



# **Message Transcript**

## **The Marriage Knot**

Ron Zappia

All right. Man, it is so good to be here. So thankful to be here with you. Let's begin with this. I want to read a scripture to you. It says in Romans 12:10, that were to do this, that were to outdo one another with honor. Think about that for a moment. Out do.

Let's give some honor today. Are you ready to give some honor? Well, I don't know if we're ready. Are we're ready to give some honor? How about this? How about to Justin and Andrea and the worship team, let's honor the Lord for what they did leading us in his presence.

We got all these children's workers. They're discipling, they're training, they're helping our kids into a relationship with Christ. Let's give some honor to the Lord. Let's honor the elders of the church for the vision and leadership they bring.

Come on, let's honor them for what they've done. I want to honor my good friend. I've known him for over 20 years. It's hard to believe, but Kent Shaw and I go back a long, long ways. And so I just want to honor him. And then lastly and most importantly, I know we're honoring the Lord in all that we do, but so thankful for your pastor, Pastor Jeff and Kim, because why?

I know what it's like, Jody and I, to start a church to move forward, to keep going. And they've died 1,000 deaths for this church. They've given and given and given and given and given. Sacrifice week after week, day after day. The intense struggle inwardly and outwardly to do what?

To grow a church for the glory of God. Let's praise God for the commitment, the

sacrifice, the step of faith that they took to plant this church, keep it going. Honor your pastor. Let's give them a round of applause. Awesome. Let's do this. I want to teach you how to tie a knot. And so it's just simply called the square knot.

And so I'm holding two ropes in my hand. And a square knot has been used by sailors for centuries. You just take right over left and you twist over and you take left over right and you twist over, and then you pull all four together for what I'm calling a perfect square knot. You're not impressed.

I feel the need to do something a little bit more difficult with this crowd. Didn't need to do that before, but we will. Let's do this. How about the double fisherman's knot? What that is, oh, somebody knows. Good. All right. So come on up here and help me. Basically, you've got to straighten it out.

It's really important to straighten it out and you tie one end to the other and I see you guys are very skilled in this here in this service. Then you take the other end and do the same exact thing. And this is why I love this knot because it's so impressive. And once you see it, I just feel there's going to be an applause.

That's going to be unbelievable. And I'm just feeling it. I'm feeling it. And then once you have it, see like this, and this is the double fishermen, and it's been used by boaters and by kayakers and rock climbers. And so then look what happens.

Do you see that? Oh, that was good. That was pretty good. That was pretty good. Said all that to simply say this, knots over time, any single one, even the ones you tie your shoes, they loosen over time if they're left unchecked or untightened.

That's what I want to talk to you about. If you have a Bible, do this, open it up to Matthew 7. I want to give a shout out and a welcome to our Broomfield campus. Praise God for them. And they're joining us today. So thankful for what God is doing out there. I heard they had an awesome Easter service, man.

Good stuff is happening here in the Denver area as a result of what BRAVE Church is doing. Title of the message is simply this, it's the marriage knot. And what I want to talk with you about today is the seven choices that each of us need to make to tighten the marriage knot to hold things together, to keep moving forward as a married couple.

The choices that I'm going to share with you is a highlight from the book that Jody and I wrote and Moody published. And so thankful that they're making it available to you today. Awesome things that we've learned over the course of the last 29 years.

These are the biblical choices that we've repeated and learned and failed and tried, and this and that. And those have been married. You've been there with me, that these are the biblical choices we need to make continually to tighten the knot. If you are single, do not check out. Ushers are locking the door right now.

Do not leave. Please. I'm telling you the choices that we're going to be talking about generally speaking, they're very applicable to the most important relationships that you have in your life, in your family, with your best friend. These choices are all important as we learn to do this, glorify God in our relationships. Are you ready?

Choice number one, if you're a note taker, go ahead and write this down. Choose

to grow spiritually. Choose to grow spiritually. And I want to take a look at Matthew 7:24. If you don't have a Bible, grab one. I see there's some in the seat underneath you so you can see it in scripture. I'm going to share a variety of scriptures today.

We're not just going to one. We're going to go to a few. But in Matthew verse 24 of Chapter 7, Jesus says this, everyone then who hears these words of mind and does them will be like a wise man who built this house on the, you tell me, on the rock.

And he says this, and the rain fell and the floods came and the winds blew and beat on the house, but it did not fall because it was founded on the, you tell me, the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mind and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand.

Verse 27 says, and the rain fell and the floods came and the winds blew and the beat against that house and it fell and great was its fall. Many of us have been here before. The pivotal question that Jesus is asking is simply this, what are you building your life upon?

Is it the rock and the truth of who I am, who Jesus is and what he's done, and what's revealed in this book? Or is it the sinking sand of this world and the philosophy that it has? Now, we need to do what, to choose to build our life on the rock.

In this message, secondary question, what are you choosing to build your marriage on? Is it the rock, the truth of who Jesus is? Or is it the sinking sand of this world? Jody and I, we were high school sweethearts. I married the homecoming queen.

I was the basketball star, the humble one. And it was unbelievable. We dated all through college. We dated after college. We got two great jobs that brought us to Chicago and nearly after eight months, we didn't even make it to the first year, we were ready for a divorce. And it was tragic. We didn't grow up Christians.

I wasn't a follower of Christ. We weren't. We were just kind of doing our own thing. Building on the sand, so to speak. I was doing this. I was doing some things that I shouldn't have been doing. She, if she was up here would probably say that she was not doing some things that she could have been doing, but save all that for this.

We were crash and burn within the first year. Anybody have a first year like that. Come on, be honest with me. Good. Thank you for the first row. After the worst night of our lives, Jody woke up, she went across the street to a church. She put on a dress.

We weren't church going people. I'm like, what are you doing? She walks into a church. She meets a woman, Asian woman. And with tears in her eyes, Jody verbalizes what happened. The lady was so gracious to welcome her and talk with her. First thing she said is this, my husband, he a failure too. Men, that's what we are.

Just raise your hand right now. And just, you know what, ladies look at us. We're failures. We get it. We're going to verbalize that right now to get it all out there at the table. But then she said this, and we didn't know the verse then. She was talking about Jeremiah 29:13.

And she said this. She said, but you need to go to Widow Creek and Widow Creek. And Jody thought to herself, Widow Creek. I don't know. I thought about killing

them last night, but I didn't think that was a good idea. And she was talking about a church, a big church in Athel Gokin Road in the Northwest suburbs of Chicago.

And she said this, Jeremiah 29:13. She said, but don't go with half your heart. Go with your whole heart. If you seek me, you'll find me with your, if you search me for your whole heart. Long story short, the bottom line is this, we became Christians. We began to build our lives and our marriage on the rock. God put together what was broken.

Simply asking you are you building your life on the rock, your marriage. It changes the trajectory. Choice number two, if you're a note taker, go ahead and write this down. Choose to love unconditionally. Choose to love unconditionally. I'm going to ask you to turn to 1 Corinthians 13.

Maybe you had that red at your wedding like Jody and I had it red at our wedding. I've got some pictures up here to kind of spice things up. The first one, if you can recognize this, we'll put it up. That's your pastor and his wife the day they got married.

Oh, I knew you were going to do that. Let me text him right now and say, everybody said aw. I mean, oh, look at them. Now, let me put up a picture of Jody and I. This was on our wedding day and this is doing what, we're lighting the unity candle. Oh thank you for including me.

I know it was not sincere and it wasn't intense, but let's just move on. We are lighting the unity candle right there. And in a moment, Jody's veil is going to get into the

flame. And I'm telling you, we almost lit this 150-year-old church on fire.

The marriage was over almost before it began. But I think if Jeff were here and if I'm on the stage, so thankful to share this platform as you get great teaching every single week, we wish we knew then what we know now. Anybody with me in the marriage relationship? I mean, so many things you just didn't know and you just trial by error.

And so one of the big things is what, it's the passage before us. And again, we had it read at our wedding, but I didn't understand it. That love is what? What is your definition of love it? Is it about an action, word or is it about a feeling? And so what?

I love that Christian artist who said it like this, that they said love is a verb. And if you go back a few years, Jay Giles used to say, love stinks. Anybody remember that? Why did it thank you one man for being honest. The rest of you wouldn't identify yourself.

Love stinks. And we won't go into it. But why? Well, I think it's because of how hard it is. It isn't about the feeling. It's about the commitment. And what we have in 1 Corinthians 13. Let me just slow down and define what love is. It says in Verse 4 that love is patient and kind. And so those are action words. Loves is not envy or both.

It is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way. It is not irritable or resentful. It does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. And then Verse 7, it's the summary. It's says it like this, love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Jesus said it best, man.



How are you going to know my people? How are you going to know them, man? You're going to know them by their love. The sacrificial love. You before me. I love what this Christian author or excuse me, writer says, and she says it like this. She says love must be learned and learned and learned again and again and again. There is no end to it.

We must learn how to love. In this season, in this phase, where are you at when it comes to unconditional love. Choice number three, we need to make a choice and each as husband and wife. And again, this is applicable to any person in relationships that are close to you.

We want to serve in such a way where we are serving sacrificially. Serving sacrificially. Maybe you're like Jody and I, you came into the marriage relationships and a bit opposites in some ways. I mean, I came from a very loud Italian family.

She came from a very quiet and reserved English family. I mean our house, it was this, you had a party. It was the food was crazy. My mom is throwing the rolls at me. I mean, it was out of control. We got some Italians in the room. And Jody was very reserved, just enough food, just enough.

And so there's these differences that we can celebrate, but there's also expectations that we can bring because of our background, because sometimes our baggage and we have expectations that we bring into merit.

Again, if I can open my heart to what we've learned over the course of the last 29 years, it's less about what I want, it's less about what Jody wants, it's all about

what God wants, everything. And so to layer things down.

And we've learned this, one of the best ways to understand that is to understand your roles and responsibilities so you will rightfully have expectations that are God honoring. And so Ephesians 5, we won't turn there now. I'm just going to focus on one summary verse.

I know Pastor Jeff, when he comes back next week, you guys are walking through, love the church that walks through books of the Bible. Can I get an amen? And you're just walking through 1 Peter, and you're going to get to 1 Peter 3 next week, and it's going to be about husband and wife.

And so some of this, you're going to talk about it again. And so really what I want to paint for you is what are the roles and expectations in God's eyes? Well, summary from Ephesians 5 is in verse 33. And really this classic passage, Paul compares Jesus in the church, that relationship to husbands and wives.

And he says in Ephesians 5:33, however, let each of you love his wife as himself. So husbands are called to love and let the wife see that she respects her husband. So wives are called to respect. That's what we're called to do. Husbands are to lead with love, wives are to honor through respect in the different seasons in the different flow.

That's what God's word says clear as day. Now, why is that? Why does he say it like that? Studies show and if you could do your own research and find out that men have a deep need for significance. Hear me for a moment. They have a deep need that what? That my life is going to matter. That my life is going to count.

You say, well, my husband has never said that. He's a man. He doesn't say anything. He grunts a little bit. He kind of makes some noises and you're just what is going on here? He can't verbalize anything. We, I'm saying it, have a deep need for significance.

And again, I'm not even saying success. Don't confuse those two things. But that our lives would matter. Wives on the other hand, generally speaking, they have a deep need for security. That's why we're called to love and to respect. You say, what do you mean security? Well, that in some ways that things would be taken care of.

You say, well, I know the woman. She's a strong corporate exec. And I mean, she's got a type A personality, and this girl you don't get in her way. She's going to run you down and she's got it going. And she's doing this and that and this. And I say, I married one of those.

But at the core, they still have that same deep need. They may not be verbalizing it because they're doing this. They're saying I'm not going to depend or have somebody else do that for me. I'm going to create my own security. So it's really important for us to understand that men have a deep need for significance.

Women have a deep need for security. And so husbands, if I can speak to you for a moment, just Ephesians 5, let God write this on your heart. Husbands love your wives as Christ love the church. And when you do that, your wife will honor as the church respected Christ. It's a formula.

And so we're called to do it. First of all, you don't know my wife. Hey, try it. You

don't know my husband. Hey, try what we're saying. The scripture says this, that Jesus gave his life for the church. Men, if I can ask you husbands directly, what are you willing to lay down?

Jesus just gave his blood, his sweat, his tears. He gave everything for the church. He died for the church. What are you willing to allow to die in you for the success of your marriage? For the fruitfulness of what God wants to do with you as a couple?

Jody always says it like this, the we before the me. And it's so important. So right in the marriage relationship. It's about the we not the me. Good stuff so far? With that kind of reception, let me just get on the plane early and get back to Chicago. I'm going to light you up with this one. Hold on for a moment.

The fourth choice we're talking about tightening the marriage knot, choose to please regularly. Choose to please regularly. Now, I'm going to slow down for a moment and I'm not just talking about walking the dog or taking out the trash. I'm talking about the birds and the bees.

So it's getting a little quiet in here. I call it the birds and the bees or the blue Jays and the yellow jackets. Let me begin with the truth that we could all agree to, sex is a God in our society. Would you agree with me? It's God and people worship it. And sex sells.

Let me kind of paint the backdrop, 95% of people have had premarital sex. 95%. 50% in high school. It gets worse. 74% of men said that they would have an affair if they knew they wouldn't get caught, 74%. 68% of women said the same thing. You

say, well, hold on, Ron.

Those statistics are high. I mean, that isn't the case here. Well, those, you got to remember, they're taking an account all males. And it's just like there's just a devaluing of marriage. Do I need to tell you that? There's just a devaluing of all these things. But what about the church?

Well, unfortunately, the church is in a good place today, but it hasn't always been there. And so let me give you the pathway because throughout church history, sex has been misunderstood. And so even the early church fathers, and please, I hope I don't step on any toes, but the early church fathers, they would say that it was only for procreation.

Some of the church fathers, one in particular, he said it like this, he said that it's only for procreation and anything else is animalistic love. I mean, that's what the backdrop of the teaching of the church has been throughout the ages.

Mary McPherson, she wrote an excellent book and it's called conjugal spirituality. And in this book, she shares a quote that it's rather lengthy and it's got truth, but it's almost ridiculous. So listen to this, please.

In the second century, Clement of Alexandria allowed unenjoyed and procreative sex only during 12 hours of the 24 only at night. But by the Middle Ages, preposterous as it seems now, the church forbade sex 40 days before the important festivals of Christmas, 40 days before, and eight days after the more important festival of Easter.

Eight days after Pentecost, the Eves of feast, and Sundays can't do it in honor of

the resurrection. On Wednesdays, you couldn't either because you had to call to mind the beginning of lent. Fridays in Memorial of the crucifixion, during pregnancy, and 30 days after birth, 40 if the child is female, during menstruation, and five days before communion.

This all adds up to 252 excluded days, not counting feast days. If there were 30 of those, I guess, which may be on the conservative side, there would've been about 83 remaining days in the year provided, of course, that the women did not happen to be menstruating or pregnant or in the postnatal position.

And provided that they intended procreation only couples could with the permission of the church have indulged, but not enjoyed sexual intercourse. For the abundance of clarity and the teaching of the Bible, sex is a gift from God within marriage. And it's not just procreation, how wonderful that is, it's for pleasure.

Let's put up Proverbs 5:18 and 19. And you can just take a look on the screen. I mean, this is a verse. It's not just for procreation. You say, I need other verse. Well, turning your Bible to Song a Solomon. How many are done with this point? I'm seeing some faces.

Let's move on. Sex is a wonderful gift from God within marriage. Choice number five, to do what? To tighten the marriage knot. Choose to persevere persistently. Choose to persevere persistently. I'm going to ask you to turn to James 1, and this is a very classic passage.

It has to do with trials. And some of us know this passage and it talks about the

trials that the early Christians had in sharing their faith. But the principles are apropos. They're very well understood for all of us.

Now, Jody and I, when we started our church 19 years ago in the suburbs of Chicago, we lost three of our four parents in the first couple years. We were coming home from one of the funerals of our parents, it was Jody's, and our house got hit by lightning. I kid you not. I'm driving up the street.

I'm like, that looks like the bricks from our house in the street. That looks exactly like our house. I pull in the driveway. It's like, that's our chimney in our driveway. And I mean, our house, it just got blown up by lightning. And so I don't know what trial that you're in or what you're facing or what's going on. Maybe it's a job loss.

Maybe it's an uncertainty at home with the kids and difficulty you're having throughout the teenage years. Maybe it's this. I don't know. Maybe it's just something that's been happening within your extended family. I mean, trials are going to come.

There are circumstances allowed by God to shape your Christian character and conduct as we do what, as we look to Jesus, as we learn from Jesus, and as we do this, as we lean on Jesus. That's what the trials are for. Now, this passage, I just want to take a moment and review.

There's four key words. So what I'm doing right now is for the spiritual leaders in the home, I'm asking that you would just take note of this. You're not going to remember what I say, but I'm asking four words. The next time the trial hits your family, pull everybody around the kitchen table and open up to James 1 and share

these four words.

It says, count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet various kinds of trials. Various kinds, that means they're all not one size fits all. You get yours. I get mine. There's different kinds of trials that are going to come. It says count. That's the word to circle.

I've got it in yellow, I believe on the screen that you could do what, that you could count. And that's a financial term. I came out of not thinking I was going to be in ministry. I have a finance degree. I was an accountant for a couple years.

I mean, I know what it means to be a bean counter. You're to count it all joy. Now, that's not this. That's not to paint a fake smile on your face when you come to church. No, that's insincere. But count it all joy when the trial comes. Why? Next word.

Because you know something. You know something that not everyone else knows. And as you're sitting around the family, the kitchen table, and you're saying, we know something, and the know here is the Greek word that talks about experiential knowledge.

It's not head knowledge. It's what we call in Chicago, street smart. That you know some things. What do I know through experience? Well, I know that the testing of your faith produces something. So the trial that we're in right now, this is a test.

The brevity of life. There's all kinds of trials to come to test our faith. God knows about it. It passed by his death. He's not surprised. He wants you to seek him in the midst of the trial, not push back and run away. But he says this, that you would know



that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness.

Some versions say endurance, other versions say patience. Well, what's that mean? Well, that means that it comes from a Greek word, a compound word. It literally means to remain a under. It's this idea to remain under the trial.

I'm sure you've been taught on this before, but it's almost like this, that when the weight of the world is upon your shoulders and your marriage and your family, that God doesn't want you to squirm away. I like to call it staying power.

So count what? Count it all joy, because we know that God wants to produce something in us as a midst of this draw, in the midst of the tears, in the midst of the difficulty. Verse 4, good stuff so far? Let's allow God to use this.

Allow God to use this pain for his gain. Hey, you know what, you pick up a copy of our book. Our mess became our message. The mess that we were in is what God did to redeem us. And so we all have a mess that can become our message as God redeems.

We need to let him have his way. And so what this says is let steadfastness, let that staying power in your life, not to cut and run have its way. Why? Because it says you'll be perfect and complete lacking nothing. That's a picture of what we're going for.

That's the bullseye, so to speak, of the glory of God. That the result, the byproduct is that when we're seeking God's glory, man, we become more mature in the faith. We become more spiritually sensitive and mature to what God wants. You say, man, you don't know what I'm going through.

And I'm telling you if you knew, and if you came up and I told you what's going on, and it is a mess. Well, then here's the last word, Verse 5, ask that we would do this, that we would ask. If anyone lacks wisdom, hey, you can't get through this, ask of God who does what, who gives generously to all without reproach.

So what I'm saying is if it's that heavy and that season is difficult and Jody and I, we've been there, man. And whether it's the church or the ministry or the marriage, that is you grab your family together and no matter how old, that you'd be modeling that this is where to go to.

And this is what we're going to do to persevere persistently to get through this and to bow your heads around the table and to genuinely call out to God. I mean, that's how we can get through the trial. That's how we can do what God's word says. So important. So critical.

I love what Joni Eareckson Tada says. She says sometimes God uses what he hates to accomplish what he love. Bam. Wow. Sometimes he uses what he doesn't like, what he hates in this world to accomplish the good that he wants. Mike dropped moment for sure. Two more choices. You got time.

How are we doing in Broomfield? You guys doing okay out there? Let's get moving. Keep going. Two more choices. This is an important one. Choose to respect. Choose to communicate respectfully. I've just got one verse. It's from Ephesians 4:29.

I think we can put it up on the screens for everybody to see. And it's a great verse, Ephesians 4, and it says, let no corrupt talk or I remember as the version,

corrupt communication, come out of your mouth. Boy, that's hard in itself, but only such as what, good for building up as fits the occasion so that it would want do what, it would give grace to those who hear.

Ephesians 4:29. How do we communicate respectfully in all of our relationships, especially in our marriage relationship? Well, there's some words that you need to do what, cut out. And what do I mean? Well, you know what they are. I don't need to say them.

I mean, they just are not edifying and they're not good. Some of us, some of you are still thinking about some words that a person of authority said to you. Maybe it was even a parent, a father. And it was a word about what they said and who you were that was not true and it's still to this day defines you as you think about that.

You're going to never accomplish anything. You're a loser. You're this. Hey, there's words that we need to cut out and then there's words that we need to change out for the marriage relationships. Anybody who's been married over 30 years, come on, give me a hand raise, come on 30 years.

Let's applaud these people, man, because they're the real ones. But if you've been married for any length of time, in the 30 year club, they raise their hand. Let's have some fun. Who's over 50? Anybody over 50 years. No, not over 50 in age.

Over 50. The guy is like no, I am. Just stop it. That was a lot, man. Over 50 years. Put your hands up again now that you understand. That's great. Awesome. So they know this. This is what they know. There's some words that you need to change

out.

Do not say always, do not say never. You always do this. You never do that. Always. You see what I'm doing? It's like pouring gas on the flame. And so there's words we need to change out. There's words we need to call out. That's what Ephesians 4 talks about.

I remember when Jody and I, we taught this verse to our kids and they were really young. And we've got three daughters. And what was funny was we're going on vacation. So we just told them this. Before we left for vacation, we said, hey, we want to grow in this.

So if something's getting a little spicy and conversation is getting little on the edge and you're talking about somebody, three girls, I mean, I'm talking, there was a lot of emotion in this house. Are you hearing me? And so I said, all you need to do is say 429.

That's code language for the zap is to know that we're on thin ice. So you better chill out a little bit. So anybody, you can call dad out, you can call mom out, 429. Call each other out. That's the code word. We're driving on vacation. And the kids are asleep in the back.

And Emily, she's the youngest. And I mean, she's in a car seat. She can barely even speak. And we're talking Jody and I, and wait for them to fall asleep. And we're talking about family and anybody know how that can get. And then we started, if I got to be completely honest, we started talking about the church and people like you.

And all of a sudden out of the backseat, 429, out of the car seat. Emily, I don't even know that you could communicate. I mean, I didn't know you were listening. I mean, she's calling us out. Hey, what are the words that you need to call out? Change out?

Do what, cut out in your relationship? So important to be respectful in our communication. I love what one writer says. He says that the difference between the right word and the perfect word is like the difference between lightning and a lightning bulb.

Let's choose our words wisely, carefully. So important. Last thing is this. Good stuff for us today. Choose to bless abundantly. Choose to bless abundantly. This is actually a verse that Kent Shaw, he is the walking Bible. This is a verse that he shared with me many years ago.

It's from Proverbs 3:27. Do not withhold good from those to who it is due when it is within your power to do so. What a great verse. What an important thing for us to do to not withhold good. I remember asking my dad when we were 10 years married and, again, we weren't from Christian homes or anything.

And Jody and I were the first Christians in our family. And I asked my dad, I said, what's the secret to a long marriage? I mean, a long marriage, a marriage that's really good. And he looked at me and he just said, and he was an engineer.

He didn't use a lot of words. He was just a very thoughtful person, very smart, intelligent, nothing like me. But he said this, he said, just make the other person happy.

And that's all he said. And I knew what he meant because it was so simple, but rang so true.

That I had watched him make the choices over and over again for 49 years with my mom, even to the point where what, the last days when she was dying of cancer. And he was right there at her bedside. He was chopping up her medicine so that she could take it so that she could get a little bit of relief.

I mean, he chose and made these choices over the course of 49 years to do what, to have a God glorifying, God centered marriage. That is what we're going for. That's what we want. I believe as foolish as it may sound, that your marriage is the number one witnessing tool that you have, that what, people are struggling.

And if you can do what, be honest, transparent, and genuine, guess what, God is going to work, God is going to move. I want to do this. I'm going to put the choices up on the screen as we close. And so even in Broomfield, I'm so thankful to have them with us today.

If you're single, I want you to think about the important relationships in your life. And again, these are written very generally. So think about that important relationship to you and that person that you've been thinking about.

And how can you respond in such a way where are these the choices that you're making to glorify God in that relationship? And even ask God through the power of his holy spirit, what can I do, Lord? How can you lead me? If you're married, I mean, the message has been more tailored you. And thanks for all for listening in.

Jeff asked me to speak on this topic, which I'm so thankful because he believes in what, God centered marriages along with the leadership team here. But what do you need to do today? What choice do you need to make? Hey, don't be the type A personality, I got to do all of them, all seven.

Start. What's the one thing, what's the two things that you need to do today, this week, this month that are going to really make a difference in your marriage relationship? Ecclesiastes 4 says that two are better than one because they provide a good return for their labor.

It goes on to say, if one falls, then there's another one there to pick them up. It goes on to say what, that if one is lying alone and another one comes next to them, that they're going to be warm together. A picture of provision and protection.

But then at the end of Verse 12 and Ecclesiastes 4, it says this, it's talking of about what, this idea that there's two separate individuals or two chords, and you get the picture that it's good that we're together. But then it says, but a chord of three is not quickly broken.

And so if you're not careful, you can read that like, where'd this come from? Who's the third person. Who's this guy? And who is it? It's the Lord. And through the Lord and God and his word and his strength that he can hold together to keep tight what's been loose.

That he can restore anything. We are a picture of hope in the glory of Christ, that if we choose to honor him, he will be faithful. Let's bow our heads together. You know

what, I forgot to say let's stand. I had a really good close going until that time. So Broomfield, stand here.

Let's stand. Let's get ourselves together. Let's stand together because we're going to worship in a moment. And really what I want our hearts to do is to focus on that third strand. And so as you pick what thing you need to do, you can't do it unless Christ and God is working through you to maximum effectiveness for his glory.

Hey, I can forgive because Christ has forgiven me. Hey, I can love because he first loved us. So let's bow our heads together. And father, for all those that are here and listening, would you reveal yourself to us? Would you help us to glorify you in our individual relationships that our desire is to choose to build our lives on the rock?

Our desire is to build our marriages, our relationships, that they would be Christ center. Father allow your holy spirit to comfort your saints, those who are looking to you now. Would you reveal to us the steps that we need to take.

Would you restore that broken relationship. Would you just give that person who's struggling their next step. And as we focus on you, we know that it's by faith we can accomplish these things. Without faith, it's impossible to please you.

Allow our eyes for the next several moments and minutes to be focused upon you, that you could do the work that we could not as we worship you in spirit and intrigue.