

Red Flags

Relationships Done Right

Sermon Recap

God designed relationships to thrive, and they get better when they're done God's way—not because life becomes perfect or painless, but because His wisdom protects and strengthens love over time. The sermon calls people to approach dating, sex, and marriage with humility before God, rejecting cultural “anything goes” advice that often leads to heartbreak, confusion, and harm—especially for families and children. Rather than shame, the pastor emphasizes conviction as a gift from God that invites healing, growth, and a fresh start no matter your past.

Using Philippians 2:1–5 as a foundation, the message teaches that the quality of a relationship is shaped first by mindset, not just behavior. If you want a better relationship, you begin by adopting “the mindset of Christ”: humility, unity, unselfishness, and genuine concern for the other person—not using a “you hold up your end, I'll hold up mine” contract mentality, but pursuing covenant love that stays committed through hard seasons.

A key practical tool is the “Relationship Attachment Model,” presented as God's healthier progression for romantic relationships: - Know (build friendship and truly learn who they are) - Trust (see integrity and consistency over time) - Rely (confirm dependability in real life) - Commit (covenant marriage) - Touch (physical intimacy in its proper place)

The sermon warns that modern dating often reverses this order by starting with physical intimacy, which can create strong chemical and emotional bonding before real trust and commitment exist. Research is cited to support that romantic infatuation can reduce critical judgment (“love is blind”), making it easier to ignore red flags and harder to make wise decisions. God's boundaries, including the call to flee youthful lust (2 Timothy 2:22) and not “awaken love before its time” (Song of Solomon 2:7), are framed not as repression but as loving protection.

Finally, the pastor stresses that the most important decision after following Jesus is who you marry, because so much is at stake. The invitation is to put God first, rebuild relationships on His pathway, and if needed, start over today—receiving grace for the humble (James 4:6) and choosing a new direction that leads toward healthier, stronger, Christ-centered relationships.

Relationships get better when they're done God's way.

Discussion Questions

How does the difference between conviction and condemnation reshape the way you talk about past mistakes in dating, sex, or marriage—both in your own story and when listening to others?

Condemnation tends to isolate and label people as hopeless, while conviction invites repentance, healing, and a new direction. A helpful discussion point is how to create a group culture where honesty is safe, but growth is still expected. What practices help you receive conviction as a gift without sliding into shame?

What does it look like, in practical terms, to “have the same mindset as Christ Jesus” in your closest relationships when you feel hurt, unmet expectations, or conflict?

Philippians 2 suggests humility, unity, and looking to the interests of others, which often means pausing defensiveness and choosing service over winning. That doesn’t erase boundaries or hard conversations, but it changes the posture and goals of the conversation. Discuss specific moments where mindset—not just behavior—would change the outcome.

How does the Relationship Attachment Model (know, trust, rely, commit, touch) challenge the way you’ve been taught to pursue romance, and what step do you most tend to skip or rush?

The model treats friendship and character as the foundation, not chemistry as the driver, which can feel countercultural and slower. Many people rush “touch” or emotional reliance before trust is proven over time. Identify one practical way to strengthen the step you typically neglect (for example, building friendship or testing integrity).

Why do you think covenant commitment is described as different from a contract, and what changes when a couple moves from “keeping score” to “holding the covenant” during a hard season?

A contract mindset says, “I’ll do my part if you do yours,” while covenant says, “I’m committed to you as we work this out,” even when it’s costly. That doesn’t mean staying in harm, but it does mean redefining love as faithful, resilient, and others-centered. Talk about what covenant faithfulness looks like in everyday choices—especially when feelings fluctuate.

What boundaries or rhythms help you “not awaken love before its time,” and how can someone start over with hope if they feel like they’ve already crossed lines or built unhealthy patterns?

The sermon emphasizes that God’s design protects us—emotionally, spiritually, and even biologically—by keeping intimacy connected to trust and commitment. Starting over can look like honest confession, clear boundaries, community support, and a re-centered life with God

first, without pretending the past didn't happen. Discuss what "starting over today" would concretely require in your current season.

Prayer 🙏

- May we choose humility over pride, welcoming conviction as a gift that leads to freedom rather than shame that keeps us stuck.
- May we adopt the mindset of Christ in our relationships by practicing unselfishness, listening well, and valuing the other person's good alongside our own.
- May we follow God's pathway with patient integrity—growing in friendship, building trust, learning to rely, and honoring covenant commitment before deep physical intimacy.
- May we pursue righteous living, faithfulness, love, and peace by setting clear boundaries, running from what stirs unhealthy desire, and choosing companions who strengthen our devotion to God.
- May we embrace intentional effort and preventative maintenance in every season, taking one practical step today to put God first and help our relationships become healthier over time.