

Worship Transition and prayer – Pentacost (Weekend/Sunday) – John 14: 16-18 says ...

16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— **17** the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept Him. because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be^[a] in you. **18** I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.

The passage is speaking of the Holy Spirit which is celebrated 50 days after Easter. Jesus promised in the scriptures that when He left this earth another would come – the Holy Spirit to not just dwell among us but within us. It's been said, that at Bethlehem God was with us. At Calvary God was for us, at Pentacost, God is in us because it is then, His Holy Spirit dwell and empower us to walk upright in Him. So this day and always let us celebrate and remember well. Amen

Home Front. False Expectations: Our Story, His Glory

Aloha! Well, we continue through our Home Front series – a series where we are not just making a declarations, but taking back ground from the enemy, not just for our homes but for entire communities and not just for this day, but for generations. Last week, Pastor Theresa said we are in a battle. Yes, we are. We have a choice to make. Are we going to stand ground and fight for what God has set forth, or are we going to rollover and hand everything over to the enemy? That's right we are going to fight.

Throughout this series, we've set forth pillars for our ohana (families) to thrive in this crazy world. These pillars of prayer, honor, mission, love, and purity – meant not just to help us survive as Christ followers but to flourish. So today, on this Pentacost (weekend/Sunday) I think it is fitting we discuss Marriage expectations. Before we get into this, I want to say three things.

First, we could do months and months of discussion on today's topic. We do, in the context of HOPE class. So, it might be something to consider if you want to go deeper on this topic. Second, this topic of false expectations in marriage is critical. It is what the enemy uses to tear apart families, and not just to steal hope of the now but of the future, and the generations. Third, while our discussion is in the context of marriage, know that this message is not just for those who are married and those wanting to be married but for every Christ follower. And you'll see why and how as we continue this discussion.

The story of marriage is one of the oldest and most enduring narratives in human history, deeply rooted in culture, religion, and human connection. It's both a social institution and a personal journey, reflecting the evolving values of society and the timeless human desire for love, partnership, and family.

Today's message is entitled The Story of Marriage False Expectations.

So, I thought it might be fun to do a quick quiz. Testing our knowledge of marriage and relationships as it is based on tradition, what folks know, Disney, etc.

TRUE or FALSE

- **Marriage is just a status (False)**

- Marriage is a universal picture/reflection of God's Love. Eh, what you mean by universal. Meaning it applies not just to married folks but to everyone.
- **Ephesians 5:32** says marriage reflects *Christ and the Church*—that's relevant to *everyone* because all believers are part of the Church.
- The principles in a marriage (sacrificial love, faithfulness, grace) apply to all relationships—family, friendship, and church life.

Even if you're not married, you are called to live out covenant love—serving others, forgiving, and staying committed like Christ.

- TRUE or FALSE – **Marriage is a contract between two people (FALSE)**

Historically, marriage was often more about alliance, inheritance, and social stability than romance. It was a contract, often arranged, and reflected the priorities of families or communities. But even then, the idea of loyalty, shared duty, and companionship was present.

From a spiritual perspective, marriage is more than a legal contract—it is a covenant. Unlike a contract, which is conditional and can be broken when terms aren't met, a covenant is a binding promise rooted in love, faith, and commitment. It's about giving oneself completely to another, with God at the center.

- TRUE or FALSE – **Marriage is God's Divine Design (TRUE)**

Genesis 2:18–24

18 The Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."

19 Now the Lord God had formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds in the sky. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. **20** So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds in the sky and all the wild animals.

But for Adam^[a] no suitable helper was found. **21** So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs^[a] and then closed up the place with flesh. **22** Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib^[a] he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

23 The man said,

"This is now bone of my bones
and flesh of my flesh;
she shall be called 'woman,'
for she was taken out of man."

24 That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife,
and they become one flesh.

- God initiated marriage; it wasn't man's idea.
- Marriage is designed for *companionship* ("It is not good for man to be alone").
- Unity: "*They shall become one flesh*" – emotionally, physically, spiritually.

Marriage isn't just about finding the right person; it's about becoming the right partner in God's design.

How'd you do with the quiz? Did you get them all correct?

So with that, we will focus the balance of our time on the false expectations part. What do we mean by false expectations?

- Where do they come from? In every relationship we have expectations. Friends have certain expectations of each other. We have expectations of our coworkers, family, pastors, etc. These expectations are not necessarily bad, or are they? We all have Hopes, Dreams, and wants and place it on a person and... they do the same. The problem is that it's MY HOPES, MY DREAMS, MY WANTS come from things I have experienced or seen. But we have to remember there is someone else - Our spouse or potential spouse ...

There are things I've experienced that my spouse hasn't – and that means our expectations may differ. I may have lofty professional or financial aspirations while my spouse may be thinking as long as we can not worry about any of that. I may be thinking one child who may play basketball, while he may be thinking he wants an entire basketball team.

Sometimes it's trust, it's how we are catered to or cater to our spouse, sometimes financial, sometimes goals ... Whatever it is, it is usually based on who we are, what we've come through and what we've seen. Things we don't like that happened to us, we will try to avoid or change. Things we love we want to keep or replicate.

This is what happened in my case. I absolutely loved the idea of the Prince on a Stallion coming to rescue me. Liking everything I liked, being the hero 24/7 to rescue me, help me feel better about my day, my situation, myself. Doing all the things that make me happy. So, my job was to educate my spouse with all the things that make me happy. Are we seeing this? I was like a spoiled child wanting my way and wanting to change him to what I want. I should have married ... myself.

So, when my expectations were not met, I chose the next best thing, right? I left. I quit. I bolted. Rather than learning to work through it, I, blew it. What was supposed to be blessed, became blasted. What was suppose to bring glory became gory.

Anybody ever experience signing up for something thinking it was going to be one way but finding it another way and saying, “this is not what I signed up for?” Lol! One college course I took was called interpretive reading. I thought easy. We take apart stories like Grimm Fairy Tales, look for deeper meanings and such. What we used to say, “easy A?” Never in my wildest dreams did I think I would need to interpret through acting those parts I was assigned to read. WHAT? Do they know I am Asian? Seriously, me. I wanted to bolt but it was one of the required courses I hung in to find it one of the best and deepest classes I ever took.

At the end of the day, our hopes, dreams, and wants become expectations, we create a “make me happy list” that we silently expect our spouse or future spouse to fulfill. But they were never meant to carry that weight. Further, expectations create a debt/debtor situation. Sort of a “You owe me because I love you? That’s an entitlement issue. Remember: Love is not conditional. It should be, “I get to love you because God brought you and His grace allows me to love and care for you.”

Through God’s grace I had a chance to experience marriage once again. We are now going on our 28 years. Granted I might be older and prayerfully more matured. It was through this marriage I began to understand more about where those expectations came from. And not holding Guy to them. Realizing that I cannot change anyone but to keep in prayer and allow God to transform me is key. Is it perfect? Nope. Is it better? Yes, because our marriage is not based on our expectations but with God at the center, He writes the story.

You may have come into marriage—or the hope of it—with expectations, too. Maybe you imagined constant connection, deep intimacy, shared dreams, or spiritual partnership. Or maybe you expected that finding the right person would fix your loneliness or your past. And now, maybe you’ve experienced disappointment, confusion, or even heartbreak. Maybe you're not married but you're wondering why God hasn’t brought someone yet—or why love seems so complicated.

Here’s the truth: we all carry stories, hopes, and fears into relationships. But when our expectations don’t align with God’s design, we set ourselves up for struggle.

Here’s a couple of things to consider ...

- **Are you willing to surrender your Hopes, Dreams, and wants?** Are we able to surrender our expectations?

- **Begin again with the end in mind.** When we first fall in love is anyone thinking the end in mind. Have you fast forwarded what this might look like in 10, 20, 50 years. Eternity. What are you seeking? What is your spouse or potential spouse seeking? For yourself, for each other? For your legacy?

- Matthew 16:24-26 says it like this ...
24 Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. **25** For whoever wants to save their life^[a] will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it. **26** What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul?"

WE are first disciples of Christ before we are husband and wife. We are first in covenant with God before we are in covenant with Him and our spouse.

- While we were never promised a flawless spouse or an easy marriage. It's possible. However, if that doesn't happen, God gave us a blueprint for something far better: *covenant*. In Scripture, marriage is a reflection of Christ's love for the Church—a love that is patient, sacrificial, and faithful even when it's not returned. God's idea of love is not based on performance but on promise. That promise leads to trust.

Hosea and Gomer story

The Bible speaks of Hosea, a prophet, who was called by God to marry Gomer, a woman who would be unfaithful to him. Their story reflects God's unwavering faithfulness even when His people were unfaithful. Just as His people were then, we continue to be now. Self-focused seeking our Hopes, dreams and wants. We come with our expectations to Him. But rather than push us away, or forsake us, like Hosea He paid the price for our slavery, and restored us. He doesn't shame us—He reshapes us. He trades our illusions for truth, our pain for purpose, our pride for humility. He meets us in the mess and makes it holy. And as we walk it out ... Our Story is no longer gory but our story is now for His glory. Our story for His glory. God makes us a promise in

- *Isaiah 54:10* – "Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken nor my covenant of peace be removed," says the Lord, who has compassion on you."

Imagine if we as church ohana began to get real and honest about the pressures and myths we've absorbed about marriage—and we were to create space for grace, for Truth, and no judgement. In community and support of each other under Christ. Imagine if we all understood marriage isn't a promise of perfection, but a reflection of God's covenant with us. If we all understood this great love given that calls us to lay down our expectations and take up the cross, love with grace, endure with hope, and reflect Christ in the midst of our mess not just for our story but for His glory. Take a look at this ...

NO GREATER LOVE

Thank you, Brekke's

CLOSING PRAYER:

Call for those who would like to place God first in their relationships / those who would like to enter into a relationship with Christ

Heavenly Father,

Thank You for being a covenant-keeping God, faithful even when we fall short. Today, we surrender “my hopes, my dreams, my wants” and take up yours knowing that Your way is better. Lord, help us to begin with Your ending in mind. Bring new freedom from every experience from the past that we would try to stumble us as we abide in Your high call to the office of husband, to the office of wife, and to be Your child.

Teach us to love like You love—patiently, sacrificially, and with grace. Heal the wounds we've caused or received. Strengthen marriages that feel weary, prepare hearts still waiting, and restore what feels broken.

Help us to reflect Your glory, not just in our good moments, but in our growth, our forgiveness, and our faithfulness. May our stories—imperfect as they are—point to the beauty of Your redeeming love and give you glory.

In Jesus' name we pray,

Amen.

CLOSING STATEMENT:

May we become a people who surrender our expectations, embrace God's covenant love, and reflect His glory—not just in marriage, but in every relationship. Because our story, when surrendered, becomes a testimony—for His glory. Have a wonderful week!

Declaration Slide: *False Expectations: Our Story, God's Glory*

We declare today:

- ◆ Our hope is not in perfection but in God's faithfulness.
- ◆ Our love will be shaped by grace, not by unrealistic expectations.
- ◆ Our story—no matter how messy—can reflect God's glory.
- ◆ Our relationships will be built on covenant, not convenience.

Group discussion / Partner share:

- What does it mean to begin with the end in mind? Discuss what that means to you.
- How would remembering that make a difference in your relationship? How you respond in different scenarios? Honoring your spouse/others? Respecting your spouse/others? Communication with your spouse/others? Valuing your spouse/others?
- What false expectations have you believed (about your spouse, marriage, or singleness)?

- How have those shaped your relationships or faith?
- Where do you see God calling you to grow in grace, forgiveness, and commitment?
- Consider covenant and contract. What is the difference? What do parties agree to in a covenant versus a contract?
- How does marriage reflect God's covenant with His people? How does it affect you? Your words? Your actions?
- How might your personal story—imperfect as it is—bring God glory?