

Bridges pt 2: Pouring Out or Filling Up

-Genesis 24: 1-4 Abraham was now a very old man, and the Lord had blessed him in every way. 2 One day Abraham said to his oldest servant, the man in charge of his household, **“Take an oath by putting your hand under my thigh.** 3 Swear by the Lord, the God of heaven and earth, that you will not allow my son to marry one of these local Canaanite women. 4 Go instead to my homeland, to my relatives, and find a wife there for my son Isaac.”

-I love reading the Hebrew Scriptures for just this reason lol.....

-can I have two men willing to act this out lol.....

-so Abraham is looking for Love for his Son Isaac

-Abraham's wife, Isaac's mom, recently died and Abraham thinks getting married will help him deal with the loss...

-Abraham tells his servant to GO BACK TO THE HOMELAND and find a wife

-many reasons: -common customs and backgrounds...

-there was great wickedness among the Canaanites

-conscious choice to be sure his wife would honor God and move after God as they were.....

-the servant is nervous because it is a Big Ask for a family to send their daughter to marry into a family they don't know from Afar

-Abraham didn't want to risk Isaac going because what if he fell in love and she was unwilling to leave,,, then Isaac would stay back in the original homeland,,, not in the Promised Land

-So the Servant we will call “Frank” goes on the weirdest work trip ever, after making a promise to his Boss in the weirdest way ever.

-Frank loads up 10 Camels full of supplies and Riches for the dowry.

-this journey probably took close to a month 1 way!

-Frank arrives at the town Abraham sent him to and he stops at the well outside of town.

-Frank asked God to help him in choosing a good wife for Isaac

-Frank tells God: “I am going to ask these women, one at a time, for a drink as they show up for water,,,, if one of them offers to give me a drink AND to water my camels,,, I will know that is the woman you are guiding me toward”

-I hope all you single people are listening to “Pick your spouse 101”

-Frank asks the very first woman who approached and she did exactly what Frank outlined in his prayer, she offered to get him water and the camels (10 camels!!!!)

-Frank uses his best “Game show host voice” and says, “Frank, tell her what she's won!”

-Frank gives her a bunch of gold jewelry

-Frank then asks who she is and what family she is from

-Turns out This girl Rebekah was actually a Niece to Abraham, and a cousin to Isaac,

-which in that time and value system made her *the perfect marriage candidate*

-Frank is thrilled and really believes God is guiding him,,, so he asks for further help

-I have been on this long journey Could I stay with your family

-Rebekah says “for sure, Dad loves it when I bring home strange older men who approach me in public, give me jewelry, and then ask to stay the night”

-As funny as it sounds it shows something about the Generosity and Kindness of this family.

-old saying “The treacherous are ever distrustful”. In other words if you are slimy you will always suspect others of being slimy...

-the fact that someone is willing to trust and extend favor actually says more about who they are than who they extend it to

-these acts of generosity and hospitality are showing him the character of this family

-Frank is convinced that he has found a Great Wife for Isaac so he proposes the terms of the marriage agreement to Rebekah’s Dad.

-Interesting part is that Rebekah’s parents **consulted HER!!!**

-i know that seems basic but it was revolutionary then....

-Rebekah says yes! **(they called a photographer and did one of those “she said yes” instagram posts..)**

-she journeyed to Isaac’s home,,, met and married him.....

-Here is how the chapter ends: “Isaac loved her deeply, and she was a special comfort to him after the death of his mother.”

-That is as close as the Hebrew Scriptures come to using the phrase *“they both lived happily ever after”*

-We are going to use this story as a running illustration and we are going to learn a few different things about love.

-The things we will learn about Love will be HUGELY APPLICABLE to Marriage

-But they are not MARRIAGE lessons,,, they are LOVE LESSONS

-So today is not just for Married people:

-what we talk about for the next few minutes will make you a better Christian

-it will make you a better Friend. -a better parent or child or sibling

-it will make you a better grandparent

-If you are young and hopes of Love still lay out in the future,,,, this will SET YOU UP for success when that time comes

True Love is Established, not Discovered.

-from our “western perspective” it might look like Frank was searching for “THE ONE” for Isaac.

-it could appear that he was asking God to point out Isaac’s Soul mate

-The concept of “The one or Soul Mate” is not what Christian scripture teaches us about love.

-you will not find anywhere in the Bible where it gives instruction on marriage or love and the teaching is simply: to FIND THE RIGHT ONE

-It is never about discovery, it is always about how to establish love

-We are culturally indoctrinated with the myth of the Soul Mate.

-some of us are less dramatic so we call it "The One"

-it sounds incredibly romantic to believe that there is this One Person out there for you, who will complete you.

-they are the peanut butter to your jelly. -the toast to your eggs. -the ketchup to your fries

-This idea has worked its way into western culture from an Ancient Greek story.

-a fictitious myth talking about early humans

-picture of Round People

-these people were supposedly much faster, smarter, and more powerful than what we are now,, they actually ROLLED on their extended arms and legs

-at that time supposedly people were both genders in one.....

-they were trying to Usurp the gods on Mt Olympus

-to limit people what the gods supposedly CUT EVERYONE In HALF

-they then scattered all the halves so they could not find each other and team back up

-supposedly Out in the world somewhere each of us would have the other Half of our Soul wandering around, living a "half life"

-If we are lucky enough to find our TRUE SOUL MATE then we are powerful beyond measure

-we would again become capable of Scaling mt Olympus and living the life of a god

-Hopefully as we say this you can see all the ways that our Concept of "The One" is built on this.

-the key to life is all locked up in finding the one

-you will be happy and successful

-in disney terms it is "Happily Ever After"

-The idea that some other person out there will make life all it was intended to be is as ridiculous as this picture.

-In Rebekah's story, Frank was not search for "The One" he was searching for SOMEONE who knew how to Love.

-there were specific instructions about where to get the person from and from what people groups....

-There is not One person who is right for you, but there are probably lots of people who are not right for you.

-there were so many factors that would play into their life together, but a lot of it was common world view,,, common customs and practices,,,, common cultural understandings of marriage and marital roles

-there was the issue of common beliefs about God and what life is really about

-The marriage relationship centers on two people becoming like they are one.
-so one thing that really helps is not having wildly different understandings of key areas of life

-The most crucial thing you see in Rebekah and her family is people who **believed in putting the needs of others above their own.**

-she was going above and beyond in offering to water his animals.....

-this was not just a man woman thing, even her dad was inclined to serve this stranger

-Doing for others what she would like done for herself and preferring others even over herself was just how she learned to treat people.

-If you ask me that was the key to this whole story.

-Frank could have asked God for any sign if it was just a sign that she was “the one”

-make her glow. -let there be an Angel hovering over her head

-the sign that Frank looked for was the sign that this person knew how to love people well, even strangers.

-1 John 3:16 This is how we know what love is Jesus Christ laid down his life for us and we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters.

-Jesus shows us what love is by putting the needs and interests of others above himself.

-Jesus demonstrated it to the extent of giving his actual life away

-Rarely will we be called on to go to that extent, but what about the extent Rebekah went to?

-she made her time and her intentions less important than this other person

-she made her comfort and her thirst less of a priority than his,, than even his camels

-as this family took him in they made his comfort, care, and consumption more important than their own.

-According to John Love is the act of putting another before yourself.

-John 3:16 for God so loved that he _____gave

-1 John 3:16 this is how we know what love is that _____..... christ laid down....

-Regardless of what anyone says they FEEL for another person, Loving is the act and pattern of putting someone else above me in my actions.

-feelings of love will follow actions of love

-If you are still looking for a spouse:

-Good, Love is about finding someone and being someone who will put the needs, feelings, and desires of others ahead of their own.

-If you already have a spouse:

-Good love is about being someone who puts the needs, feelings and desires of others, especially their spouse, ahead of your own.

Good Love Grows when We Give First.

-We don't Go First, We Give First.

-Relational Standoffs are Doomed Endeavors from the start.

-if you feel like you are right and someone else is wrong or You are OWED ,,and you are waiting for them to give,,, to act,,, to make gestures,,,,, that pattern BREEDS CONTEMPT

-People who know how to love Plant Seeds of service, kindness, and consideration into their relationships.

-what does the Bible say about how Jesus loved us? *While we were still sinners, he died for us*

-Jesus' love gave first,,, his love is what makes us ABLE and Inclined TO LOVE

-If you are already in a relationship and you don't like what you are getting:

-you have to begin to give away the love you want to get

-give away the respect and consideration you want

-give away affection or attention you want

-give away the tenderness and attentiveness you want

-You cannot sow seeds of frustration and bitterness and think that a harvest of love and happiness will sprout.

-I know what you are thinking:

But I am already at a deficit, I already GIVE MORE THAN I GET.

*-its not fair and its not right..... **that is absolutely true***

-What we get from Jesus is not fair and its not right either,,, its LOVE

-if we got Fair and Right we would get hell

-Jesus' acts of love for us were SEEDS SOWN that are growing and making us love him, RIGHT?????

-Us giving first, plants seeds that enable those we love to love us and others better.

-Maybe the warm and fuzzies have faded and there are days you wonder if you married "THE RIGHT PERSON".

There is no such thing!

-the sooner you stop asking the wrong questions and start sowing seeds of love the sooner You will FEEL LOVE and BE LOVED in return.

But what about having my needs met?

-If love means Pouring Myself Out Rather than Filling myself up, then How does my jar get full?

-One of our greatest Relationship Problems is that we often look to people to meet needs only God is capable of meeting.

-Illustration: Karen and the Two Jars

-“If he were more romantic then I would be happier”

-“If she paid more attention to me then I would be happier”

-“If you were: funnier, gentler, more affectionate, listened better, put more effort into your appearance, bought me things or whatever”

-We look to our partners hoping that **if they will pour out this thing or that,, then we will be happy.**

(while saying this me and Karen are trading water back and forth.)

-We both have souls that are Hungry and Thirsty for Love. How will it ever work if we see each other as the solution to the deficit we feel?

-John 15:5 “I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

-John 5:9-13 “As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. 10 If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commands and remain in his love.

11 I have told you this so that **my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.** 12 My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. 13 Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.

-Jesus is teaching us something very powerful about the Source of Real Love.

-The Fueling source of your love for another person should never be their love for you. It should be Jesus’ love for you.

-the branch is not drawing Nutrition From the Gapes, it is giving it

-the branch IS drawing Nutrition from the VINE

-*The Pitchers:* When I fill myself up on the love of Jesus for me then I have plenty to give to Karen, regardless of what she pours out for me.

-when Karen is filling herself on the love of Jesus, then she has plenty.....

-Any relationship (marriage, friendship, family...) that depends on the love of Jesus as it's source and motivation will always have an abundance to pour out from.

-A marriage where just one person is doing this,,, it will work and be "ok", but here is the thing,,, When two people do this your marriage can be a consistent environment of overflow and joy,,,,,, the same with ANY RELATIONSHIP

-When 1 person commits to it and trusts in God,,, it plants the seeds necessary for God to lead the other person into it.

-When we worry about whether the other person will give to us in the same way, we withhold.

-we wait to pour, until we know they are going to pour back into us

-but keeping your water in your jar for you actually keeps Jesus from being able to pour out into your jar. (stagnant.....)

-The act of our pouring out creates the space for God to fill us back up.

-Luke 6:38. Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap

-When you pour out, God can pour in. His pour always runs over!

-Even if another person never loves you back the way you love them. You will be making space in your life to experience the Love of God in ways that are MORE THAN ENOUGH!

-when I pour out, God pours in,,, and he always runs over,,,, REPEAT....

-When it comes to loving actions, we think "Poured out OR filled up" but Jesus says, "Poured out AND filled up"!