

GENESIS: THE BEGINNING IS NOT THE END

God's Functional Design of Marriage

TEXT: Genesis 2, Matthew 19, Ephesians 5

INTRODUCTION: The last two messages in our study of principles that begin in Genesis but which progress through the rest of Scripture, and culminate with their final completed expression in the New Testament, have begun in Genesis chapter 3. This morning I want to take a quarter of a step backward into the latter part of Genesis 2, to examine a very important beginning of an institution that God established long before the beginnings of cities, states, or nations, or any other forms of civilization.

In fact, **the final creative act of God during Creation Week was not the making of man, nor even His forming woman, but the establishment of the institution of marriage.** Let's read about what God did in Genesis 2:18-24.

Genesis 2:18–24 18 And the LORD God said, "*It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.*" 19 Out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought *them* to Adam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam called each living creature, that *was* its name. 20 So Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him. 21 And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. 22 Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man. 23 And Adam said: "This *is* now bone of my bones And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man." 24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

I have always found this account fascinating, and in some ways humorous.

- God says, "Adam, it is not good for you to be alone."
 - At this point men, it would be good for you to say a hearty, "Amen!"
 - Perhaps Adam assumed that out of all the marvelous creatures the Lord God had made, there was already one destined to be his best and constant friend.
 - We know that God certainly knew that the companion Adam needed did not yet exist.
 - Maybe Adam just needed to see that this was so.
 - Whatever the cause and the motive, neither of which is explained in the text,
- Before creating woman, God took Adam on a tour of the animal kingdom, allowing him to give names to each of the different kinds. But the primary consequence of this review of God's creative genius was to demonstrate to Adam that as amazing, wonderful, marvelous as were all of the animals that God had made,
 - There was not a single one comparable to him.
 - There was not a one capable of being the lifelong companion Adam needed.
- Therefore, God created woman.

- The personal design of God to be like man but not identical to him.
- The one who would be just right to take away his loneliness.

And look now, at His design for marriage. First we should see

I. MARRIAGE IS A RELATIONSHIP DEFINED AND DESIGNED BY GOD.

A. God designed marriage to be between one man and one woman.

Now friend, before you get mad at me and start calling me a Bible thumping homophobe, I want you to understand something.

I am not homophobic. I have no fear of homosexuals.
I do not hate homosexuals.

But that does not mean that I have to try to redefine truth just so I will not be hateful.

An apple is not an orange.

Now you can start calling an apple by the name orange, and convince other people to do it.

You may even persuade lawmakers to call it discrimination if you don't call apples oranges.

But no matter what you do, an apple is not an orange, and beneath all the clatter and chatter, everybody knows it.

You do not have to hate oranges to say an apple is not an orange.

You can call a relationship between a man and another man a marriage if you choose to. The relationship between two women may be called a marriage on the law books and ratified by the Supreme Court.

But the Supreme Being, the One True and Living God Who made heaven and earth, and Who created man and woman, and Who Himself designed and defined marriage says, **Gen. 2:24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.** "Marriage is the relationship between a man and a woman who are joined together for life."

B. God designed marriage so that man and woman would each be the completer of the other.

- The woman was designed to be the completer of the man.
- Likewise the man would be the completer of the woman.
 - What the man lacked, the woman would supply.
 - What the woman did not have, the man would give.
 - Man and woman were made for each other.
 - Man and woman were made to complete each other.

I just cannot pass this point without saying that I am so glad that God led me to marry the woman who was every bit the one who could complete me, the one who could supply all the things that I lacked.

And not only have I benefitted from Karen being my wife, you have too.

- I am a better man, than I would be without her.
- I may not be a very good pastor or preacher, but I promise you, I am a lot better than I would be if it were not for Karen in my life.
- She opens my eyes to things I cannot see on my own.
- She stirs my heart to be moved for things to which it would otherwise remain cold and hard.
- She enables me to understand things that would be far beyond me.
- I needed her. I still need her.
- Apart from Christ Himself, she was and is God's most precious and important gift to me.

And you know what?

- I was God's gift for her too.
- There was something she could not do that I could do.
- Geometry!
- I could, I still can, do geometry better than Karen.
- And even to this day, when she has a geometry problem she cannot solve, I'm her go to guy!

We were made for each other! That was the intent of God's creation.

And while we are talking geometry, let me show you a picture of God's plan.

Complementary angles are not identical to each other. They are not the same size. But in geometry, they are called complementary angles because when you put them together, they form a right angle.

These angles complete each other.

That is what God intends for a husband and a wife. They complete each other. Together they get it right!

C. God designed marriage so that man and woman would have children and fill the earth with people who have been taught and trained in the ways of God.

This is not a minor subpoint. It was a primary purpose for God making the marriage relationship to be between a man and a woman.

For a culture to sustain itself, each couple in the culture must have an average of 2.1 children. In other words, 9 of us can have 2 kids, but every tenth couple needs to have 3. If you have a Jeremy Johnson in your group, your average goes up!

Folks, we are not averaging 2.1 children per couple among believers today in the United States or the world. So, when I say to you young married couples, go make babies, I am telling you one of the purposes of God in bringing you into the marriage relationship.

D. God designed marriage to be a life-long relationship.

They were to “cling” to each other. They were not just other animals, many of which mate with one this season and another the next season. They were to cling to each other, remain with each other.

There is certainly more in this passage we could talk about, but I don't want to just talk about the beginning. Let's jump to Matthew 19:4-6 to see that

II. THE FATHER'S DESIGN OF MARRIAGE WAS AFFIRMED BY THE LORD JESUS.

*Matthew 19:4–6 4 And He answered and said to them, “Have you not read that He who made *them* at the beginning ‘made them male and female,’ 5 and said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’? 6 So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate.”*

Here also, there is much we could discuss, but my primary purpose in bringing you to this passage is to see that Jesus Himself affirmed God's design of marriage as described in Genesis. In fact, Jesus is quoting Genesis.

In fact, **Jesus specifically affirmed three of the four foundational statements we examined in Genesis about God's design.**

- A. Marriage is between one man and one woman.
- B. They are to complete each other.
- C. They are to be joined together for life.

Finally, I want to take you into the section of the New Testament called The Epistles, of The Letters, and specifically to the letter of Paul to the Ephesians. In The letters, we often find the practical application to the principles stated earlier in the Scriptures. And here we find how a man and a woman can make their own marriage work the way God designed it to work.

The whole passage is 12 verses long, but I am just going to give you the bottom line in the last verse.

*Ephesians 5:33 Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects *her* husband.*

III. GOD'S DESIGN FOR MARRIAGE WORKS WHEN WE WORK IT.

Men, love your wives.

Women, respect your husbands.**How can a man demonstrate love to his wife?**

- **Show your wife that, apart from Christ, she is number one in your life.**
- She will not want to be before Christ, but she does want to be before anyone or anything else.
- **Before work**
- **Before play**
- **Even before children.** Men, one of the best things you can do for your children is to be a husband who really does love his wife in the same kind of self-sacrificing way Christ loves the church.

How can a woman show respect to her husband?

- **By submitting to him**
- Not because he is smarter or better
- Not because he is necessarily right
- But because it shows him honor and respect.

And those two things make a marriage work.

Those two things are God's way to make a marriage functional, that make it work.

Two weeks ago, what did we see brings unity, oneness in a relationship? Doing things God's way and not our own way. That is what will bring oneness into your marriage. Do it God's way.

Men, love your wives.**Women, respect your husbands.**

Last summer, we offered the video series called Love and Respect during our Summer Mondays which offers tons of help in making practical application of these principles.

If you missed this or could use a refresher, Bro. Jeremy is going to offer the Love and Respect course on Sunday nights as a part of Discipleship training beginning 3/26 at 5 p.m. Sign up at the Welcome Center or see or call Bro. Jeremy.

If you cannot do the class, go to the website loveandrespect.com and purchase materials. The book Love and Respect is also available for loan from our Church Media Center.

CONCLUSION: One of the great blessings that God initiated in the very beginning was the relationship of marriage. If we will allow it to be what God designed it to be, and work in our own marriages to allow them to function as God designed them to function, the fruit of that blessing can be ours personally.