

MARRIAGE IN PARADISE

Genesis 2:18-25

INTRODUCTION

- There are differences between men and women, and there are differences between the roles of husband and wife
- This is what is called *complementarianism* – the view that men and women have been created equally in God's image but have different yet complementary roles
- We are unashamedly complementarian because the Bible is complementarian from the opening chapters of Genesis
- The traditional complementarian view of marriage has been replaced with the new egalitarian view of marriage, where the husband is not the head, and the wife is not in subjection to him
- We can see the awful fruits of our society's rejection of the Biblical pattern for the home in the high prevalence of divorce, the rejection and redefining of marriage, single-parent homes, the disintegration of the family, and children traumatised and confused as to who they are or how they should live
- The teaching of the Scripture is completely contrary to the philosophy of the world
- Ungodly women will devise their reasons for rejecting God's order:
 - ✓ "It would make me of lesser value or worth"
 - ✓ "My husband will take advantage of my submission and abuse his power"
 - ✓ "I don't like being told what to do"
 - ✓ "The world would mock me if I obeyed my husband"
- Such an attitude shows both the danger of trusting in the fallen wisdom of man, and of failing to trust God

- When men and women go outside of the roles that God has designed us for, it leads to devastating consequences, and we are witnessing this on every side in our society today
- Even the world recognises our inherent characteristics, given by God, that distinguish the masculine from the feminine

MASCULINE	FEMININE
Methodological	Empathetical
Duty	Emotions
Leadership	Support
Competitive	Cooperative
Combative	Gentle
Warrior	Nurturer
Firm	Soft
Strong	Weak

- None of these qualities are negative – they are all good and all needed – but they demonstrate how perfectly the male and the female sexes are suited to complement each other, and how wise our God is in making us this way
- This account of the creation of the woman in Genesis 2 is foundational to the rest of the Scripture’s teaching on the roles of men and women in the family, the church and in society
 - ✓ It is cited in the forbidding of divorce (Malachi 2:14-16 Matthew 19:3-9)
 - ✓ It is cited to forbid fornication (1 Corinthians 6:16-17)
 - ✓ It is cited when addressing the role of women in the church (1 Timothy 2:9-15)
 - ✓ It is cited in relation to head coverings in the church (1 Corinthians 11:3-16)
 - ✓ It is cited to show that husbands must love their wives and that wives must submit to their husbands (Ephesians 5:22-33)
- Rejection of male headship has deep theological implications – it confuses the very nature of the Godhead, on which the hierarchy of marriage is modelled

I. THE MOTIVATION FOR A WOMAN IN THE MAN (18-20)

A. "It is not good that the man should be alone"

1. Over the six days of creation God declares his creation as "good" seven times
2. But here for the first time God says that something is "not good"
3. This is not something evil or defective in the creation, but something incomplete
4. God is speaking within the communion of the Persons of the Godhead as in 1:26
5. Why was it not good for Adam to be alone?
 - a. It was not good for Adam himself, being a social creature
 - b. It was not good for humanity, as he had no capacity to procreate (cf. 1:28)
 - c. It was not good for the glory of God – one man worshipping alone must be expanded into the corporate worship of the whole congregation of the saints
6. Adam *did* have communion with other beings before Eve was created
 - a. With God as his superior
 - b. With the lower creatures as his inferiors
 - c. But not with his *equal*

B. The need of "an help meet" for man

1. "Meet" means "fit; suitable; proper; qualified; convenient; adapted, as to a use or purpose" (Webster)
2. Most basically it means "a suitable helper" for man
3. But more than this it refers to one who corresponds to the man, one who is "*altogether like to him in shape and constitution,*

disposition and affection; a second self; or one to be at hand and near to him, to stand continually before him, familiarly to converse with him, to be always ready to succour, serve, and comfort him; or one whose eye, respect, and care, as well as desire, Ge 3:16, should be to him, whose business it shall be to please and help him” (Matthew Poole)

4. To regard the role of “helper” as somehow inferior is a slight against God himself, who delights to call himself our “Helper” (Psalm 54:4; Hebrews 13:6)
5. The role of helper is far from being diminished, but is rather an exalted position that even God assumes

C. The naming of the animals

1. There appears to be several reasons why God at this point on day six had Adam name the animals
 - a. To acquaint Adam with the animals
 - b. To confirm Adam’s authority over the animals (cf. 1:26,28)
 - c. To teach Adam the importance of order in creation
 - d. To show him his need for a suitable companion
2. The animals named by Adam extended only to “cattle”, “fowl of the air” and “every beast of the field”
3. If there were 3000 of these animals, Adam could have named them in about five hours (one every six seconds), allowing enough time to complete this task on the sixth day
4. This feat of naming the animals on the same day he was created shows the high level of intelligence and reason God imparted to Adam
5. Note that v.19 is the first occurrence of the name “Adam” which is derived from the Hebrew word for “earth” (*adamah*)

II. THE MAKING OF THE WOMAN FROM THE MAN (21-22)

A. The deep sleep of Adam

1. God demonstrates his power in putting men to sleep both physically (Genesis 15:12; 1 Samuel 26:12) and spiritually (Isaiah 29:10; Romans 11:8)
 2. The verbal form of this noun describes Jonah's sleep, which was not broken even by the stormy tempest at sea (Jonah 1:5-6)
 3. This account inspired physician James Simpson (1811-1870) to pioneer methods of anaesthesia
- B. The woman made from Adam's rib
1. Rib bones have a unique characteristic that other human bones don't – they have the ability to regrow, as long as the periosteum (a membrane that covers every bone) is left intact
 2. The word for "made" (*banah*) is one not previously used and has the meaning of "built"
 3. This is the very final act of creation to bring to completion God's marvellous work (Psalm 139:14)
 4. *"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."* (Matthew Henry)
 5. The woman formed from the man does not in any way imply inferiority of her to the man, even as man being formed from the ground in no way implies inferiority of him to the ground
 6. Moreover *both* Adam and Eve are said to be made in God's image, showing their equality of standing before God (1:27)
- C. A type of Christ and the church
1. Adam's bride was formed from his wounded side as he slept
 2. Christ's bride, the church was formed from his wounded body, even as he slept in death

III. THE MARRIAGE OF THE WOMAN TO THE MAN (23-25)

A. Adam's joyful reception of his wife

1. "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh" – Adam recognised the woman to be just like him – not a replica or copy of himself, but the perfect counterpart of himself
2. The word "woman" (*ishah*) sounds similar to the Hebrew word translated "man" (*ish*)

B. The first marriage

1. Marriage is the forming of a new family unit – the man (and by implication the woman) leaves his parents to constitute a new family with his wife
2. This is both a physical and emotional separation from both sets of parents, marking a relative independence from them, while maintaining filial responsibilities to them (Exodus 20:12)
3. They must cleave to one another
 - a. Physical consummation is integral to the marriage bond, yet this alone does not constitute marriage
 - b. Marriage is a covenantal bond between a man and a woman (Malachi 2:14)
 - c. "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge." (Hebrews 13:4)
4. Two become one flesh
 - a. Marriage is the closest, most intimate human bond, where two people become one flesh
 - b. This shows that marriage can only be heterosexual – man and woman
 - c. This shows God's intent for marriage is monogamy – one man, one woman, for life

- d. Though God permitted polygamous marriage even among his saints, this was a deviation from the original design and invariably resulted in negative consequences
 - e. From this and other Scriptures we see that God intends for marriage to continue unbroken until one of the spouses dies
5. “And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.” (Matthew 19:4-6)
6. They were naked and not ashamed – in their sinless state of innocence, there was a physical and emotional openness between the man and the woman, which would soon be marred by sin

CONCLUSION

1. Of all the human institutions (such as nations, governments, church, schools, etc), the institution of marriage is preeminent
 - ✓ It is the first created
 - ✓ It was established by God
 - ✓ It was established before the fall, on the sixth day of creation
2. Marriage is the original and foundational human institution
3. The significance of marriage is seen in its patterning of the Divine Trinity
4. The significance of marriage is seen in its picturing of God’s relationship with his covenant people
 - ✓ The LORD and Israel
 - ✓ Christ and the church
5. It is no wonder that Satan has made marriage a major target of his attacks through:
 - ✓ Divorce
 - ✓ Defacto relationships

- ✓ Fornication
- ✓ Adultery
- ✓ Prostitution
- ✓ Pornography
- ✓ Polygamy
- ✓ Sodomy
- ✓ Bestiality
- ✓ Transgenderism

6. It is not God's will that every person must marry – some are called to celibacy (1 Corinthians 7:7-9)
7. The Lord Jesus, in the days of his flesh, never married
8. The circumstances of life leave many people without a spouse
9. The need for companionship remains with us, and God has given the church as a spiritual family wherein many of our social needs can be met (cf. Matthew 12:46-50)
10. Though men and women are equal in their standing before God, each have been given different roles in within the institutions God has ordained: in the home, in the church and in civil government
11. A mark of a godless and dysfunctional society is weak men and dominating women
12. As Christians, we must demonstrate in our marriages and homes the proper order and hierarchy God has ordained, regardless of how contrary it is to the prevailing attitudes of our culture