

## Genesis 2:18-24

Pentecost 20; October 6 & 7, 2024

Husbands – I have a question for you. What did you give your wife for your last anniversary? Second question – Did you give your wife a gift for your last anniversary? I can't answer that question for you, but I can answer it for myself. Nothing. After all, she has me, what else would you want. Right? (She could say the same thing to me, but she is better than I am.) As strange as it may sound, we don't usually give each other gifts for most occasions in our life. We are both okay with that. We would rather do something, get something that we can both enjoy. For us, 38 years later, it works. It also keeps things simple.

Yet, as simple as that sounds, we all know that marriage takes some work. I'm not saying that it is bad work, but there is some work that both spouses need to do. Over the years, I wouldn't even know how many couples that I have married. But I think it is fair to say, that every couple wants to have a marriage made in heaven. Marriage sounds simple. After all, you have two people who love each other more than anyone else in the world. You want to build a home with them. You want to have a family together. You plan to have a future together. Marriage puts you in the same space. You have many things in common. Yet, you have two people who are opposite of each other or are like each other together for the rest of their life. God has blessed us with families. Every husband, every wife, every parent, and child is a gift from God whom we can receive his love and to whom we can show our love for God. So, followers of Christ love their families. So, in our text today, let us take a look at marriage, the foundation of the family.

**“The Lord God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.”** In other words, God performed the first marriage in heaven with Adam and Eve. Why? Marriage is really the whole reason for God creating everything in this world. He created this perfect world so that Adam and Eve would have the perfect place to live. When everything was created in this world, God said: Then God said, **“Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.”** So, God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.” There in the Garden of Eden, God made the perfect home, the perfect couple to live perfect forever. And it was good!

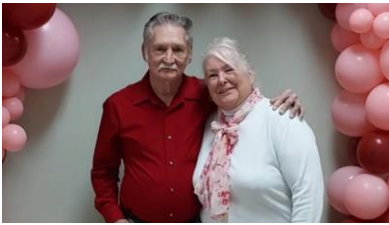
God first created Adam. Then God does this whole object lesson in the garden. **“Now the Lord God had formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds in the sky. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. So, the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds in the sky and all the wild animals.”** Have you ever wondered how that must have looked? Were animals in this ten-mile line marching in front of Adam? How do you come up with the names, instead of assigning them a number? The Bible doesn't tell how this all took place in less than a day. Maybe, it doesn't matter. No matter how God made this happen, the result was the same. **“But for Adam no suitable helper was found.”**

God's statement that it was not good for man to be alone implies that Adam was incomplete by himself. He had been created for relationship, and it is impossible to have relationship alone. With the creation of Eve, Adam experienced the joy of love for another person. **“Alone”** should not be confused with *“loneliness.”* What God wanted Adam to see was that he was not complete without Eve. **“Suitable helper”** has nothing to do with being an assistant, inferior, or anything like that. Adam was not complete without Eve. He created them to fit together like a puzzle.

Someone once said that God didn't take a piece of Adam's head, so that he could rule over Eve. God did not take a piece of his feet, so that he could trample over her. God took a piece of his side so that she might be his companion. God made men and women different. That's part of his design for families. Those differences make husband and wife complete. I read a phrase this week that I kind of liked. *“Men are like waffles and women are like a bowl of spaghetti.”* Any idea what was meant? As men, we like everything in its simple little box. We like to put everything in its own little compartment. That makes sense to us. As women, when we stick a fork in a bowl of spaghetti, you never know what might come out. You might go from painting the kitchen to don't you care for your family by not wanting to paint the wall. Why do you want to watch that football, am I not more important than the game. And we stand there and think: where did all that come from? All kidding aside, we really need both in our life as husbands and wives. God created us different and that's okay. When God gave Eve to Adam, he wanted them to be complete.

Yet, unfortunately, even if husband and wife are perfect for each other, we don't always treat each other perfectly do we. It didn't take long for Satan to attack that first marriage and caused them to not treat each other perfectly at all. Into this perfect marriage sin came. What does God do? He goes to the cross for every time you as husband and wife are not perfect to each other. He carries every excuse that we might make to the cross. We don't deserve that forgiveness, but yet he gives it to us again and again. Marriage gives the unique opportunity to put God's love into action as we love one another as God designed us.

I wonder how Adam looked when God gave Eve to him. I picture Adam standing there with a big grin on his face when he saw his bride walking down the aisle. He said to God: **"This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man."** Now they were complete. Marriage would now become their opportunity to show the incredible love that God had done for them in making a marriage in heaven. God's love could now flow to each other and they loved each other as one.



I read a story this week about an elderly South Carolina couple who were killed in their home as Hurricane Helene hammered the Southeast part of the country. *Marcia, 74, and Jerry Savage, 78, were found hugging each other in bed after the tree crashed through the bedroom of their Beech Island home, killing them. Their grandson, John Savage, told The Associated Press he had checked in on his grandparents to make sure they were OK only moments before tragedy struck while Helene raged outside. John Savage told the AP his grandparents were found in an embrace in bed, adding that the family believes it was God's plan to take them together, rather than let one suffer without the other. "When they pulled them out of there, my grandpa apparently heard the tree snap beforehand and rolled over to try and protect my grandmother," he said.* What an incredible expression of love.

Let us give thanks for all the blessings that God brings to marriages. May God help all of who are married to his love to our families and to each other. Amen.

Priorities