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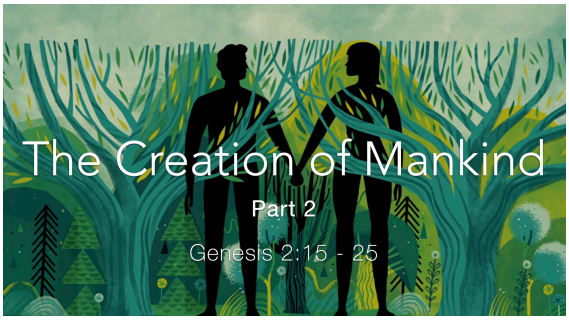
The Creation of Mankind: Part 2

God Creates the First Woman in the First Garden

Scripture: Genesis 2:15-25 **Sermon Series**: *Genesis: The Beginning*

Topic: Creation, Mankind, Marriage, Male, Female

I. Introduction



Last week we made it half way through chapter 2 while today we will make our way through the last half.

Last week we saw that God created the first man out of dust and breathed life into his nostrils (vs.5-7).

Then we saw that God planted the first garden in Eden (vs.8-14). Eden is a place of "delight,"[1] beauty, and goodness. It was a place where God was. It is a kind of sanctuary, which the Bible elsewhere calls Paradise.[2].

II. God's Purposes for Man (vs.15-17)

By way of review, this section reveals God's purposes for man.

> 15 The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep
> it. 16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every
> tree of the garden, 17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not
> eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."
> **Genesis 2:15-17** (ESV)

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[1] John H. Sailhamer, "Genesis," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1990), 41.

[2] Augustine of Hippo, *On Genesis: Two Books on Genesis against the Manichees; And, on the Literal Interpretation of Genesis: An Unfinished Book*, ed. Thomas P. Halton, trans. Roland J. Teske, vol. 84, The Fathers of the Church (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1991), 108. See also Revelation 2:7; cf. Luke 23:43; 2 Corinthians 12:3.

The first purpose of man was ***to commune with God***. God was at work in the garden and He ***put*** the man in the garden to be with Him. The word 'put' means "to settle down, rest, and repose"[3] in the presence of God. The first purpose of man is to enjoy unbroken communion with God.

The second purpose was ***to work the garden***. God created man to work. Works is not a result of sin or the curse of sin because neither of those two things have yet happened. God made man to be productive in work as a part of His original creative design.

The third purpose of man was ***to keep the garden***. Last week we saw that the word 'keep' means "to guard and to protect."[4] We learned of the presence of evil (v.9) and thus, the man was "not only to be a gardener, but also to be a guardian"[5] of this special place of God's presence.

Finally, which is where we concluded last week, we learned that the fourth purpose of man was ***to obey God's word***. Man was to be the keeper and guardian of God's word. In this garden God entrusted the first man with His first command. God blessed the man with a permissive command to enjoy all the good trees of the garden, but then that expansive permissive command was followed with one prohibitive command. He prohibited the man from eating from "*the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.*" This one tree is prohibited, for it leads to death.

III. God Creates the First Woman (vs.18-20)

Now the scene shifts. Woman is not on the scene. Thus, far it has been only God and the man. Now God creates the first woman. First, God sets the scene and exposes the need (vs.18-20). Next, He then causes man to fall into deep sleep (v.21), created woman and presents the bride to be (v.22), the man rejoices in she (v.23), and from parents he flees (vs.24-25).

A. God sets the scene and exposes the need (v.18-20)

God again speaks, but this time appears to be talking to Himself.

> 18 Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make
> him a helper fit for him." 19 Now out of the ground the LORD God had formed every
> beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see
> what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its
> name. 20 The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to
> every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him.

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[3] Rick Brannan, ed., *Lexham Research Lexicon of the Hebrew Bible*, Lexham Research Lexicons (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2020).

[4] Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, vol. 1, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1987), 67.

[5] *ESV Study Bible* at note on Genesis 2:15-16.

Genesis 2:18-20 (ESV)

It is not good that man should be alone (v.18). This is a surprising statement. Up to this point, everything said about creation was that it was "***good***" (1:10, 12, 18, 25, 31). This is apparently something God said to Himself. One commentator called it a moment of "divine deliberation."[6] It sounds very similar to what we read in 1:26, "*Let us make man in our own image, after our own likeness.*" This statement is immediately followed by,

> So God created man in his own image,
> in the image of God he created him;
> male and female he created them.
> Genesis 1:27 (ESV)

God's very nature is communal. His essential nature entails a mysterious communion between the three persons of the Godhead; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Evidently, part of what it means to be created in likeness of God is to be created in a communal relationship. To be created "'in God's image' also entails a 'partnership.'"[7] "Man" is created as "both male and female." Both are equally created in the image of God. However, when man is ***alone***, this "*is not good.*" Here we see humanity's deep need for companionship, which is part of God's original creative intent.

I will make a helper fit for him (v.18). Adam as been enjoying communion with God in the garden, but as God considers all His plans for the man, He concludes that the man needs "*a helper fit for him*" (v.18). God then states, "*I will make a helper fit for him*." God himself will create a solution to this problem. God proposes to create a "*helper*" 'corresponding'[8] to him, or literally "like opposite him," which points to complementarity.[9]

The word '*helper*' is not a subservient or derogatory word. This word does not mean that the 'helper' (ie. woman) is inferior to man. The word is often used of God Himself or the help that He provides. God uses the word to describe Himself as Israel's "Helper" (Hos 13:9). In Psalm 70:5, "O God! You are my help and my deliverer." The word is used twice in Psalm 121.

> 1 I lift up my eyes to the hills.
> From where does my help come?
> 2 My help comes from the LORD,
> who made heaven and earth.
> Psalms 121:1-2 (ESV)

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[6] John H. Sailhamer, "Genesis," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1990), 46.

[7] Ibid.

[8] See *ESV* footnote for this word in 2:18.

[9] Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, vol. 1, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1987), 68.

In order fulfill all God's purposes for man, he needs a companion to help in a particular way(s) that God Himself chooses not to directly help. God says that "*it was not good that man should not be alone.*" But man is not absolutely 'alone' since God is there with him. God must have in mind some way of being "alone" that He Himself is choosing not to satisfy. The scene has been set.

God Exposes the Need

Note that there is a process to this provision of help. God does not here merely speak a word and immediately effect a solution. In stead, there are a few steps that He takes that involve first naming all the animals that God had just created.

1. Animals brought to Adam to be named.

   God brought them to the man to see what he would call them (v.19). First, God brought before Adam all animals to see what he would name them. Naming the animals is an exercise of authority over them.[10] We have seen in 1:26, 28 that God has shared his dominion over creation with man and here is the first exercise of that shared reign and rulership. Adam named all the animals, birds, and beasts. At end of that naming process, we are told,

2. No helper fit for him found.

   But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him (v.20). The purpose of parading all the animals before Adam was at least three-fold; 1) to demonstrate to him how unique the man was among all of God's living creatures, 2) to reveal Adam's need for "*a helper fit for him,*" and 3) to demonstrate that all animals were insufficient to supply this help.

   This event highlights man's aloneness. It illustrates his need. None of these birds, beasts, or creatures were "*fit*" for this man. No animal could supply the companionship that the man needed. Jewish rabbinic tradition pictures God passing the animals before Adam in pairs, thus leaving Adam at the end to conclude, "Everything has its partner but I have no partner."[11]

With the need now exposed, the solution is proposed.

B. God causes a deep sleep (v.21)

God now works to effect a solution to Adam's problem by causing him to fall into a deep sleep.

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[10] Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, vol. 1, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1987), 68.
[11] Ibid.

> 21 So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took
> one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. 22 And the rib that the LORD God had
> taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man.
> Genesis 2:21-22 (ESV)

The LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man (v.21). God is the first anesthetist. He puts Adam into a deep sleep and removes a rib and then patches up the spot. While the man sleeps deeply, God works sweetly. God is the first surgeon. Again God did not merely speak woman into existence out of nothing. Rather, He chose to begin with flesh and bone taken out of man. From that starting point God then "*made*" a woman. The Hebrew word literally means '*built.*' God did not create woman out of dirt, but rather out of the same stuff of the man himself. So we see woman was made *from* man and *for* man.[12]

And He brought her to the man (v.22). God is also the first Father of the bride. God created a women who was indeed '*fit*' for man. She was made from the same stuff as him. She was like him in that she was created in the image and likeness of God, but she was not identical to man. She was built to do what the man could not do alone. God brought the woman to the man as a great gift and the man joyfully received her saying,

> "This at last is bone of my bones
> and flesh of my flesh;
> she shall be called Woman,
> because she was taken out of Man."
> Genesis 2:23 (ESV)

This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh (v.23). This "*at last*" is a happy exclamation of fulfilled expectation. "*At last*," celebrates that after seeing so many ill-fit animals, he finally sees one perfectly "*fit for him*!" The creation of woman from Adam's rib now supples all that he was lacking. The man cannot help but rejoice. He does so in the form of poetry. These five lines (4 in ESV but 5 in Hebrew text) are the first poem in Scripture.[13] This is also the first recorded human speech. It seems language was born for the purpose of a husband to compliment and communicate with his wife. This poem also includes man's act of naming her, "*Woman, because she was taken out of man*." Adam understands what God has done while he was sleeping. He knows that God created woman not out of dust, but she was made "*out of man*." The two of them are made of the same material and this unity is reflected in the Hebrew language for the word for man is אִישׁ (*ʾîš*) and the word for woman is אִשָּׁה (*ʾishah*). The man's naming of woman is another example of his exercise of the authority given to him by God. This indicates that the God-given role the woman is to hold stands in subordination to that which God has given to the man. God created the man first and to him

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[12] 1 Corinthians 11:8-9.

[13] Iain M. Duguid, "Genesis," in *Genesis–Numbers*, ed. Iain M. Duguid, James M. Hamilton Jr., and Jay Sklar, vol. 1, ESV Expository Commentary (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2025), 55.

was given the primary role of headship and responsibility of leadership. This is evident before the Fall so male headship should be seen as part of God's original design and not as a corrupt result of the entrance of sin into the world. We will also see this role distinction become evident in the next chapter in the event of the Fall, for God will go first to the man for an accounting, rather than first to the woman. Notice that the subordination in role of the wife is counterbalanced by an exaltation of her priority by her husband above every other human relationship.

> 24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. 25 And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed. Genesis 2:24-25 (ESV)

These is no longer the words of Adam, but rather Moses' commentary on the nature of marriage and the relationship between a husband and wife. Moses is here interpreting God's original design, which Adam has praised. Moses is rightly reflecting God's creative plan, for when Jesus was once questioned about the nature of marriage, He quoted these very words and explained that they came form God Himself (see Math 19:4-6).

Man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife (v.24). A husband is to respond to his wife by *putting her in the position of the highest relational priority—above father and mother*. Jewish children were taught not merely to respect, but to "revere"[14] their parents. Parents were second only to God. Yet, here we see the command that upon marriage the parental loyalty of a husband is to be immediately subordinated by a higher loyalty, respect, devotion, and allegiance for his wife. The needs of his wife are to be first in mind of the husband. A husband is to *leave* the once supreme esteem for and allegiance to his parents and "*hold fast*" (cling to, cleave, stick to) to a new priority for his wife.

They shall become one flesh (v.24). The "one flesh" union being described is not merely speaking about sexual oneness, but rather the entire nature of the married relationship. The husband is to think of his wife as being one with himself, as being the same as his own flesh. He is to think of her as an extension of his own body. This is why the apostle Paul said,

> …Husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. 29 For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes it and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church…"
> Ephesians 5:28-29 (ESV)

Paul wrote these words to the Christians in Ephesus because of this truth revealed in Genesis 2:21-24, because in the next sentence (Eph 5:31) Paul quotes this verse (Gn 2:24).

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[14] Leviticus 19:3.

That the man and his wife were "*both naked and not ashamed*" points to the reality that there should be no barriers between them. There should be no hinderance to the intimacy of their relationship. There should be no secrets. There should be no hidden offenses or unresolved issues. They each are completely open and totally vulnerable before one another. There should be no defensive armor and weapons of aggression. The relationship between husband and wife is to be one of complete comfort, sweet security, peaceful permeance. A husband and wife ought be separated only if one's flesh ought to be separated from one's bones.

IV. Conclusion

In conclusion, we can think about the origin of marriage and the priority of marriage.

1. The origin of marriage: ***Mankind was created for community***.
    A. First, Adam and Eve are presented in the Bible as the historical first parents of humanity who became living breathing human beings, not by way of purely naturalistic, mechanistic, random, godless processes, but rather by the direct, intentional, creative, and personal work and will of God. Adam was not formed by the accidental, meaningless processes of evolution, but rather by the intentional, purposeful, and skillful hand of God, created out of dust, not out of preexisting biological material. Eve was intentionally formed out of Adam's rib, by the masterful fingers of God she was not selected out of a group of roughly 10,000 evolving hominids.
        - Accepting the Biblical account creation does not mean you can never be a scientist. The world has been changed by Christians who were also scientists and operated from a biblical worldview. Consider such men as Nicolaus Copernicus, Isaac Newton, Galileo Galilei, Johannes Kepler, Blaise Pascal, Robert Boyle, Michael Faraday, James Clerk Maxwell, and many others, including many of you in this room who are scientists, biologists, doctors, and researchers.
    B. Second, God created the first man and then later created the first woman so that the man would not be alone. God created the first woman as a "*helper fit for him.*" How was she "fit for him?"
        1. *Continual companion*. In all of God's good creation, He noted that it was "not good for man to be alone." Animals are not sufficient human companions. They are good as far as they go, but they are insufficient to supply the kind of companionship for which God intends humans to enjoy. God created woman and man to enjoy a continual relationship of mutual companionship. Both were equally created in the image of God, both equally created in the likeness of God, and both were created in the same flesh and bone to enjoy physical human companionship and closeness. Both were intended to find companionship in each other.

2. *Complementary partner*. There are at least two expressions of this partnership to be mentioned, though more ways could certainly be expounded upon.

    A. Partnership in procreation and parenting. God's first blessing and command to the first couple was that they "*be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth*" (Gn 1:28). Fulfilling this purpose and blessing necessitated man being created as both male and female. Children need both a mother and a father. Both are needed and neither are optional. Thus, childbearing requires a partnership between husband and wife.

    B. Partnership in exercise of dominion. The second blessing and command given to the first couple was to exercise dominion over all the earth (Gn 1:26, 28). This command was given to *both* of them—not one or the other individually but to them both, which means that neither the man nor the woman can complete this command without the other. Man is to be the primary leader in the family, but not the sole dominator. Appropriately exercising this dominion over the earth requires a shared partnership between husband and wife.

    C. Partnership in application of life wisdom.

    D. Partnership in accurate discernment.

    E. Partnership in personal sanctification.

    F. Partnership in wise leadership.

2. The priority of marriage: ***Marriage is part of God's plan for the majority of humanity***.

    A. *The majority of humanity is called to marriage, while a minority is called to celibacy*. Jesus never married and the apostle Paul never married. Thus, some people are clearly given the gift of singleness, while the majority of humanity is called to marriage, which carries the unique blessing to "*be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth*" (1:28). God is not concerned about overpopulation. God is pleased with families, children, and filling the earth with His image-bearers.

    B. *The prominence of marriage reveals God's plan and design for humanity entails two sexes, male and female*. There are not 47 different sexes. There are two; male and female. God Himself decided who is born male and who is born female. It is a rejection of God's creation order to attempt to alter His choice. God's original design for creation is good. Things go badly wrong when we deviate from God's design.

        - There is much sexual brokenness in this world. We the church, the people of God, must patiently and lovingly help those who are confused about their sexual identity. We must speak this truth in love.[15] We must speak this truth and it must be spoken

[15] Ephesians 4:15.

in love.[16] It is unloving to allow someone to believe a lie.[17] Those who have been sexually wounded and abused ought to be able to find the church to be a redemptive place in which to recover a biblical understanding of humanity sexuality.

C. *Marriage is defined by one man and one woman*. Marriage is God's idea. He created and thus He—and he alone—has the right and authority to define it. His divine plan for humanity is clearly laid out for us and His plan for marriage is limited to one man and one woman.

Do These Conclusions Apply to Today?

Do these conclusions apply to us today? Genesis is an ancient book. Perhaps these principles are best left in an ancient time. Shouldn't we update our beliefs and move beyond these outdated practices? Isn't this merely an allegorical story rather than a historical record?

Jesus was once questioned about divorce and he answered based upon Genesis 2 (see Mt 19:4-7). Jesus' answer revealed that he believed Genesis 2 was not an allegorical story but rather an accurate historical record.

- He affirmed God's direct creation of Adam and Eve,
- He affirmed the reality of two sexes (i.e. male and female),
- He affirmed that a husband's allegiance and devotion to his wife is to be prioritized above all other family relationships,
- He affirmed that marriage is defined as being between one man and one woman, and
- He affirmed that husband and wife are to be thought of as two personas joined into one flesh, one body, by God Himself, which ought not be separated.

The apostle Paul made this same affirmation in several places in his letters, but most clearly in Ephesians 5:22-33 where Paul affirmed that the husband is the head of his wife and that a husband ought to love his wife as he loves his own body and he quotes this chapter (ie. Gn 2). Paul concludes that what is happening in *marriage is like a mysterious living parable revealing to the world Christ's love for His church*.

> Husbands, marital headship is primarily yours, but if we were take a close look at your marriage, would we see the love of Jesus manifested in the privacy of your home? If we were to listen in on your daily conversations with your wife, would we conclude that your words and conversations were Christlike? If your actions and words toward your wife were to be exposed for a full-length feature film, what rating would it receive? If Jesus were to sit down next to you and say, "Let's talk about your leadership in your

[16] Ephesians 4:25.
[17] Ephesians 4:25; Colossians 3:9.

home?" Would your eyes hold his gaze or would your knees start to tremble and your hands start to shake?

Husbands, when you look at your wife does your heart swell with delight and you cry out with Adam, "At last! Bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh?" Do you think of your wife as part of your own body? Do you treat your wife as an extension of your own flesh and bone? Do you speak to her as you expect to be spoken to? Do you care for her like you care for your own hands and feet? Do you view her as a necessary partner, a cherished companion, and as a happy helper? Have you prioritized her above every other human relationship?

Husbands, Genesis 2 tells us we ought to be delightful leaders not domineering commanders. Matthew Henry wrote,

> That the woman was made of a rib out of the side of Adam; not made out of his head to rule over him, nor out of his feet to be trampled upon by him, but out of his side to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected, and near his heart to be beloved."[18]

Husbands, hear the words of Holy Scripture.

> Love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself for her.
> Ephesians 5:25

> Love your wives and do not be harsh with them.
> Col 3:19

> Live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to her as the weaker vessel, since she is co-heir with you in God's grace, so that your prayers will not be hindered.
> 1 Peter 3:7

Thus, everything in this chapter still applies to us today. ***All principles rooted in God's original creation design, still apply today.*** These principles are transcultural.

- Every human being is still to be thought of as created in the image of God.
- Human life on earth is to be understood as resulting from the intentional, purposeful creative will of God, not from the accidental, purposeless results of random biological processes.
- Marriage is to be seen as a blessing not a death sentence.

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[18] Matthew Henry, *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 10.

- The marital relationship is to be held in the highest esteem by all. Sex is God's gift to husband and wife alone, not to boyfriend and girlfriend and not to fiancee or roommates.
- There are two sexes, male and female and marriage is defined as the life-long union between one man and one woman.
- Children are to be seen as gifts from God, not unnecessary burdens to be sacrificed to the god of self-autonomy.
- Wives are to be cherished, not abused.
- Marriage is to be understood as mirror to the world of Christ's love of His bride, the church.

May the Lord helps us to embrace these truths in our lives today.

V. Discussion Questions

1. God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone." What does this teach us about God's design for human relationships? What are some ways we can wrongly try to satisfy our deepest relational needs apart from God and the relationships He has provided?
2. Genesis 2 describes marriage as a "one flesh" relationship in which husband and wife leave, cleave, and become one. What does this teach us about the priorities, commitment, and intimacy that should characterize Christian marriage?
3. The sermon challenges husbands to exercise leadership that reflects the love of Christ rather than domination. For husbands: where is your leadership most clearly Christlike, and where might you need to grow? For wives: what qualities of godly leadership and partnership help a marriage flourish?
4. Looking at Genesis 2 as a whole, what is one truth about God's design for humanity that you most need to remember or apply right now? What is one specific change you could make this week in your relationship with God, your work, your family, or your marriage as a result of what we have studied?

5. The sermon emphasizes that the word helper does not imply inferiority, since Scripture also describes God Himself as our helper. How should this understanding shape the way men and women view one another, particularly in marriage? What are some practical ways a husband and wife can recognize and value each other's God-given strengths? (Gn 2:18-20)
6. The sermon teaches that both men and women are equally created in the image of God and that human companionship is part of God's original design. How should these truths shape the way Christians treat people who are lonely, overlooked, elderly, widowed, or unmarried? What could our church do to better reflect God's concern for human relationships and community? (Genesis 1:26–27; 2:18)
7. According to the sermon, husbands and wives are complementary partners in parenting, exercising dominion over creation, applying wisdom, discerning what is right, and growing in holiness. Which of these areas presents the greatest opportunities or challenges for Christian couples today? How can spouses learn to work together rather than compete with or undermine one another? (Genesis 1:28; 2:18–23)
8. The sermon teaches that a husband is to prioritize his wife above every other human relationship and to care for her as he cares for his own body. What are some ways that work, parenting, extended family, hobbies, or personal ambitions can compete with this priority? What practical changes might help married Christians honor the biblical priority of their marriage?(Genesis 2:24; Ephesians 5:28–29)
9. The sermon concludes that marriage is intended to display Christ's love for His church. How does Christ's sacrificial love challenge a husband's understanding of leadership and a wife's understanding of partnership? In what specific ways could a Christian marriage make the gospel more visible to children, friends, and unbelieving neighbors? (Ephesians 5:25–33)