

Viral Video Highlights 'Fairytale' Image of Marriage

After his "Why I Hate Religion, But Love Jesus" video garnered more than 17 million views last month, the **Christian poet** has become known for his innovative spoken word on some of the church's most debated issues.

Jeff Bethke's latest production is titled "**Sex, Marriage & Fairytales**"—a poem he says is meant to "highlight the most frequent and problematic issues marriages face today." In it, he reminds viewers that "Jesus is the ultimate healer, redeemer and restorer of every marriage."

Bethke, 22, admits to never being married, but says he is "the product of one that was nonexistent."

He describes the distorted view of marriage we often see today, painting a picture of relationships portrayed in extremes—as if marriage is either fairy-tale-like and euphoric, or hateful and divorce-prone.

"Disney movies and 'chick flicks,' they've put us in a weird position," he begins. "They've distorted our reality because we forget they're actually fiction."

"In marriage we either get better or bitter, either joy or remorse," Bethke continues. "What we're doing isn't working, like the rate of divorces."

Standing in front of a stained glass window, he then boldly asks, "So, how's your marriage?"

"I mean, come on. Let's be honest. Because marriage seems to sound more like prison than the paradise they were promised," he says.

Bethke again pushes the envelope in the same way he did with

his previous video that appeared to pit Jesus against religion—although his intended message was more about ending self-righteousness and hypocrisy.

After some constructive criticism from Michigan Pastor Kevin DeYoung, Bethke admitted he could have chosen his words more wisely in “Why I Hate Religion.”

Yet, Bethke’s passion for Jesus and his generation still come through in this latest project devoted to love and marriage.

“Men, grow up. Put down the controller,” he says, warning against putting people and “lesser created” things before God. “How about you lead her with grace, instead of trying to control her.

“A strong friendship before marriage will make a good marriage after. Marriage isn’t just sex. It’s conversation and laughter,” Bethke later adds.

The marriage poem, which now—one week after it was posted—has more than 3.1 million views on YouTube, is laced with question after question—as Bethke attempts to confront some of the deeper issues that can be ignored in relationships.

He urges viewers to rest their marriage on Jesus.

“Because His death was a proposal. He wanted you no matter the cost. While some guys propose on a knee, Jesus proposed on a cross,” Bethke concludes.

“So die to self, put your flesh on a life sentence,” he says. “Because you don’t fall out of love as much as you fall out of repentance.”

More than 25,000 people commented on Bethke’s latest video before comments were disabled.

In a follow-up post about his inspiration, Bethke says he wrote the poem after reading *Real Marriage* by his pastor, **Mark**

Driscoll of Mars Hill Church.

“It’s real, it’s gritty and it’s extremely honest,” he said.