going to try and apply this pastorally in three ways.

So hang on for that right at the end. But here's the thing I've been wrestling with all week. In fact, I've known this is coming up for about two months now. Here's what I've been wrestling with. Why not just skip it?
Or why not just couch it in amongst kind of four other commands and we'll kind of just give this five minutes and skip on. Can I just tell you two convictions that drive me why we don't skip this?
Number one is a conviction about the Bible.
That all of this, all of scripture is God breathed, right? We're a church that loves its 316s. We love John 316, for God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son, that whoever believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.
We're also a church that loves 2 Timothy 316, that all scripture is God breathed and is useful. And so that's why we go towards this. Every single verse in our Bibles is there because God wanted it to be there.
[5:42] And the second conviction is just an experiential one. Having done this gig now for, well, we've been at Brunsford this summer for 14 years. The amount of people that sat in these pews during that time.

But here's the conviction. It's an experience. Having walked with people these number of years, that God does the deepest work in our hearts when we go towards the hardest parts of his word.
I was thinking of my mom when we were young. She used to make us every morning as kids take cod liver oil tablets. Every single one of those three words is terrifying, isn't it?
Cod liver oil tablets. Four words. But here's the thing. It tasted disgusting. It was really hard. But it was so good for me.
And I pray, friends, that whatever's going on in your life today, this would be that in your life and in my life. Because just in case you're thinking of checking out at this point, notwithstanding the punch of this, and I won't hold this back, it's good news for us that Jesus speaks into this today.
[6:49] Really good news. And this could well be. It's not like we preach on this every week. This is why we go through the Bible. These things come up. This could be just the light into your darkness that you need this morning.

Here's the question I want you to have in your mind as we journey through this today. We're going to come back to it right at the end. Why does Jesus care so much? Will we read it together?
It's on the screen. Here we go. It has been said, Remember this is Jesus talking, Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce.
But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife except for sexual immorality makes her the victim of adultery. And anyone who marries a divorced woman commits adultery.
Let me pray. Lord, we pray that you would just be with us this morning. Lord, I'm so aware of my inadequacy. Lord, I pray that your spirit, where all of our hope is, your spirit would take your words and implant it and apply it deep into our lives.
[7:54] May we leave here with a bigger view and love for Jesus, we pray in his name. Amen. So we're in the Sermon on the Mount. Let's get, we run up to this in the Sermon on the Mount. Remember, Jesus is speaking primarily to his disciples about what life inside the kingdom of God looks like.

Remember, this is not an ethical lecture. This is what the spirit of God does in a human heart when the king moves in. This is what life inside the kingdom looks like. And in this sermon, he's doing two things.
This is really important for where we're going. Number one, he's challenging the Pharisees and the teachers of the law who are in the background. Who are sticklers for keeping the letter of the law, but totally missing the heart of the law.
And two, Jesus is bringing out the true meaning of the law. Now, this is how I've, as a journey with this Sermon on the Mount, we kind of plan these things six months in advance.
This is kind of where my thinking has got to. What is Jesus doing here? You know, my favorite news story from a couple of years ago. Do you remember this one? Yeah? Is it, I can't pronounce this, Eke Mono?

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[9:01] Was that the painting that was in a really bad way? And this 80-year-old woman, I wrote her name down, Cecilia Jimenez. She volunteered to try and restore it. And she came up with a picture on the right. Remember this?

Well, this is kind of what is going on with the Sermon on the Mount. You can imagine people around in Jesus' day. They're looking to the teachers of the law and asking this question.
Can you help us see the beauty of the law? Can you help us understand the true meaning of the law so that we can try and live in light of it as we worship the God whose word and instruction this is?
Can you help us? And the Pharisees are holding up a completely distorted view of the law. And Jesus, if you like, in the Sermon on the Mount has come to restore and show us the original.
Right? This is what's kind of going on here. And that's what Jesus is doing at verse 31. Have a look at it there. Jesus is quoting them, quoting Moses in Deuteronomy 24.
[10:10] Do you see it? He's quoting them, quoting Moses in Deuteronomy 24. Now, it's going to go on the screen in a minute, so don't worry too much about turning there. But this is what you read when you turn there.

Just read it to us, right? If a man marries a woman who becomes displeasing to him, we'll come back to this in a minute, because he finds something indecent about her and he writes her a certificate of divorce, gives it to her and sends her from his house.
And if after she leaves his house, she becomes the wife of another man. And her second husband dislikes her and writes her a certificate of divorce, gives it to her and sends her from his house. Or if he dies, then the first husband who divorced her is not allowed to marry her again after she has been defiled.
That would be detestable in the eyes of the Lord. Now, work with me here. According to Jesus, the Pharisees' interpretation of that law is miles off it.
Firstly, because they're failing to teach that divorce is only a thing because of the hardness of the human heart. God gave these measures to his people as a damage limitation exercise, not an excuse for change.
[11:30] Park that thought, we'll come back to it. But secondly, because they've ripped that quote massively out of context. So do you see the certificate of divorce language there?

This is where they've got it from. It was there to do two things. Firstly, it was there to stop the man initiating a really hasty divorce. You can understand that one.
But two, this is what you might not have thought about. It is there to protect the woman. Now, remember, Jesus is walking and talking not in a 21st century context.
He's walking and talking in a 1st century culture. One where so often a woman would be completely dependent on a man for her livelihood.
So just remember that. So this law was actually in place to stop the scenario whereby a man divorced his wife, sent her away, and then at a later date decides to try and get her back and treat her a bit like property.
[12:37] So the certificate of divorce, if you can appreciate this, what this is doing is it's bringing a sense of closure to this whole thing. Do you see it?

Bringing that sense of closure. Everybody knows where we stand. But in Jesus' day, this certificate of divorce divorce is being treated a bit like a monopoly get-out-of-jail-free card for any unhappy husband to play, and he's got rid of his wife.
So see that? This is how this works. Okay, I was a lawyer. I totally remember how this works. This works when you had a contract. You would define your terms before you got into the contract, right? You can talk to me about that afterwards if you want.
This is how the game plays. These guys are doing the same thing. See that word displeasing. The Pharisees and the teachers of the law had taken it, and they'd gone concertina on it, right?
What they'd done is they'd taken it and just totally broadened it out. So they were making it broad. In fact, they were making it so broad that even if, to give you an example, a wife burnt the cooking one evening, that fell within the scope of displeasing.
[13:50] No joke. So the Pharisees and the teachers of the law weren't honoring the Lord at all as they taught this. All they were doing, in fact, was facilitating an easy divorce culture and leading people straight into sin.

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So do you see how our generation, our culture, is not the only one to have a pretty low view of marriage. It's exactly the same one here. You with me? So that's precisely what Jesus is challenging if we go back to Matthew at verse 32.
What is he saying here? I think he's saying two things. The first big thing is that whilst divorce isn't always necessary, now hear my words here, okay?
It isn't always necessary. And reconciliation is always something that we're encouraged to pursue. There are sadly, regrettably occasions when it is permissible.
And specifically here he mentions sexual immorality. We're just going to define that as having sex with someone when you're married to someone else as being one of those things.
[15:10] And it's worth saying that that's not all the Bible has to say about valid grounds for divorce. I think you could add, and you can talk to me about this afterwards if you want, come back this evening.

There'll be more space to talk and pray about this kind of stuff. Desertion and abuse. And hear me say that when it is valid divorce, then remarriage is valid too.
And if you're thinking, I'd love to think a bit more about that. There's a QR code, or you can just Google it, a Kevin DeYoung article in the Gospel Coalition called Divorce and Remarriage. One of the best things I've read on it.
We'll take you 20 minutes to read it. I think it's really, really helpful for teasing this out. We don't have the time this morning, but that article is top-notch. But here's the thing.
When it comes to divorce, according to Jesus, that list is not long. It's not long. And it's a serious and a hugely traumatic thing for everyone involved when it happens.
[16:17] Here's the second big thing I think Jesus is saying there. Don't mistake the provision that God makes for a sinful world with God being okay with the sin.

Say that again. Don't mistake the provision that God makes for a sinful world with God being okay with the sin. They are quick to promote the issuing of certificate of divorces, flying around like confetti.
But Jesus is saying to them, bear in mind that at the end of the day is just a bit of paper. And just because a man has issued one doesn't necessarily end the marriage in the sight of an all-seeing, won't be mocked, cares deeply about how we treat one another, holy God.
Because remember that livelihood culture? Come back with me there. The livelihood culture. When a woman is divorced, she is almost, as it were, forced into the arms of another man for her livelihood.
And in the scenario where her previous divorce from her husband wasn't legit, not only is she led straight into committing adultery, but the man that she goes to is also led into committing adultery.
[17:38] And see this whole sin and shame and guilt and remorse and hurt cycle, it just balloons. It's like a vortex. It just continues to bring in people and the mess gets deeper and more complicated.

But see, when you think about that, who is the one who suffers the most emotionally, spiritually, maybe even physically in this whole rinse and repeat project that the Pharisees and the teachers of the law are promoting?
Who suffers the most? It's the woman. Isn't it? Who has all the cards here? It's not her in this context.
If you know your Bibles, fly a kite here and see if it connects. Friends, could it be, if you know your Bibles, could it be that that is something of the life story of the Samaritan woman that Jesus encounters in John chapter 4?
Because we read about her and we automatically assume because we've grown up with Sex and the City and Friends and all those sitcoms, we automatically assume because we view her through 21st century lenses that when Jesus says, you have had five husbands and the man that you're now with is not your husband, we assume, if you like, she's played away five times.
[19:09] Yeah? Now, John doesn't tell us in the text, so don't hear me wrong. We can't be sure of her backstory. And no doubt, listen, she'll have made tons of mistakes in her life.

But there is, with this in mind, the distinct possibility that she's been issued with a certificate of divorce by an unhappy husband who's found her displeasing five times.
And the man that she's now with wants nothing to do with the marriage thing because there's such a stigma around her. And we don't have time to see the fact that she's had five husbands, there's a

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man on the scene, five plus one, that makes Jesus the seventh man on the scene, the perfect man. I'd love to go there, but we just don't have time. But here's the thing. What does Jesus say to her? He says, I've come for you. What does he say to her?
Samaria's lowest outcast. He says, I've come to offer you living water. And dear friend, if that is you today, if you think you have no idea the darkness of the situation that I am in, know that we have a God and a Savior who specializes in bringing light into the darkest and the most horrific of situations.
[20:30] But see, when you zoom out a little, do you see what's going on in this context? When it comes to divorce, the Pharisees, what game are they playing?

Again, I was a lawyer. Know how this works. Your job is to what? Find loopholes. That's the game they're playing with the certificate of divorce stuff. They're just trying to find loopholes.
And in so doing, they're leading people towards not a higher view of it, but a lower view of marriage. But Jesus comes on the scene and he wants to talk about the sanctity of marriage.
And he's calling his people not to swallow a lower view of it, but to hold his hand, trust him, run to him for healing and adopt a higher view of it.
And so here's what I want to do in the time we have remaining. In a room this size, and I recognize there's a ton of people watching this online and there are people who are not here this morning who will also be affected by this.
[21:33] In a room of this size, we're in different seasons of our lives and this will land in all sorts of different places in our lives. Can I just try and apply this pastorally?

Because I wonder if one of these three phrases as you encounter this this morning comes to your mind. Just praying for you all this week, praying for all of us this week, and these are just the three things that I felt God lay on my heart.
Here's number one. And number one is a lot longer than two of the three, so just bear with me. Okay, here's number one. Maybe you're thinking this. I'm right in the thick of it.
Speaking to those of us, let me just play this out. Speaking to those of us who are married, some of us will be here. I know some of you have just got married, right? Some of us will be here and we would describe ourselves as being happily married.
And if that's you, friend, I want you to see that you give God all the praise for that. All the praise for his kindness and goodness. It's why we started our service by singing about the goodness of God.
[22:42] Okay, we give him all the praise for that. And let me encourage you to keep investing in the health of your marriage. Some of you are really early years and you need to put the foundations in your marriage at this stage because you will reap the benefit down the line.

If you are happily married, praise God for that. And yet for others of us, you might hear me talk about this this morning and you think to yourself, I'm not happily married.
I'm actually unhappily married. And even maybe you're slowly beginning to entertain the thought, maybe, just maybe, change is exactly what I need.
Maybe your thoughts have begun to wonder. Maybe there's someone at the office who you're beginning to look upon in a different light. Can I just say as your pastor, deep breath, gently yet clearly, kill it.
kill it. Because if you don't kill it, it will kill you. Do not let discontentment be the torpedo in your marriage.
[23:56] Kill it. The devil is the absolute master of the bait and switch. Promises you everything and will take from you everything.

He is the master of whispering into our hearts that red flags are in fact harmless bunting. And friend, if you are there today, can I plead with you?
Kill it. Kill it. It is not harmless, it is serious in the eyes of a holy God.
discontentment. And maybe this morning you need to wake up to two things about discontentment. One is a good thing. Okay? Maybe you need to know in your discontentment that this is just a season of your life.
Don't let it question whether you're in the right marriage. Maybe it's just a season of your life. Listen, I have been there, a really busy season at work, a run of night shifts, middle of exam season.
[25:02] Maybe you're looking after family members that's taking its toll on you. Maybe you're looking after young children and you cannot get baby brain out of your head. Can I just say to you, if you're in that period of life, it will pass.

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Do not let it cause you to doubt whether you're in the right marriage or not. Come up for air. It's okay to struggle in these seasons, but it will pass.
But maybe that discontentment, here's the second thing, you need to think about perhaps the things that are feeding that sense of discontentment.
Friends, have an honest thing to yourself. What programs are you watching? What books are you reading? Whose pictures are you looking at on social media and think, actually, I deserve a bit of that.
Why am I not having the Kodak moments? Why are we not going to Disneyland with the kids and getting the selfies? Why is my experience of this different to the one I'm seeing in social media? We know social media enough to know that it's one side of the story.
[26:07] You pop the bonnet of those pictures and it would tell a very different thing. Don't be duped into that. Think about the things that are feeding your discontentment and distracting you from Christ. All those are just petri dishes that are the perfect breeding ground for the bacteria of discontentment to grow.

So maybe think about that today. What is feeding that sense of discontentment? Maybe today you need to take the action of just turning back to the Lord and turning back to your spouse.
Maybe going away for the weekend is exactly the thing that you need to do. However, that said, all of that, if you hear me and you think to yourself, it's more than that, can I encourage you to talk about it?
I always love what C.S. Lewis said about friendship, and I think this is great. Friendship is born at the moment when one person says to another, what, you two? I thought I was the only one.
If that's you here today, can I encourage you to seek out another person? Just be honest with them. We're here to help, not to judge, not to comment, we're here to listen, I don't know what a good friend does.
[27:31] Maybe even seek out another couple in this church who you can be really honest with. So there's words here for you if you're married, there are also words here for you if you're not married.

Can I just say don't buy the lie that somehow getting married is going to solve all your problems. speaking as one who is happily married, love being married, but let's be honest, I'm punching well above my weight.
Do you know, I remember when I got married just discovering a whole host of different problems in my life that I didn't even know were there. 90% were all about me and my stubborn heart. Don't think that marriage is going to solve all your problems, but I want you to appreciate that you've got such a stake in the married people in this church, their marriage is continuing to flourish.
Could you offer to babysit one night? There's so many people here that babysit for us to let us go out. It's gold for us. Could you offer to babysit for somebody? How can you go up to someone today who is married and ask them how you can pray for them?
Those of us who are married, can I just say this is not an excuse as important as family time is? This is not an excuse just to close our doors. Can I encourage us who have been blessed with families open our doors, let people in because we are one church family here today regardless of our relationship status.
[28:58] Maybe that's exactly where you are. I'm right in the thick of it. Can I just say God in his mercy has words for you here. Here's the other two and these are much quicker. Maybe you're thinking to yourself right now, I've been really hurt by it.

maybe you've watched this happen to someone you know from afar. Maybe this has happened to you and your family. Maybe this has even happened to you personally.
And I'm so deeply sorry that that has been your experience. Know that God has not missed any of it.
He knows every tear, he sees every prayer, nothing has escaped his gaze. But can I encourage you to speak up this morning, particularly if you're struggling silently and particularly if that issue is abuse.
Make no mistake that we want our church culture to be a safe place for sinners, but we don't want it to be a safe place for sin. If that is you, you need to speak up.
[30:11] Again, seek someone out, find a friend, but particularly if that is abuse, come and speak to the elders. But the other person I thought of in my mind this week is maybe you've given up on the whole thing because you've been so hurt by it.

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You've given up on the whole thing. It's not for me. I'm not doing it. I want to pick another option. My prayer for you this week has been, you know, we've had a humble brag here.
I took down a tree this week in our garden. I remember getting up the next morning and looking out and seeing the sun shining on this area of our garden where it never shone before.
And where the bits of our garden where I'm thinking in my head thinking they've just never seen light. And my prayer for you in your darkest moments is that you would see the light shining into that problem.
And I want you to hang on for two minutes to see why this means so much to Jesus. because as we gaze at him we've got to see that he is one who specializes in going towards people.
[31:16] He's the one who specializes in grace, new tomorrows and in healing. You know when Alex and I have had a really rough day as parents we sit in bed at night. Often she's lifting me off the floor or I'm lifting her off the floor.

And we always say this thing to each other. Tomorrow is a new day. Got it wrong as a parent. Tomorrow is a new day. His mercies are fresh to us. But here's the third phrase.
Maybe you're thinking to yourself, I'm not in the thick of it. I'm not hugely hurt by it. But you know what? I've made a real mess of it. And I don't know friends, maybe you have.
Maybe you know that you have. Can I just say that Jesus is wooing you here towards repentance? And maybe this slices two ways. Number one, maybe you have never acted on it.
Maybe you've never fessed up. The challenge here from Jesus is for you to think about what are some of the really hard conversations that you maybe need to have?
[32:19] What do you need to hold your hands up for and say I've massively got it wrong? Who do you need to seek out for forgiveness and being able to start a conversation? What is it that you maybe this morning are being called to turn and first and foremost before the Lord?

Confess. But here's the other angle on this slice. Maybe you think actually the last place I feel like I can go is to God.
Maybe shame is the thing that is keeping you from running to the cross of Jesus for forgiveness. You think I've messed it up so bad. You have no idea. I've messed it up so bad.
Surely this time I've gone too far. And friends I beg of you to look at Jesus on the cross and see that you cannot out sin the cross.
And if you think you can Jesus would say try me. Run there for forgiveness. Run there for restoration. Run there for redemption. You cannot out sin the cross.
[33:27] Are you doing okay? Right. Coming into land. Just as I close. And if you've lost me over the last 20 minutes this has been too hard.

I want you to come back in for the last two minutes. Okay. Just as we close 17 years ago I was an usher at a friend's wedding in Vancouver, Canada.
Check that out. A place called Thetis Island. I was one of its best men. To this day the most stunning wedding backdrop I have ever seen. The weather was everything you'd expect.
Everyone was looking fabulous. Canadians were dazzled by the fact that we were in kilts. And there wasn't a dry eye in the house as the couple made their vows to one another. But the pastor stood up to speak and he started with this line.
He said Dave and Amanda as you set out on your married life today I want you to know at the start that there are two things wrong with this marriage. And he pointed to them both and he went you and you.
[34:32] And we all had a laugh because he kind of killed the Disney-esque moment that we were in. But he did it out of a pastoral love for those two. As if to say here is what your married life will be like.

Don't let this decorated doorway of a day lull you into thinking that married life is going to be this constant stream of bliss and happiness. Slow dancing in the kitchen to Michael Buble.
Roses arriving every day from Interflora. Valentine's Day becoming the new groundhog day. Don't buy it. But here's what he also went on to say. Do you know the only way this is going to work and flourish?
Is if you keep remembering what this is pointing you to. And here's where we end. Back to that question at the top. Why does Jesus care so much?
And the reason he cares so much is because marriage is baked into the very purposes of God. In Genesis 1 and Genesis 2 God creates Adam and Eve and his intention is for them to become one

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flesh.
[35:48] We've got to see in the Bible story that is before Genesis 3. You can do the maths. Right? Before Genesis 3. So it is baked into God's good design for creation.

Why has he done it? The answer the Apostle Paul gives in Ephesians 5 is that so that in the generations to come we would understand why Jesus came.
That we'd understand why he went to the cross. We'd understand why he shed his blood. We'd understand where all history is going. Now listen, in the church I think over the last 10 years we've made much of the fact that Jesus was a single man.
And that is absolutely right. And I think that he is the stone in the shoe to the sexual revolution that's going on today that says you have to find someone to be contented. You have to find someone to do life with.
And Jesus says no. God, that is what life is all about. We've rightly made much of that. But on the other side, it is also absolutely true to say that Jesus is a deeply, holy, fully betrothed man.
[37:06] and the apple of his eye is his blood-bought church. And we fail and we stumble and it feels at times like we barely put one step ahead of another in this journey of faith.

We're barely keeping going. It feels like each day is harder. than the rest. And of course, it's true in the Bible story that his people have given him every single reason for God to issue us the certificate of divorce.
And yet Christ goes to that cross to win his bride. And if your faith is in him today, he goes to the cross for you. We are unfaithful, but he is faithful.
And one day soon, he will come for his bride. And do you know what? Our groom is going nowhere. What do I pray?
And let's just be quiet before the Lord. And friends, just bring your own prayers and your thoughts before him this morning, wherever this has fallen on you. the Samaritan woman said to him, you're a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman.
[38:34] How can you ask me for a drink? For Jews do not associate with Samaritans. Jesus answered her, if you knew the gift of God, and who is it that asks you for a drink?

You would have asked him and he would have given you living water. And so Lord, I just thank you for Jesus. Father, thank you that whatever is going on in our lives today, all maybe the hurt or the regrets or maybe the worries or the people that are on our minds right now, we bring them to you. Thank you that nothing takes you by surprise. And thank you in Jesus, we have one who comes to us, offering us grace and truth.
So may we leave here today not with a sense of our guilt, but with a lifting our eyes to the greatness of his grace. So Father, be with us as we finish our time this morning.
Would you be in our conversations afterwards? Lord, would you help us to respond in ways this morning that glorify you and are for our good? And we pray all of these things in Jesus' name.
[39:57] Amen. Amen. Amen.

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