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Exodus 22 versus 16 through 17.

These are God's words. If a man entices a virgin who is not betrothed and lies with her, He shall surely pay the bride price for her to be his wife. If her father utterly refuses to give her to him, He shall pay money. According to the bride price, a virgins.

Amen. The sins. This reading of God's inspired and inherent word. Please be seated.

There is a joy of romance that comes with betrothal and we may be need to start with what is betrothal since That is something that is not often practiced. Well the marriage covenant binds a man and a woman together by an act of God who created marriage. And before this binding happens that the wedding day when the marriage, covenant covenanting occurs, It is good that the man and the woman in advance.

Bind each bind himself or herself to bind themselves together in marriage. And so there's a commitment to the marrying ahead of when the marrying happens. It's a very serious commitment. It's not marriage itself. The marriage bed does not properly belong to that time, but it is serious enough that you remember, when Joseph was betrothed to Mary and did not actually marry Mary and, you know, the name and the English verb are confusing us here before he had married Mary In order to break off the betrothal.

It was a form of divorce to put her away quietly as the gospel says. But betrothal is is a very happy time. When the two have made the commitment that the The wedding is happening. It's a time of preparation. And one of the things that is prepared is the heart because with the marriage covenant is going to come the marriage bed.

And as in all things, The Lord wants us to obey Him delightedly and from the heart. And so that as a time of the husband to be and the wife to be to start practicing romancing and being romance, the stirring up of affections and the reciprocation of affections, the desire for that day to come.

And the marriage bed, which is honored to be not just, not just to occur, but to be honored, and delighted in from the heart. Now That is a good biblical wisdom for what to do when you've been betrothed. But sometimes and it feels in our current broader culture and current church culture almost like a.

It's a terrible understatement to say, sometimes a man tries to draw the affections and desires of a woman or sadly, even in our culture. A boy who is not anything yet? Like a man trying to draw the affections of a girl and even worse in our culture, the way that we think.

And the reading that we ingest and the media that we ingest has filled, not just the houses of those who do not know God. But even of those who do with little girls who are longing to be romanced in that way to have heart bound up. In one other individual to say he is mine and I am his and his banner over me as love of an earthly.

Man, that is really something that she should only ever feel or would hope that she would only ever feel and enjoy with her husband. That's what's going on in verse 16. This word that is translated, entices means to allure or persuade and in the context that we have here the alluring and persuading is a romancing.

It is The expression of and convincing of that heart connection. That that is so connected with the marriage bet that you want in your marriages. Or if you're not married in your future marriages or if you have no future marriage at least in all the marriages of your brothers and sisters of the church.

That connection that you want to have between the marriage heart and the marriage bed, to put it, a little crossly and maybe imprecisely these two are in. Love The woman is a willing participant. We know that because Deuteronomy 22 tells us what happens if she's not that if this is forced, t is to be executed.

So this is not a way to, by power obtain for yourself, the life that you wanted, which we'll see. And when we get to verse 17 is not a good plan. Anyway, even for the enticing man. As opposed to the forcing man The woman in this case is a willing participant.

And is important here that we know that she's a virgin who is not betrothed, because if she were betrothed or he were betrayed, this would be adultery. And then, even if she's a willing participant, they both are to be executed. Also covered in the same context, in Deuteronomy chapter 22.

And so, the first danger here is not the danger of the loss that comes in the second half of verse 16 and the rest of, and all of verse 17. The first danger here is a danger of sin of trying to have something that belongs only to marriage outside of marriage.

One of one of the young people just asked me this afternoon and I thought, oh, they must have done the Hopewell at home or have looked ahead at the. No, it was just God's providence. Something they were thinking about and they wanted to know what's the line of for this romancing?

And it's kind of like what's the line for the Lord's day. That's not where we start. We start with what God has designed and it's and it's goodness. And we exercise wisdom in order not to in order to fulfill what the good that God has commanded. Now, we know where the line line is, and it's the marriage bed And all of the physical interaction.

That that belongs to that, But a good rule of thumb. Assuming you have godly mother and father or at least those who are setting something of a godly example for you. Is that the kind of interaction or thinking about another man that your mom would not want to have for anyone?

But your dad the kind of thinking about or interaction looks way of speaking closeness to a woman, another woman that your dad would not want to have with anyone other than your mom. That, that you wouldn't want. You wouldn't desire that with a particular individual until you had committed to covenant if we can put it that way until it was time for the stirring up of those things because you want to have that in place in your heart for the day, that it comes.

Now that's very That is applicational advice and wisdom based on the danger here in the enticing It does not as if every time your affections are drawn out to someone. You are immediately danger the next moment of of violating the marriage bet. But you understand that you are soul and a body and your heart works in a particular way, and the Lord could have given us in the text.

The Bible is a very economical book And so he says in very short compass, what he says he could have. Just says, If a man lies with a virgin who is not betrothed and the stipulations in Deuteronomy. If we were to go that to that passage would actually get us to the point of understanding that she was willing.

But the language of enticing here is a reminder, even within the case law that before, there is the risk of committing a crime. There's the risk of sinning against God. There is the risk of that which comes from the heart. And we've we've already seen by some of the penalties that that the Lord desires his society.

Yes, to punish crime, not sin. Because you can't see sin and if we punished all sin, then we would all just be punished all the time, but He gives them a way of punishing with all of the parts of his law. That that discourages us from sinning, that hinders us from sinning that warns us, makes it appear to us to be risky on earth because we forget that we are before the face of heaven.

And so just as we have seen that in the entire moral law, the heart is the heart of the matter. So in this particular case law there is an implied caution to the garden of the heart and then the risk therefore that that comes with this. Romancing is not just the risk that will give out our heart in, in a way that we are designed to give to one and not many.

But there's actual there's significant risk. If the romance goes from the heart, to the violation of the marriage bit, The first is they lose all other options for marriage. This is something that We are not well prepared by our culture to consider a risk. We have not just a broader outside culture, but even a church culture in which the young men and the young women in the older men and the older women are accustomed to giving out their hearts over and over again of identifying themselves with one another.

And these exclusive almost one person and maybe we can compare sad notes with some of the people closer to my age. But in the youth group, I grew up and they wouldn't just say that they were together or that they were boyfriend or girlfriend, sometimes they would jokingly put their names together.

You, I was going to say Jennifer and Christopher. That wasn't that wouldn't work because they have the same last syllable. But Yeah, Susie and Peter, and they would call the couple pizza and it would suppose to be so cute. It just realized there's a Peter. So I'm glad we don't have a Susie up But but we live in a culture where that pairing often that coupling and that I'm with him and he's with me and the giving out of the heart like that.

And then there's the breakup and we haven't put the labels at the Bible puts on everything, but the heart knows, what just happened. We've gotten divorced and as devastating, you feel like you were one with that person and the fracturing of that feels like a death of that period in your life when you were joined to them and we do it over and over again.

Well, hopefully not you but we must guard. We must guard the heart and value having our options open and not having them closed by, romancing, or hormones, or whatever. For, for the man who was alluring this virgin and they laid together. They had just lost the option of marrying.

Anyone else in this world, If they were going to be married, now this had to be the one And that of course in verse 17 is dependent on her father permitting it. But if the father permits it then he may pay the bride price for her to be his wife.

And there's no more considering what kind of man from what kind of family and our are our interests and values aligned. And what would our futures be like together and the ability to get good counsel from both sets of parents and from the people who know you? And and to think through these things before we, we fall into chemistry with one another and end up committed, you know, while the rational funk part of your brain is not yet, overloaded hasn't been Napalmed by emotional desire for one another, it's good to do the choosing and evaluating when your brain is functioning.

And if you don't have a very well-functioning brain because you're under the age of 25 for guys, and I forget what it is for girls 21 or something, maybe a little younger. I don't remember. I just read the books and took the audited. The classes. I didn't do her degree but it's physiologically.

True men. Women that our brains are not even fully developed, let alone able to withstand the chemical onslaught of falling in love. And so you want your options open and you want help from others. You don't want the choice to be made for you, by something you did in folly and violation of God's law.

But for this couple, if they end up that way, that's how their choice got made. Isn't it Now enter the Father and you Fathers and you boys who are going to be fathers I hope you are. Utterly disinclined to let your daughter. Be a husband and that man's house for the rest of their earthly lives together.

I hope you would much prefer that she be a daughter in the house of a daddy who cared about her interaction with God. Now, each situation is different and we're all capable of falling and stumbling into great sin. So we're going to hear especially about David when we get to the second half of verse 4.

And Romans 3 Wednesday evening. Lord willing. So that's not a hard and fast rule, but you can see, I hope that in verses 16 and 17. The He pays the bride price and gets the wife. Option is probably not the most. Common one selected by daddy. And so now he is an adulterer and she is as it were one for whom.

The marriage bed has already been dishonored and it's unlikely that she ever gets married.

Even if a child comes out of what they did, the child grows up in her daddy's house under her dad and mom and her. And so they lose all options for marriage and they probably lose this option for marriage too, and he would lose his bride price. 50 shekels.

More expensive than any slave that you could buy.

And not only do they lose the money but for him for his consideration, he loses the opportunity to propagate his name. The the inheritance of a man in the continuation of his line was extremely important to them because it was important to God. As we'll see as we continue to go through his work together with this man who's unlikely to end up married.

Now, his name dies with him. So it's actually not that different than the penalty of forcing or of adultery. But just takes a long time to be executed, when he lays down in the grave, There are no children to continue him in this world. And so God's penalty here for Israel.

To implement emphasizes. How weightily God takes the heart of marriage and how weightily God to takes the marriage bed and urges us to treat it as way, toly, as he does. We could give illustration after illustration But and the damage done to one's heart when they either go serially from romance to romance or even worse than they violate the marriage bed.

The damage done to their future household and often their current one, but their future household the damage done in the church. Where sexual purity and the bond between the purity of the bond between the husband and the wife that exclusive oneness. That is not just physical and we don't treat marriage the way God does.

When we fall into a pattern that that violates this The damage done to nations in which families are broken and those who even know who their father are, Do not have the Father who is committed to their mother in the way that they should, they don't have a pattern for themselves.

All of these things can proceed in a household or in a church, or a nation that approves accommodating in the heart. What God abominates in the action. And so We thank God for the goodness of his law and drawing the general equity. Here helps us not just think about how civil society should be structured, but it helps us think about the keeping of the heart in order to have the joy for which God designed the marriage.

Let's ask him to help us in the keeping of our hearts.

Our father in heaven, We do pray that you would help us in this, not just the keeping of the heart, but the sanctity, the honor, the exclusivity of the marriage bed is Wow. Hardly proclaimed and held to, and our doing. So puts us at odds with many, but we don't care.

Lord if if following you keeps us from thinking and living at odds with you And so we pray that you'd help us be wise. We pray that you would keep us from a legal frame legal way. Legalistic way of thinking, when we come to this but that you would make us to love your design and enjoy the good for which you have given it.

Who pray that by the keeping of hearts you would prepare us for strong and happy and marriages. That are full of romance between the husband and the wife. And we pray that you would turn in our generation, that turned the tide of these things in your church. We thank you.

Lord Jesus for your perfect purity and that you have taken for yourself. Not a worthy bride, but a bride who needed your atonement for whom you are our righteousness. That your spirit turns our hearts to you that you are unto us that Savior that Lord, that husband of your church to whom we may be exclusively committed.

Knowing that you have committed and bound yourself to us forever and ever. And so we pray that out of that your spirit would give us from your character and your goodness that the picture of that you've given us would be. Well, displayed in our marriages and our future marriages.

Granted we ask in your name, Amen.