

Jesus Redefines (Matthew 18:21-19:12)

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[0 : 00] So Matthew chapter 18 verse 21. Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me?

Up to seven times? Jesus answered, I tell you, not seven times, but 77 times. Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants.

As he began the settlement, a man who owed him 10,000 bags of gold was brought to him. Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt.

At this, the servant fell on his knees before him. Be patient with me, he begged, and I will pay back everything. The servant's master took pity on him, cancelled the debt, and let him go.

But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him 100 silver coins. He grabbed him and began, choke him. Pay back what you owe me, he demanded.

[1 : 13] His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, Be patient with me, and I will pay it back. But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt.

When the other servants saw what had happened, they were outraged and went and told their master everything that had happened. Then the master called the servant in. You wicked servant, he said.

I cancelled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you? In anger, his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured until he should pay back all he owed.

This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart. Matthew 19 When Jesus had finished saying these things, he left Galilee and went into the region of Judea to the other side of Jordan.

Large crowds followed him and he healed them there. Some Pharisees came to him to test him.

They asked, Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any and every reason?

[2 : 25] Haven't you read, he replied, that at the beginning the Creator made them male and female and said, For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.

So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate. Why then, they asked, did Moses command that a man give his wife a certificate of divorce and send her away?

Jesus replied, Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But it was not this way from the beginning. I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another woman, commits adultery.

The disciples said to him, If this is the situation between a husband and wife, it is better not to marry. Jesus replied, Not everyone can accept this word, but only those to whom it has been given.

For there are eunuchs who were born that way, and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by others. And there are those who choose to live like eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven.

[3 : 42] The one who can accept this should accept it. And that is the word of God. Thank you, Venus. Please keep that passage open in your Bibles.

And we're going to hear what God has to say to us. Those of you who I haven't met or had a good conversation with yet, my name is William. Thank you for joining us here or on live stream.

Lovely to have you here. And lovely as well just to be back home. I was preaching this morning at Salvation Church where Sharon grew up. So always a great reminder when we visit other churches

to remember that this is not an unusual thing.

This is a wonderful thing to gather together as God's word. To hear from God's word. So why don't we pray as we hear from this part of God's word.

As we sung, Lord, we thank you because you are the servant king. As we sung, Lord, we thank you because we'll never know how much it cost for our sin to be nailed on that cross.

[4 : 48] Lord, you've forgiven us. And so as forgiven people, help us to hear from your word. See how you redefine what it means to forgive others. To embrace the married or single life.

We ask all these things in Jesus' precious name. Amen. Before just chatting with some people, hearing lots of buzz about Taytay, Taylor Swift, and people who have enjoyed watching her live. Look, she has redefined music, right? Lots of world number one records broken because of her current tour. Let me share with you, I finally joined the bandwagon on another musical adventure. It's called the, who's heard this musical before? Hamilton. For you? Yeah, okay. Half the church, man. Okay. I'm a bit late to the party, alright?

Hamilton was released in 2016. I finally watched it last year and I was hooked. Now, it is a musical with adults, about adults. So kids, do ask your parents first before watching it.

[5 : 56] But it is a very unique premise, right? Because what Lin-Manuel Miranda, the composer, has done, he's turned this like 800-page biography of one of America's founding fathers.

So if you like American history, great, but if you don't, listen to this three-hour version instead of Alexander Hamilton's life. This isn't the sound of music, right?

But because this is like, there was rap duels, there's jokes about immigrants, there's feel-good songs about not throwing away my shot. And it's all packed inside a very compact three hours.

And all different genres and styles. Look, Hamilton actually, I think, a lot of people agree now, it's redefined what a hit Broadway musical can be, right? And in my opinion, actually, though, the most powerful moment in this musical comes in Act 3.

So no big spoilers, but it's in the midst of a very sad scene. Hamilton's devoted wife, Eliza, has just been publicly humiliated by her husband cheating on her.

[7 : 00] But in the space of ten minutes and four key changes, she goes from, like, I'm going to burn everything, to forgiving Alexander Hamilton, her husband.

And it's an unimaginable decision, right? As people are watching on, the choruses are singing and narrating what happens to them. In this song, it's Quiet Uptown. They sing, Forgiveness, can you imagine?

Forgiveness, can you imagine? What makes forgiveness Broadway worthy, and yet almost impossible to imagine in our day-to-day lives?

That's my question for you. What makes forgiveness something that sounds so Christ-like, right?

Sounds like such a wonderful virtue, and yet, day by day, we find it hard to live it out.

Even here. Even here as a church. Look, there's no rap battle, there's no catchy chorus in our Bible passage, but this is powerful.

[8 : 04] More powerful than Alexander Hamilton's songs. All right? This is a three-part encounter, what we've just heard, with a spiritual melody that flows from the heart of God Himself.

A God who defines Himself as good and forgiving. Psalm 86, verse 5. This is the melody of today's passage, so I'll just say it, and then we'll talk through why.

Okay? The melody today of our passage is that Jesus, the servant king, redefines forgiveness, marriage, and singleness through the gospel. I'll say it again.

You can say it with me. In Matthew, this passage, Jesus, the servant king, redefines forgiveness, marriage, and singleness through the gospel.

All right? So keep that in mind. If you forget, if you fall asleep, this is the big idea. This is the melody of our passage, our song today. So I'm going to go through it in three parts, right?

[9 : 00] So in our section, he redefines three things. Firstly, the servant king redefines forgiveness for us. Jesus, the servant king, redefines forgiveness.

We've heard already that true greatness is marked by childlike humility. We heard that last week. Radical righteousness and a delight in rescuing the lost. And you remember last week, there was this discussion about a brother who sins against us.

What do you do? You go to that person one on one, right? You gain that family member back. You don't just leave that argument unresolved. You do it step by step.

That's a redefinition of true greatness, isn't it? To be willing to reconcile. And then, what happens straight off the bat of that is that, verse 21, have a look again, there's a question.

Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times? Look at verse 21 again and think.

[10:02] Put yourself in Peter's shoes for a moment. Peter has been patiently processing Jesus' teaching from last week, right? We heard it all on true greatness. And Peter's realizing this kingdom life, being humble, showing grace and forgiveness, it's gonna be hard.

After all, we are sinners. We constantly hurt each other. Every day is a new opportunity to mess up in our relationship, to miscommunicate, to do something that needs to be fixed.

And so, we are people who need to constantly offer and receive forgiveness. And so, I think Peter, in verse 21 here, he's speaking for all of us when he asks Jesus, right, surely we need to set a limit on this kind of forgiveness.

He suggests an upper limit of seven. The Jewish leaders of the time actually taught three times as the max you can forgive someone for an offense. So, clearly, Peter's being nice.

He's being, you know, over double, right, the standard. But look at verse 22 and you'll see once again, Jesus is here to reimagine, redefine everything, including forgiveness.

[11:13] What does he say? Verse 22, I tell you not seven times, but 77 times. To argue, as some scholars do, whether Jesus meant 77 or 70 times 70 or how good his maths is, is not the point, right, you're missing the point if we go that road.

The phrase, not seven, but 77, should ring a bell if you are a Jewish listener who knows your Bible, who have even memorized the earliest book of the Bibles, including the story of Lamech.

Who knows the story of Lamech? Very obscure. It happens in Genesis chapter 4, right, and it's just a passing moment. He's a proud ancestor, all right, all the way from our first parents, and he boasts of taking revenge on a man who hurt him.

What does he do? Oh, you hurt me, I'll kill you. And then he justifies it by saying, I quote, if Cain is avenged seven times, then Lamech 77 times.

In other words, bang, that's all the 77 times you hurt me, I've got your back. Slam, right, that's for the 652 times you left the toilet seat up.

[12:30] A glare, oh, that's just for the hundreds time that you made fun of me or you bullied me at home, at work, wherever. What's the kind of heart that keeps track of hurts that often?

It's the unforgiving heart. It's the Lamech heart. If it's ridiculous for Lamech to do it when we see it in Scripture, how much more of us today says Jesus. Do you see?

As one author put it, if you're still counting, you're not forgiving. Rather, to illustrate what true forgiveness looks like, Jesus goes on to tell the story, right?

And some of you are illustrating it right now, it's wonderful. the story of the king and his servant. It's a startling story, but you want to pay attention again to how unimaginable it is.

So Venus is, I've read for us, I don't know what translation that was, but there's bags of gold involved, right? But how many bags of gold? 10,000, right?

[13:36] Who has 10,000 bags of gold, right? This is actually an unimaginable amount. This is a huge debt. The first debt the servant owed the king, in today's currency, the original translation is talons, which is like the highest value in ancient times.

In today's currency, 10,000 talons would have been 650 billion New Zealand dollars. So that's how much the servant owed the king. We're meant to laugh and go, this is ridiculous.

We're meant to go, oh my goodness, are you seriously saying, verse 26, servant, you'll pay it off? I'll pay it off. Please be patient, right? After pay will not save you with a debt like this, all right?

And then, look down to the next verse, right? What does the other servant owe this first servant in verse 28? A hundred denarii, okay, or bags of silver coins.

Today's currency, apparently, it's a couple of dollars. Nothing in comparison to that first debt. If the first debt could never be repaid, the second debt could have easily been overlooked, right?

[14:45] When you go shout someone coffee or when you go out for dinner later on and someone owes you ten bucks, right, and they've owed you ten bucks for a couple of years, you don't just grab them and take them to the police station, do you?

This freshly forgiven servant, though, has not got it. In fact, his fellow servant is using the same words he used to the king, right? Please, be patient with me, he cries out.

And yet, rather than showing the same mercy as his king and master, he throws his mate into jail until he gets ten bucks back. And so, the master overhears the story, no surprise, he's going to expose the hypocrisy, the wickedness of his heart.

How could you be so cruel and selfless towards others, he says here. After I showed you such lavish grace, and with that, he throws him into prison and Jesus, verse 35, ends with these very chilling words, right?

This is how my heavenly father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart. The meaning of this story is not hard to decipher.

[15:56] I'm sure you've already got it. God is the king in this story. We are all the first servant. We owe our maker and king an uncountable debt, right?

We're meant to offer him our highest love, our fullest dependence and obedience, and yet, we have not given this to him. This is an infinite debt. And yet, in his mercy, he has forgiven our debt.

He's wiped our slate clean. That's what true forgiveness is. And so, for the Christian, what should Christian forgiveness look like? This parable lays out four key parts of true forgiveness.

See if you can recognize these steps from the story. Step one, you name the offense. You tell the truth. Right? Look at verse 24. He brought the man to him. He told him the truth.

You owe this much. Right? You bring someone to you or you go to someone. Hey, this hurt. You did this to me. Step two, the king takes pity.

[17:02] Right? That's a crucial step. When you seek forgiveness and restoration, we're not fighting each other anymore. We're saying, oh, I pity you. I feel for you. That was hard.

I see where you did, why you did what you did. That compassion, right? That's not an offender that you need to wipe out or take revenge on or kick to the curb. It's a fellow human with their own struggles.

That's step two. Take pity. Tell the truth. Take pity. Step three, what happens next? In the story, he cancels the debt. Forgiveness is not free for everyone.

When you forgive someone for crashing your car, you absorb the cost, don't you? Right? You need to drive a broken car or you need to go get it fixed at the panel reader. To cancel the debt is to willingly bear the costs of that person who wronged you.

That's true forgiveness. It's a voluntary suffering as Tim Keller puts it. And then finally, step four of forgiveness, true forgiveness, is to let the person go.

[18:06] Restored in their relationship. To forget. To forgive is to then finally say, okay, I absorbed that cost. Let's go and let's keep going as brother and sister, husband and wife, parent, daughter, parent, son, whatever the relationship.

That is biblical forgiveness. That the world does not know. That the world cannot imitate because it comes from God who has forgiven us. So can I encourage you?

Regularly tell the truth about the hurt that others have given you. But take pity on their own struggles. Cancel all thought of what they owe you and let go and move on with a renewed relationship.

Could we practice that, do you think? Sounds so simple, but we fail to do this all the time. I know I do. Right? Instead of confronting someone and telling the truth, we hide, we bury our hurts or we whisper about it to someone else.

When instead of wishing someone's good and having pity on them, we wish evil. We wish that they would disappear or they'd be destroyed. Instead of absorbing the loss, we seek vengeance.

[19:23] We say, I only forgive you if you clean the floor the next ten times or something like that. You know, it's so silly, but we do it. And instead of aiming to let people go with restored relationships, we hold on to the hurt and we keep looking at them with the evil eyes, with the hurt heart.

So ask yourselves, does your spouse or do your parents, do your children, do your colleagues, do people around you, do they see you as gracious, merciful and forgiving?

If not, this parable, Jesus' word says, you are the first servant. I am the first servant. If you and I, we profess to be Christian and we still hold grudges, we still keep score, we still ghost people, then you and I would block the power of the gospel from transforming our whole life.

It may even reveal that we may not even know the gospel in the first place. An unforgiving life that stays angry at someone that lives as if they still owe you an effect.

Look, this person got thrown in prison, but we imprison ourselves, don't we, with unforgiving hearts? But thankfully, our Lord Jesus, He redefines forgiveness for us, doesn't He?

[20 : 45] Through the gospel. Because Jesus Himself is the servant king who forgives, is He not? Think about His life. Even as He hung on that cross, bearing the sins of the world, dying at the hands of wicked men, what did He pray?

He prayed, Father, forgive them, for they don't know what they do. Here is our example. Who doesn't keep score? He doesn't jump out of the tomb and go chase down the people who hurt Him? Freely forgiven, then, we can freely forgive. The servant king redefines forgiveness through the gospel. I hope that helps you redefine forgiveness for yourself, for those in your life, for those that you may need to talk to.

Next, let's move on. Let's look at how the servant king redefines marriage. We've got to turn to chapter 19 here. And you'll notice, right, that Jesus stops talking.

He changes location. He begins His trek down to Jerusalem. We'll speak more on this in the weeks to come, but this is an important moment. He's going to His final destination at the cross.

[21 : 56] He's bringing more glimpses, though, on the way of a new kingdom. Right? He keeps healing. He keeps showing compassion. These are amazing insights, glimpses into a world where people are fully and finally healed.

But then the Pharisees, we love them, they come to test Jesus again, right? Listen to verse 3, Matthew 19, verse 3. They ask this question, is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any and every reason?

It's a kind of weasel word question that you ask when you're trying to really just bend and break the rules? This question comes from a culture, right?

This Jewish culture and tradition that had actually turned a practice of divorce that Moses tolerated and limited in the Old Testament, Deuteronomy 24. They've turned it, though, in this day and age, into an enormously abusive practice, especially to women.

Anything that was wrong, they could cut you loose. Would you like that kind of relationship? I wouldn't. Of course, we read the Pharisees' blindness here with the passage before on forgiveness, right?

[23 : 10] These are all connected. There's no accident why they're one after the other. A culture that does not know true forgiveness can only descend into absurd, unmerciful rule-keeping and breaking.

If only the Pharisees had actually taught and lived out the Lord's desire for them to do justly, love mercy, to walk humbly with their God, they wouldn't need to come up with random rules and enact all these silly rules to seek divorce for the smallest hurts.

That wouldn't be the way to solve problems. And this is actually not so different to our day and age, either, is it? There's lots of talk about defining marriage.

But we need to see our country's approach to marriage. One, right, today it's legal between any two people, male or female. And two, breakable for any kind of reason, really.

All kinds. We need to see our culture's definition of marriage for what it is. A tragedy. It's just as broken, though, as the approach Jesus confronts here in the first century.

[24 : 19] This is not a new challenge. And so actually, Jesus, we need to listen closely because just as He redefines marriage for us today, sorry, for then, He's redefining marriage for us today as well.

So we want to pay attention. How does Jesus redefine marriage here in this passage? What does He do? He goes beyond and above these human standards, right?

Did you see what He said? Haven't you read at the beginning, where does He go? Back to the very first pages of the Bible. The second chapter of the Bible, in fact.

He goes back to Genesis 2, verse 24. We looked at this passage a couple of years ago, but this is where our first parents, you remember, they leave and cleave together.

That is the first pattern of marriage. True marriage. One husband, one wife, one flesh, one life. This is true marriage.

[25 : 19] Marriage is not an idea that the world ultimately gets to define because it comes here at the start of creation. It's a gift from God. It's designed by God for everyone.

And so for this reason, we celebrate it and respect it as God defines. For this reason, we enter romantic relationships with marriage in mind, not just hormones or urges.

For this reason, we save sexual expression for the covenant, the promise of marriage after we've made our vows. For this reason, actually, we ask for advice from others around us before joining a marriage, considering it.

We seek counsel. We treat the decision reverently. Marriage is not something to try before you buy. It's actually designed by God to unite one woman to one man for one lifetime.

That's Jesus' definition. And so that is why Jesus answers the Pharisees by telling them, verse 6, what God has joined together, let no one separate. These are strong words from Jesus, not me, from Jesus.

[26 : 32] And look, there's a few of us here who are married, and most of us have parents and grandparents around who are. our view of marriage is no doubt being shaped by the families we were growing up in, by the married people we have in our lives.

But again, just like forgiveness, we want to take our definition of marriage from the Lord Jesus. He is the one who truly defines marriage himself.

And actually, he defines it with his own life, with the gospel, with the good news of what he did for us sinners. The apostle Paul captures this truth so beautifully.

Let me read to you from the letter to the Ephesians. This is chapter 5 of Ephesians, and I'll start from verse 25 where it says, Husbands, love your wives just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.

Right? And actually, Paul, later on in this passage, just like Jesus quotes Genesis chapter 2, 24. And then he says, this is a profound mystery, right, what happened in Genesis.

[27 : 41] And he says, yet I'm talking about Christ and the church. Can you see church? While the Pharisees are nitpicking over how easy it should be to end marriages, Jesus is going to die and lay down his life like a husband should lay down his life for his wife.

PCBC, every faithful marriage that we live out for the Lord helps to point people to the greatest lover of all time, the ultimate bridegroom who has laid down his life for the bride that he loves, the church.

That is the greatest definition of marriage. It is the one that the Bible gives us. And so it has consequences. And Jesus spells it out in his reply to the Pharisees.

He says, anything that tears this message of Christ's love for his church apart, it's wrong. Right?

Every rash and frivolous divorce, it reveals a hardness of heart.

It might end up leading man and woman down the path of persistent sin of adultery because it discolors, it ruins God's original image for marriage.

[28 : 54] And look, Jesus makes exceptions, of course, even here in verse 9. He's not a harsh and cruel master. He's compassionate. There are situations, adultery or marital unfaithfulness, those could be cases where divorce is sad but perhaps necessary.

Divorce may be needed when a Christian is abandoned by their unbelieving spouse. Sounds hard to believe but in older times, it could just be that a husband just walks out, right, and leaves their wife behind or kids and all kids.

And so in that case, separation may be necessary, right, to remarry, right? The separation may be necessary as well if there is abuse in a marriage relationship that has to be protected or guarded against.

And yet even so, I think Jesus' heartbeat is that divorce is the last resort, not the first cab off the rank. And for those of you who are married, those of you who pray for people who are married, the key to avoiding this path, right, is going to come from what we've already seen.

The key to a true definition of marriage is to be practicing true forgiveness. It's essential for every marriage to survive. forgiveness.

[30 : 20] Forgiveness. Can you imagine? Right? A husband strays from his wife but they repent and reconcile. Only the gospel has that kind of power. And it may not ever happen.

It may not be the right thing to happen but if it does happen, it's the gospel that had power in that situation. Only the truth that Jesus laid down his life for me and I can lay down my life for my spouse for better or worse.

Only that kind of gospel forgiveness can shape us in our gospel marriages. That's how the servant king redefines forgiveness and marriage but last and definitely not least, our passage also touches on how Jesus, the servant king, redefines singleness.

Singleness. When we talk about singleness, actually we had a whole sermon on it last year so I do want to encourage you if you've forgotten or you want to listen in again, do tune in to that sermon again.

It's a wonderful passage in 1 Corinthians 7 on how the Lord redeems and honors our single stage of life. And yet, we'll switch back to the main point, I've deliberately included this point, Jesus redefines singleness.

[31 : 39] Why? Because this is where half of us are at, isn't it? Here at PCBC. And I think singleness is what Jesus has in mind he's referring to as he talks about being eunuchs because of the kingdom of heaven here in verse 12, right?

And Jesus replied, not everyone can accept this word but only those whom it's given and then he talks about how there are different kinds of eunuchs. Now a eunuch, this is a kid-friendly definition, is someone who is unmarried and unable, made unable to have kids.

Actually, Philip met a literal real-life eunuch on the road to Gaza in Acts chapter 8, if you remember. But here, I think Jesus is using this idea of not being able to have kids, right, not being able to be married as a metaphor.

As a metaphor. And while the disciples are puzzling over how hard his view of marriage is, you know, oh, that sounds hard, it's better not to be married, right? Like the parable of unforgiveness, this is a very honest passage, isn't it?

It's honest with some of our struggles. Not all of us are eunuchs or single for the same reason.

Right? What does it say here? Some are eunuchs because they were born that way. Some of us are single because of same-sex attraction, perhaps, or gender dysphoria.

[33 : 06] Some of us may never have marriage as an option on the table because of how we were born. I think of friends like Christopher Yuan. He spoke to us in PCBC English once.

Authors like Rosaria Butterfield, Vaughan Roberts, who came earlier. These are such brave people. And my friend as well, I'll call him B. These are all amazing people who faithfully serve Jesus.

Right? They don't listen to the world's definition and just say, I'm born this way. But they think deep and they go, I'm born for his way, his truth, his life in my life.

And so for these people, eunuchs born that way. Single, not on their own choice. We should welcome them. We shouldn't make fun of them. We shouldn't call them stupid names.

We shouldn't define them by their attractions or feelings. They are image bearers of God, just like you and me, and worth welcoming here home.

[34 : 08] What else does it say? Jesus says, others were made that way by people. Sometimes marriage will never be an option in your life because of past trauma or violence.

I'm sorry if it brings up something for you. I don't mean it. Let me think of perhaps the stories of some of the sisters in the Philippine Survivor Network. They're a group, they're so wonderful, they are trying to advocate against the exploitation of children in the Philippines.

They themselves have suffered horrific abuse as children. They are thankfully discovering forgiveness and mercy through Jesus, and yet because of these experiences, these horrific experiences that have happened to them, some of them may never be able to touch someone, be married to someone in this life.

How can we help them? How can we help people like these in our lives? we can pray for them, we can stand for them, we can stand against all the objectionable material that has tripped and hurt them directly.

These eunuchs, others were made that way by men. And then finally, what does Jesus say? Others have renounced marriage, or made themselves unique, as the literal translation, because of the kingdom of heaven.

[35 : 33] And let me say this because it's hard to hear this in a Chinese or Asian type church where all your aunts and uncles want you to get married. Sometimes marriage is good, but then remaining single for God's kingdom is better.

Let me say that again. Sometimes marriage is good, but remaining single actually is better. Lottie Moon, American missionary, she rejected a marriage proposal so she could single-mindedly serve and love the unreached people of China.

John Stott, he wrote books, he taught the word faithfully, he never married, and he has single-mindedly served until his death churches and pastors around the world.

What should we do? We should honor and support these brothers and sisters among us who choose this road. They're not easy decisions to make, and they choose it day by day sometimes. We should stop seeing them as leftovers in God's family. We should celebrate them as they are single-minded for the Lord. And here's the secret.

[36 : 46] Just as forgiveness and marriage are connected together in our passage, we need to see that through the gospel, marriage and singleness are like two sides of the same gospel coin.

Sam Albury puts it this way, if marriage shows the shape of the gospel, singleness shows the sufficiency of the gospel. I'll say that again. If we see the shape of the gospel through marriage, we see how Jesus is enough, sufficient, through singleness.

Because who is redefining singleness here in Matthew 19? Who is teaching us these things?

What's your name, man? His name is Jesus. Jesus. And Jesus was never married.

And he lived a perfect life without ever being married. So you can too. He found intimacy and closeness in the family of God. So, can I say, you can too.

And he redefined greatness, forgiveness, everything. How? As a single man. What did he do at the cross? What did he do the night before?

[37 : 55] He went down on one knee in the garden and he proposed to his father, did he not? Take the cup away from me. Yet not my will but yours be done. And he did it.

He died for sinners. A single man, he single-mindedly died for you and me and he loved us this much. All that life-changing love. All that life-changing love you are clinging on for, you are longing for, perhaps in a happily ever after, God has already given you in Christ.

In his kingdom, everyone who belongs to him by faith is already engaged, already looking forward to a wedding feast, looking forward to a day when, as the church, we walk up the aisle, we see our groom and his beauty and while we wait for that day, we wait with bitter, sweet hope.

Yes. And whatever reason you are single, brother, sister, Jesus knows it. He knows it's a difficult gift to receive, verse 11.

He knows, too, that actually marriage is difficult, too. just as he knows that forgiveness is difficult as well. But can I encourage you to remember, the more we know and love how Jesus has redefined everything, forgiveness, marriage, singleness, everything, the clearer we will hear the melody of heaven's kingdom in our lives, in our relationships, here at PCBC.

[39 : 31] and the better we will display the beauty of Christ to our broken world. Genuine forgiveness, faithful marriages, satisfied singles.

Can you imagine? Let's pray. Father, for these words we are so grateful.

So help us as we move on in response to remember you as our servant king, truly forgiving and truly blessed. We thank you.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.