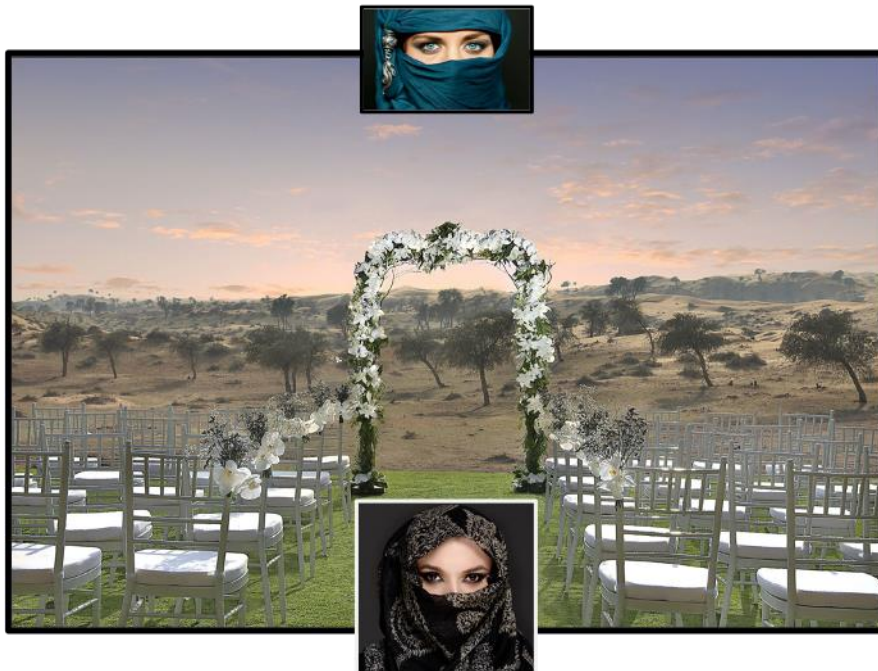


030120 Growth Group Study

Marriage: Waking Up to Reality

Gen 29:15-30



Background: Anyone who is married knows it doesn't take long to wake up from the dream-like world of the honeymoon and discover you married a sinner. For some, the revelation of these changes can be so dramatic that they may even question the sanctity of the marriage. No one woke up to the fact that he had in fact married the wrong girl as quickly as Jacob. Can you imagine the initial shock to wake up after your wedding night only to find the bride's sister in your bed? The question our text addresses is, "Can we be blessed by God if we are seemingly trapped in an unhappy marriage?"

Sermon Text: Gen 29:15-30 (ESV)

I. Betrothal Negotiations for Rachel (15-19)

15 Then Laban said to Jacob, "Because you are my kinsman, should you therefore serve me for nothing? Tell me, what shall your wages be?" 16 Now Laban had two daughters. The name of the older was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. 17 Leah's eyes were weak, but Rachel was beautiful in form and appearance. 18 Jacob loved Rachel. And he said, "I will serve you seven years for your younger daughter Rachel." 19 Laban said, "It is better that I give her to you than that I should give her to any other man; stay with me."

II. Jacob's Service for Rachel (20)

20 So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed to him but a few days because of the love he had for her.

III. Marriage to Leah! (21-24)

21 Then Jacob said to Laban, "Give me my wife that I may go in to her, for my time is completed." 22 So Laban gathered together all the people of the place and made a feast. 23 But in the evening he took his daughter Leah and brought her to Jacob, and he went in to her. 24 (Laban gave his female servant Zilpah to his daughter Leah to be her servant.)

IV. Re-negotiation of Betrothal Price for Rachel (25-27)

25 And in the morning, behold, it was Leah! And Jacob said to Laban, "What is this you have done to me? Did I not serve with you for Rachel? Why then have you deceived me?" 26 Laban said, "It is not so done in our country, to give the younger before the firstborn. 27 Complete the week of this one, and we will give you the other also in return for serving me another seven years."

V. Jacob's Marriage to Rachel and Additional Service (28-30)

28 Jacob did so, and completed her week. Then Laban gave him his daughter Rachel to be his wife. 29 (Laban gave his female servant Bilhah to his daughter Rachel to be her servant.) 30 So Jacob went in to Rachel also, and he loved Rachel more than Leah, and served Laban for another seven years.

Discussion Questions

1. Preparation

- a. As you reflect on the sermon, what stands out to you most?
- b. What is one thing you hoped to talk about today/tonight?
- c. What question(s) did you come away with from the sermon?

2. Sermon questions

- a. Name a time in your life when God redeemed the place he had you. How can that experience give you hope for the future?
- b. God desires for us to invite him into every part of our lives. As you think about your life right now (home, work, play), where is God working in your current "place"? The following questions can help flush out answers to this question:
 1. Did you ever wake up and wonder, "Is this the woman/man I married?"
 2. What have been the most difficult things you discovered about your spouse?
 3. Have you ever made shocking discoveries about yourself?
 4. How has Jesus responded to your sins, shortcomings and addictions?
 5. Where is God presently at work shaping you through your marriage?
- c. "Marriage is not designed to make us happy, but to be a place where we learn to love."
 1. How do you respond to this statement?
 2. If you are married, name specific ways you have "learned to love."
 3. If you are not married, how have you "learned to love" in your closest friendships?