

Creation: Fulfilled part 2
Genesis 2:18-25

Introduction: There are many things that are confusing in life. Why the DMV is so slow, why is gas so expensive, and why do the ladies get a couch in their bathroom? There may be answers out there, but confusion still reigns.

There is great confusion today when it comes to the purpose and personhood of men and women. What does it mean to be a man? Are men supposed to be like women? What is the purpose of marriage? Is there meaning in sex? Where are all the men? Why is marriage so hard? Why won't my husband love me the way I need? Why won't my wife follow me? Will I ever find happiness in a relationship?

The answer to these questions is found in our origin story, from Genesis 2 and 3.

Perfect Placement of Man in the Garden (4-14)

Explanation of "generations" or spotlight on mankind

Man created in a real location

Righteous Responsibility Given to Man (15-17)

Eden was a place of work, not relaxation

Work is hard, but was designed as an act of worship -

We are designed to work 6 days, and rest 1 -

Test Required: Moral agency, not moral autonomy

1. Mankind was created as free standing moral agents, but not with moral autonomy -.
2. Adam was given this command BEFORE Eve was created -

Creative Covenant Gifted to Man (18-25)

¹⁸Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." ¹⁹Now 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. ²⁰The 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. ²¹So 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. ²²And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. ²³Then the man said,

"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."

²⁴Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. ²⁵And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

First thing *lacking* in God's creation

All that God created was good, meaning it was not tainted by sin, death, or brokenness. There was no disease, weeds, or sickness. This culminated in the creation of mankind, which was *very good*. As we come to verse 18, we see that there was the first mention of something **NOT BEING GOOD**. This was not something that was sinful or morally corrupt, but rather that recognition that man was not created to be alone, isolated, or outside of relationship. We were created to have an ongoing, worshipful, intimate relationship with God Himself, but also to play that out together. The creation of Eve and establishment of marriage did NOT mean everyone had to be married to experience this, but rather that it is in the context of interpersonal relationships that we are to glorify God. We have said it before that we want everything that we do here in our church to revolve around relationships. This means that we need each other, playing out the **one-another's** in our pursuit of God through Christ. One of the greatest deceptions that our enemy will throw at us, besides the temptation for self-autonomy, is the fact that no one understands us, or no one is like us, so we move away from people rather than toward them. It is not good for us to be alone since we were created to walk life together, encouraging each other toward love and good deeds.

Study in equality and difference

Now, besides the creation of the institution of marriage, we see how God created men and women. This point cannot be stressed enough, as in our world and churches today, this is misunderstood, fought against, with a desire to create something that God never intended. Here is what we learn from Genesis 2 about men and women:

Men and women are equal - Both men and women were created in the image of God, meaning there was no subset or language of better/worse. This means that both men and women have high value, dignity, and honor. Men and women are fellow heirs of the promise of salvation, meaning we come to Christ the same way. That is why Paul said "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus." (Gal. 3:28). It's obvious that there were differences among the comparisons, but in Christ all are one. There is nowhere in Scripture where men and women are valued differently, or that their personhood and dignity are differentiated, or that men are seen as better/worse than women. It is imperative that we see this. When Adam first saw the woman God had created, there is no sense that he saw her as anything but his equal. His first statement was a poem of commitment, a covenant that he pledged to her. He did not see her as a servant or slave, weak or less than, but a co-heir and partner in the purpose of glorifying God in the Garden.

Men and women are different - This seems so obvious, but needs to be clarified. Differences are not bad, wrong, or diminishing. Differences between men and women are **God given with purpose**. Our culture today is trying its best to nullify the differences, which not only leads to confusion but demotivates men to act like Biblical men and women to act like Biblical women. Here is what we see in Genesis 2:

Adam and Eve were created in a different order - God created Adam first, and then formed Eve out of the flesh of his side. Not only did this mean Adam had responsibility over the animals and earth, he was given leadership over the home. **1 Timothy 2:12** cites the created order when talking about functions in God's church "For Adam was formed first, then Eve."

Adam and Eve had different roles - Which role was easier, Adam's or Eve's? Which was more advantageous? Which would you rather have? The answer is that they are both difficult and actually

impossible apart from the filling of the Spirit (Eph. 5:18) and redemption in the gospel. In Genesis, we see clear roles. 1) Eve was created to be a helpmate, a helper for Adam as he pursued the God given purpose in the Garden. 2) Adam named the animals, which was the first expression of dominion over the earth. Adam also gave Eve her name (she shall be called Woman). This meant that Adam had responsibility of leadership over his wife to provide, protect, serve and guard her. 3) Adam was given a command by God, not Eve - Adam was to guide her in the truth, just as husbands today (Eph. 5:25-28). This is in play today in the home and church, as men are given the **responsibility** to shepherd God's flock (1 Peter 5:1-5; 1 Timothy 3:1-8; Titus 1:5-9). Does this mean women have no responsibility? By no means. Titus 2 shows us how men and women function similarly in training and teaching, men with men and women with women. Men and women have different strengths, as Paul said he functioned like a mother and father (1 Thess. 2:8-13). Remember, Adam's responsibility will be seen glaringly when, even though Eve sinned first, Adam was held responsible for allowing sin to enter into the world, not Eve (Rom. 5:12).

Adam and Eve had different physiologies - Back in Genesis 2, we see that men and women were called to procreate as part of the created order. Each had a different role in this, as Eve was designed to carry children, not Adam. Is this demeaning? By no means. It was out of the seed of the woman that the Savior would come (Gen. 3:15; 1 Tim. 2:15).

Adam and Eve were created equal yet different. When they each played their roles, they had an opportunity to glorify God together, encouraging each other to pursue the purpose by which they were created. We need each other. *Why is this so hard today?* Genesis 3 messed everything up.

First Established Institution: Purpose, roles, and freedom in marriage

How did the roles and distinctiveness play out in creation? They were perfectly expressed in the institution of marriage. Marriage is God's creation, a divine design and not a cultural construction. When government recognizes marriage, it is recognizing what God made, not something they made up themselves. What we see in Genesis 2 is the way marriage was intended to lived out rather than figuring out how to work through our sin and brokenness, which is what we do today.

Adam's Call to fulfill in the Garden

Adam was perfect yet incomplete. He was given a call to fill the earth, subdue it, have dominion over it, and multiply throughout the earth. NONE OF THIS could have been done on his own. As he exercised the first part of dominion by naming the animals brought to him it was clear that he could not be an image bearer with delegated authority without someone to help him. None of the animals corresponded to him (2:20), meaning they could not help him accomplish the purpose for which he was created. So Eve was created as a **helper fit for him**, an *ezer kenegdo*, who would play the role of perfectly suited, equal yet different helper for him.

Now, when we hear this today with our culturally tainted ears and hearts effected by the Fall, we can easily hear the idea of **helper** as lesser. But when the Old Testament used the word **ezer** in reference to God and Israel, **God is seen as the helper** (Exodus 18:4 Deut 33:7, 26, 29; Psalm 33:20; 115:9-11). By no means is God weak or secondary, but by nature is strong and able to help Israel in her distress. Eve, and by extension women, were created to complement Adam/men to fulfill all that God had commanded. This is not a knock on intellect, ability, or value but simply and expression of role. This made no judgment on personality type, gifting, or talents but on the God ordained structure of responsibility.

Adam's Care & Provision for his wife

Notice that what we talked about last week comes into play when we see what Adam was to do in terms of care in his soon to be instituted marriage. In verses 15-17, we see that Adam was to work and keep the Garden of Eden, meaning that work was part of his design, not a result of the Fall, and he was given a God spoken command not to eat of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, a single moral test to see if he'd trust the moral autonomy of God alone or claim it for himself. These two areas resonate in marriage and leadership today. Men are called to lead by **provision and care**, in terms of physical and spiritual leadership. This means men are called to **work hard** in their vocation, modeling a tireless ethic of work as worship, both at a job and in the home. At a job, one who is known for labor and integrity, and at home as the lead servant. Many men believe that when they are home, work is done and they can simply be served. However, service to our wives and kids only begins when we enter the front door.

The **second**, and perhaps more important, is the fact that men are given charge of **spiritual leadership**. God gave Adam the command or moral testing, and he was supposed to not only teach that to his wife, but **protect** her with that information, which we will see gets tested at the beginning of chapter 3. Adam was **responsible** for the welfare of his wife, as well as her fall into deception. Ephesians 5:25-27 tells us that part of loving our wives as Christ loved the church is recognizing that a goal is her **sanctification or holiness**, knowing that she will be presented *back* to Christ one day. Our wives should be more like Christ at the end of our marriage than in the beginning of it. This means that men need to work just as hard or even harder at the spiritual component of leadership than the physical. A husband must be able to guide his family in the Scripture in terms of **purpose, direction, and decision making**. A wife who is willing to follow should be given the assurance that the reasoning for a decision, a "yes" or a "no" is rooted in the reality of God's Word, not in mere opinion. Unfortunately, this is one of those areas that men struggle in, both in **execution and effort**. There is not excuse, other than we must look to Christ and rest in His grace to move from passive to active in our leadership. Does this mean wives are simply there when her husband rings? By no means. In fact, it is a sign of strength to buoy up a leader, to exercise initiative, gifting and ability so the whole family can thrive without being in a position of leaderships and ultimate responsibility. As we will see in the coming chapter, the weight of both rolls in immense, neither is *easier*, and each require us to walk by the Spirit to fulfill.

Adam's Commitment to his marriage

Covenants are not easily broken

But where is the mention of marriage here? The answer comes in Adam's response to Eve's appearing before him. After naming all the animals, it was clear that none of them was adequate and each of them existed in pairs, which he was missing. So God performed the first surgery, putting Adam asleep and taking out part of the bone and flesh from his side. When he woke up, what he saw forever changed his life. He did what men have done for centuries: *he wrote poetry* (he may have even sung a ballad!). His words tell us his intention. At last this was now "*bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh.*" This had literal implication toward the scar on his side but had deeper significance. In **2 Samuel 5:1 and 9:13**, this was language of both **family and covenant**, commitment from one party to the other. Today we may say, "they are our flesh and blood", meaning a different relationship than even close friends. Adam was committing his life to this woman, the one who was perfectly created to complete and correspond to him. This kind of covenant was **lifelong and not easily broken**. In fact this is the kind of covenant God made with Abraham (Gen. 15, 17; cf. Jer. 34:18-19). He split apart a cow, ram, and goat, which symbolized what would happen if He broke the covenant. In other words, this language was serious, not a flippant oral contract that could be dissolved by "irreconcilable differences."

There is significance in what Adam called the woman. Not only did he exercise loving responsibility IN naming her, but he called her *isha*, which is a play on words from the name of man, which is *ish*. She was *isha*, taken from man (see 1 Cor. 11:2-12 for the significance of male headship). The other play on the root of this word is it means "**soft**". This did not mean the opposite of tough, but meant he saw in her beauty, attraction, and preciousness, something priceless. This was not an exertion of male dominance but expression of caring, affectionate love. He saw her and was willing to commit to her for life.

Parameters of marriage bonds given

This interaction vividly explains God's intention in marriage. Marriage again is NOT a social construct that will change and flex over time, but is by nature and definition timeless. It is mirrored in no less than Christ and the church!

"For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body. 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.' This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church."

Eph. 5:29-32

Marriage gives us an experiential way to understand Christ's love for His bride. A husband takes his cue from Christ in loving his wife, but also understands what it means to submit to the leadership of Christ himself. A wife can only play her role of helpmate and willingly submit unless she first does so under the Lordship of Jesus. But it also tells us that marriage is to be between **one man and one woman, in a committed, monogamous relationship that is for life until one or the other passes away**. Any other form of marriage is NOT what God designed not is it one that He recognizes, it is simply something else, a cultural invention to satisfy our rebellion against God's divine design. Genesis 2 must inform us of what is timeless to be able to uphold and hold fast to what He created.

Sexual intimacy gives vivid, ongoing sign

Finally, we see that the command to leave and cleave was given **BEFORE** the Fall, meaning it was perfectly intended. Along with this, there is the recognition of two becoming one flesh, which speaks to sexual intimacy in marriage. Verse 25 gives us a glorious truth, that Adam and Eve were naive to evil and thus immune to shame, so they approached each other openly and in purity. This helps us understand a few truths of the purpose behind sexual intimacy in marriage:

- **It was created to be worshipful** - When Adam and Eve fulfilled the call to being one or *echad*, they were obedient to the call of God, which by definition is worship.
- **It was created for procreation** - In order to fill the earth with worshippers, men and women would create new families from their offspring. It means that our children are raised to leave our families, to cleave to their own wives, and no longer be under our authority. Remember, a class we should probably teach is a pre-marital counseling class for in-laws, who must embrace the idea that when our kids leave our house and get married, we no longer function the same as parents, but reinforce and rejoice in the leadership and submission that take place in the formation of a new family.
- **It was created for enjoyment** - They were naked but unashamed. They had not looked at porn and thus did not compare themselves with others. They were selfless in their expression, since they were not selfishly motivated. There was gentleness, intimacy, communication, and satisfaction. There was no manipulation, withholding, or quid pro quo in their pursuit of each other, but enjoyment was full. **Proverbs 5** uses words like satisfaction and exhilaration when

describing sexual intimacy in marriage when it enjoyed within those confines and Adam and Eve had that to the fullest.

- **It was a sign of the covenant** - Sex was designed to take place within marriage alone and when it does, it is worshipful and enjoyable. It is also a vivid, ongoing, repeatable act that reminds us that marriage is **two becoming one flesh**, and is the ultimate act of intimacy where a wife is willing to allow her husband in her. This is why it is NOT designed for personal gratification, but rather for mutual intimacy.

There is far too much confusion out there about what the roles of men and women are in the home and the church. Men are called to take loving, caring, providing, protecting, responsible leadership and wives are to come alongside and help their husbands accomplish the purpose by which we were created, to glorify God in the world. What we feel is NOT how God created it, but how its been corrupted by sin and the brokenness produced by the Fall. We will look next week at how Satan's first attack was on the home, creating confusion and hastening the sin of Adam. This has had consequences felt today, that can only be overcome in the gospel of Jesus Christ. But we should not be confused. Men we need to lead by physically and spiritually. Wives, you need to come alongside to support your husbands. Young people, you are to trust that sexual relationships are only worshipful in marriage, and ANY other expression OUTSIDE of marriage is SIN. This is not unclear, but does reveal our sinful, rebellious heart, that finds forgiveness in Christ alone.