

Genesis 2:18-24 "What's a Family For?" (p.2)
Ajax Alliance Church. Sunday January 28th, 2024.

Genesis 2:18-24. [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**. [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**. [23] Then 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**." [24] Therefore a man shall **leave** his father and his mother and **hold fast** to his wife, and they shall become **one flesh**. (ESV)

One of the most memorable interviews of recent memory was when **Matt Walsh of the Daily Wire** was on the Dr. Phil show **discussing personhood** with those from the transgender community. What was striking in the **discussion** were the **definitions**. **When asked** as an example what was a woman, **Matt Walsh could point to chromosomes, body composition** and DNA that can all be **scientifically observable** and **verifiable objective criteria**. **When he asked the transgender panelists**, what was a woman, **they could not point to any objective criteria** but **left the definition** to however someone wants to define themselves. **What we are seeing is the result** of God giving people over to a **debased/reprobate mind** where **evident reality** is **denied**. It is **God's judgment upon a society** that will **not** see fit to **acknowledge Him as God (Rom. 1:28)**. (<https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/watch-matt-walsh-schools-transgender-activists-on-dr-phil-show/>)

For the first time in human history, the **definitions** of personhood, family, church, government and so on are **all being torn down** and **left to whoever in society yields the power** to both **define and enforce the exclusive viewpoint of their belief**. If we were to just **consider the family itself**, **what constitutes a family?** Who has a **legitimate role** in defining this? With **marriage considered a legal affair**, **the Canadian courts have created one of the broadest definitions in the world**. Whether it's considering the situation of **polygamy in**, to **homosexual unions** to even discussion of **underage joining's**, there continues to be **much debate on the makeup of a family**. **The ancient law of Israel**, was **designed to protect those who were commonly subject to abuse** by society of **those outside of the family**: the orphan, widow, and alien (e.g., levirate marriage, Deut 25:5–10). **This account here in Genesis defines the role and relationship of the man and woman and their relationship to one another in a family.**

When we **determine our roles as men and women**, what should **inform our opinion?** **What defines our primary reference:** Our own parents, experience, public role models or something else? **Where we take our bearings from** will be the **guide and benchmark** of how we act and what we promote.

Here in Genesis 2:18-24, God specifies What a Family is for. In three descriptions we see the purpose of a family through: 1) The Problem (Genesis 2:18-20), **2) The Provision** (Genesis 2:21-23), and **3) The Portrait** (Genesis 2:24) **of What a Family is For.**

In defining what a Family is for, first we must understand:

1) **The Problem** (Genesis 2:18-20)

Genesis 2:18-20. [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.** (ESV)

Everything thus far in Genesis that has been scrutinized by God has been given a **positive assessment.** Every situation has come through as either **good or very good.** The expression **not good** indicates that **these events** are **not a further continuation of chapter 1** and the creative week but **are part of that creative week (in day six).** **When God finished His creation (Gen. 1:31), He noted** that everything was very good. Thus, **until Eve was created the creative activity of God was not complete. This is the first time in the history of creation that God said, It is not good** (*KJV Bible commentary.* 1997 (18). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.). What is **not good,** is **man's lack of a corresponding companion.** "**Not good**" here is strong language. It indicates not only the **absence of something good** but a **substantial deficiency** (U. Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis, Part One* (Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 1989), pp. 126, 127.). **(From the pattern of forming and filling of creation): The skies without the luminaries and birds are incomplete. The seas without the fish are incomplete. Without mankind and land animals the earth is incomplete.** As a matter of fact, **every phenomenon in Gen. 1-2, God excepted,** is in need of something else to **complete it** and to **enable it to function** (Hamilton, V. P. (1990). *The Book of Genesis. Chapters 1-17.* The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (175). Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.). **The Lord God states this, not** because it is a thought that has come to him rather belatedly, and He now wants to remedy the oversight. No, **He speaks these words for man's guidance. Man is to know that he is dependent on the companionship** of other men, more particularly, that of a wife. **Marriage** will be the normal thing for the males of Adam's race. **The wives** God has provided are exactly **such helpers as the husbands need** (Franzmann, W. H. (1980). *Bible History Commentary: Old Testament* (34). Milwaukee, WI: Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod.).

- This should **not** be taken to mean that God intends for **every person to marry.** (**1 Corinthians 7** spells out) times when it would be better for a man or a woman to remain **single.** **God's observation (of this situation)** was that it was **not good** for Adam...to remain alone. ... **God's program** demanded that Adam have a mate. From the beginning **God looked forward to** the propagation of the race, the generation of the chosen people, and the coming of the Promised Seed (Smith, J. E. (1993). *The Pentateuch* (2nd ed.) (Ge 2:18-20). Joplin, Mo.: College Press Pub. Co.).

Please turn to Ecclesiastes 4 (p.520)

The Hebrew construction of Genesis 2:18 accentuates the negative phrase "not good" by placing it at the head of the sentence. **God has made the man** and provided a beautiful environment with honorable work. God then announces that **more is to be done** to achieve the ideal for the man. **God's concern** is that man is "**alone.**" **God has created human life to have fellowship** with him but also to be a social entity, **building relationships with other human beings.** **The implication of the narrative** is that in these areas of life, the family and worship, **man** stands in need of the woman's help. It is **not good** that he should be **alone.** (Sailhamer, J. H. (1990). *Genesis.* In F. E. Gaebelin (Ed.), *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers* (Vol. 2, p. 48). Zondervan Publishing House.)

This need is explained in Ecclesiastes 4

Ecclesiastes 4:1-12 [4:1] Again I saw all **the oppressions** that are done under the sun. And behold, the tears of the oppressed, and they had **no one to comfort them!** On the side of their oppressors there was **power**, and there was **no one to comfort them.** [2] And I thought the dead who are already **dead more fortunate than the living who are still alive.** [3] But better than both is he who has not yet been and has not **seen the evil deeds that are done under the sun.** [4] Then I saw that all **toil and all skill in work** come from a man's **envy of his neighbor.** This also is **vanity** and a **striving after wind.** [5] The **fool** folds his hands and eats his own flesh. [6] Better is a handful of quietness than two hands full of **toil and a striving after wind.** [7] Again, I saw **vanity** under the sun: [8] **one person who has no other**, either son or brother, yet there is **no end to all his toil**, and his eyes are **never satisfied** with riches, so that he **never asks, "For whom am I toiling and depriving myself of pleasure?"** This also is **vanity** and an **unhappy** business. [9] **Two are better than one**, because they have a good reward for their toil. [10] **For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow.** But **woe to him who is alone when he falls** and **has not another to lift him up!** [11] Again, **if two lie together, they keep warm**, but how can one keep warm alone? [12] And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him--**a threefold cord is not quickly broken.** (ESV)

- **Why has the church folded during this time** over the past two years: **isolation.** Well beyond legal mandates, **people have gotten used to being alone.** **Loneliness** is the greatest epidemic of our time. **When someone falls** into **despair, depression** or **despondency**, **when they are alone** there is **no one to lift them up.** **When they fall into sin** of commission or omission, there is **no one to lift them up.** **When their heart** becomes spiritually **cold** or they become **indifferent** to the lost, there is **no warmth of fellowship** to revive it. **God has designed saints** to work side by side in fellowship, **besides the exception**, for very few, for only a specified time, should anyone be alone. **The great danger** is that **the longer we are physically alone**, the **less** we strive to get back together. But **if we don't get physically back together**, **the collective design that God has for believers** just in all the corporate one another's are **not** done at the expense **our** isolated, individualistic peril.

We see back in **Genesis 2:18**, that **Isolation** is **not** the divine norm for human beings; **community** is the creation of God. **The community began** with a **helper.** There is a **dignity to this helper** that stands above the **previous description of creation.** **Previously, the creation of the man and the animals**, were described in the **third person.** **With the creation of woman**, there is a unique correspondence indicated. The narrative moves beyond that initial assessment by **specifying a functional difference** that exists between the man and woman. She is called Adam's "**helper**" (*ēzer*), which defines **the role** that the woman will play. In what way would Eve become a "**helper**" to the man? The term means "**help**" in the sense of **aid and support** (Deut 33:7; Josh 1:14; Isa 30:5; Dan 11:34.) "**Helper**" is **not** a demeaning term; it is **often used in Scripture to describe God Almighty** (e.g Pss. 33:20; 70:5; 115:9). Since **God identified Himself** as a "**Helper**" (Heb. *ēzer*) to Israel (**Gen. 18:4**; Deut. 33:7) the word does **not** imply inferiority. **It describes function rather than worth.** (Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. (1983-). *The Bible knowledge commentary: An exposition of the scriptures* (Ge 2:18-25). Wheaton, IL:).

- **To misunderstand this relationship is to ask questions like what is more valuable, a hammer or screwdriver.** **They differ in function, not in value.** It is **no** coincidence that **statistically, families do better with a father and mother.** Examining the situation **from any vantage point**, from economic stability, child literacy to a **indicator of future success**, **God made the family to function with a father and mother.** Even a cursory examination of **the prison population** will show a litany of inmates that most often did not have a father in the picture.

There are situations through death or forced separation where there cannot be a father and mother and it is the role of the Church to be the family for such a desperate situation. That is why Satan is active in perverting the understanding of personhood, family, church and Government. If these institutions can be destroyed, all of life crumbles into chaos.

Following narration of the woman's creation, verse 19 explores the similarity and dissimilarity between the woman and man and the animals. It shows the uniqueness of the woman and also the singular relationship shared by man and woman. First, the descriptive language of the animals' creation echoes the man's creation (v. 7). God "formed" both the man and the creatures out of the same substance ("out of/from the ground"), and both are said to be "living beings/creatures" (vv. 7, 19). Her source is traced to the man himself and not to the "ground." She is the first of creation to come from a living being. God creates the man first and derives the woman from the man to insure that she is his equal in substance and to maintain the unity of the human family. Thus, they enjoy a unity despite their sexual difference, and this interdependence is explicit in the expression "one flesh" (v. 24). While animals and birds are radically different from humans (the LORD God did not breathe into their nostrils the breath of life), they share a common source of origin and so, at least potentially, should live in harmony with the human family. The Bible depicts the eschatological age as one in which this original harmony is restored (e.g., Isa. 11:6-9). (Kissling, P. J. (2004-). Genesis (p. 173). College Press Pub. Co.)

Every beast of the field/Animals and every bird of the heavens are paraded before the man by the divine Zookeeper for the man to name them, thereby exercising his authority (Dominion mandate) over them. This in itself was a tremendous achievement in that there are some 17,000 air-breathing species of animals in existence today. Yet, two things were accomplished as the animals passed by Adam. First, names were given to each of the animals (this implies discerning the character or nature of an object, Isa 9:6); and second, Adam saw with his own eyes that each of the animals of God's creation was subhuman, inferior to him. He, and he alone, had been created in the image of God. He was unique; he was the only one of his kind. God was preparing Adam psychologically for his helper (KJV Bible commentary. 1997 (18). Nashville: Thomas Nelson). "It is abundantly clear and certain that he had not recently evolved from them! If the latter were true, and his body were still essentially an ape's body (or the body of whatever 'hominoid' form may have been his immediate progenitor), it seems strange that he could have found nothing in common with either parents or siblings. On this point, as on many others, the notion of human evolution confronts and contradicts the plain teaching of Scripture." (Morris, *The Genesis Record*, 98.)

In verse 20, the narration brings out this implication: "For Adam there was not found a helper fit/suitable for him", literally "alongside him" or "corresponding to him." The point is that the man was looking for a human match, but he "found" none. The woman therefore is distinguished from the animals. She is not of the order of the animals over whom the man is to dominate; she will share in the responsibility of dominating the created order (1:26-28). God was preparing the man to value his mate. Just as the man was uniquely made, receiving from God the divine inbreathing of life, the woman's creation in the narrative was unique. Both the man and the woman are mysteriously made by the hands of God. That Eve was: "fit/suitable" for Adam emphasizes the commonality of the man and the woman. Designed as the perfect counterpart for the man, the woman was neither inferior nor superior, but she was alike

and equal to the man in her personhood while **different and unique in her function** (Thomas Nelson, I. (1997). *Woman's study Bible*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.).

Illustration: In the tenth volume of his great work on history, **Arnold Toynbee** has an interesting comment on **the nature of the fellowship that exists between a man and a dog**. He says that it is **possible for a man and a dog to have great fellowship**. They can **spend many enjoyable hours**. They can **play games**. They can **show and share affection**. But, says Toynbee, **the fellowship must be on the dog's level** because the dog can only **communicate on that level**. **Adam** undoubtedly saw this in the parade of animals and realized that if he was to have a companion, **the companion would have to be specially created by God and in the image of God, as he was** (As recorded in Boice, J. M. (1998). *Genesis: An expositional commentary* (130–131). Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books.).

In defining what a Family is for, second, we must understand:

2) The Provision (Genesis 2:21-23)

Genesis 2:21-23. [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**. [23] Then 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**." (ESV)

The narration now indicates by the method of making the woman that she is a special creation in the eyes of God (v. 21). She is taken from the man by a “surgical” act of God. The “**deep sleep**” (*tardēmâ*) that Adam experiences and **the procedure that follows is initiated and carried out exclusively by God**. (Hughes, R. K. (2004). *Genesis: Beginning and blessing. Preaching the Word* (59–60). Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books.).

- **I want to think from this text** that **God's best work is often done while I'm taking a nap**, but I **don't** think this is what the author meant. **But just like surgery today, sometimes our biggest problems are not ours to solve, and are done without our awareness.**

The building block for constructing the woman is a portion of the man's essential skeletal frame. The term *ṣēlā'*, here rendered “**ribs**,” appears frequently in the construction setting of the tabernacle (Exod 25–38). **The woman was taken from the man's side to show that she was of the same substance as the man** and **to underscore the unity of the human family, having one source**. This is made clear by **the man's description of her**: “**Bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh**” (v. 23). The verb “**took**” (*lāqah*), which is given prominence in the narrative (vv. 22–23), **may anticipate the marital union of the two since it is the common idiom for marriage** (E.g., Gen 4:19; 6:2; 12:19; 19:14.). A **rib** was taken from Adam and **men have been missing something ever since. There is only One who has it all together. ... He is called the Last Adam** because there is **no** other. And He's **not** missing a thing. Why? Because He **wasn't** born the way every man since the first Adam is born. And **He will be the One** who will listen to you by the hour and walk with you in the garden in the cool of the day. **He will be the One** who will hear not only the words of your lips, but also the cry of your heart. **He will be the One** who will truly understand you. **Thus, when we start seeking what we crave from the Last Adam, from Jesus Christ, we take pressure off our husband or wife** and are then able to enjoy them **without** expecting something from them that **they cannot give us**. (Courson, J. (2005). *Jon Courson's application commentary: Volume one: Genesis–Job* (p. 8). Thomas Nelson.)

The language of **God as Builder** (v. 22) shows **His special involvement in the creation of the human family**. The verb “**made/fashioned/built**” by its very definition **implies beauty, stability, and durability** (Hamilton, V. P. (1990). *The Book of Genesis. Chapters 1-17*. The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (179). Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.). **Thomas Aquinas, in his Summa Theologiae (1a, 92, 3c) had an interesting observation:** “For since the **woman** should **not** have ‘**authority over the man**’ (1 Tim 2:12) it would **not** have been fitting for her to have been **formed from his head**, **nor** since she is **not to be despised** by the man, as if she were but his **servile subject**, would it have been fitting for her to be **formed from his feet.**” or as the Puritan **Matthew Henry quaintly coined it:** “**not** made out of his head to **top** him, **not** 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.**” **So here it is: Eve was taken out of Adam** so that **he might embrace with great love a part of himself** (as quoted in Hughes, R. K. (2004). *Genesis: Beginning and blessing*. Preaching the Word (60). Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books.).

Please turn to Ephesians 5 (p.919)

The symbolic significance of the “**rib**” is that the **man and woman are fit for one another as companions sexually and socially**. **The body metaphor** is employed by Paul in his writings to indicate **respective roles in community**, especially speaking of **Christ and the church** (cf. 1 Cor 12:21–25; Eph 1:22–23; 4:15–16; Col 2:19). Genesis 1–3 is the authoritative fountain for the apostle Paul’s soteriology and his instruction on **home and ecclesiastical order** (Rom 5:12–21; 1 Cor 6:16; 11:8–9; 15:21–27, 45–49; Eph 5:31; 1 Tim 2:12–15.). **The Lord presents or “brought his special “project” to the man**, suggesting by this that she is a gift from the man’s Maker. **God performed the first marriage; He sanctified and blessed the first home and the first family** (Hindson, E. E., & Kroll, W. M., eds. (1994). *KJV Bible Commentary* (p. 18). Thomas Nelson.)

Paul explains God’s design in the relationship in Ephesians 5

Ephesians 5:22-33 [22] Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. [23] For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. [24] Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. [25] Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, [26] that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, [27] so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. [28] In the same way 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 and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, [30] because we are members of his body. [31] “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” [32] This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. [33] However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband. (ESV)

- In **Eph 5:22–31 Paul draws on the “head-body” imagery** in a domestic metaphor where the husband as “head” of the wife parallels Christ as “head” of the church (cp. 1 Cor 11:3). **To apply the roles** specified here universally to **other social contexts**, such as **government, education, or commerce**, would be **unwarranted**, for **chaps. 2–3** do **not** address such institutions. **Creation and Eden (chaps. 1–3)** give **a balanced picture of the man and woman in cooperation and companionship**. Although **they share all in common**, Genesis also acknowledges that **there are differences**. Their sameness does **not** mean exactness.

Adam's response centers on the sameness in poetic verse in verse 23 that he and the woman share as opposed to the creatures. The parallel elements "bone [out] of my bones and flesh [out] of my flesh" have the preposition *min*, indicating source. Although "bone and flesh" are used figuratively in the Old Testament for kinship (E.g., Gen 29:14; Judg 9:2; 2 Sam 5:1; 19:12–13 [13–14].), this is the one place where it has a literal meaning, like our contemporary idiom for family, "flesh and blood." Possibly the expression refers to covenant loyalty, in which case Adam is expressing a covenant commitment (W. Brueggemann, "Of the Same Flesh and Bone (GN 2, 23a)," *CBQ* 32 (1970): 532–42). "Thus it would serve as the biblical counterpart to the modern marriage ceremony, 'in weakness [i.e., flesh] and in strength [i.e., bone]' " (Hamilton, V. P. (1990). *The Book of Genesis. Chapters 1-17*. The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (180). Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.).

Illustration: Children often get into stages in which they are immensely intrigued by riddles, and one of the riddles that intrigues them—and which therefore passes down from generation to generation—is: **What is most like half of the moon?** If you had a normal childhood, you probably heard that when you were three. Nevertheless, if a child asks that riddle, the thing to do is **guess everything you can possibly think of without guessing the answer.** What is most like half of the moon? "Half of an orange?" No. "Half of a basketball?" No. "Half of an Edam cheese?" No. You have to **mention everything round and orange colored that you can think of.** At last you say, "**I give up; what is most like half of the moon?**" The answer comes back, "**The other half of the moon.**" **So we ask, "What is most like a man?" The answer is: a woman.** "And **what is most like a woman?**" **The answer is: a man. Men and women are different, and long live the difference (as the French say). But they are also more alike than anything else in creation** (Boice, J. M. (1998). *Genesis : An expository commentary* (131). Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books.).

Finally, in defining *what a Family is for*, first we must understand:

3) **The Portrait** (Genesis 2:24).

Genesis 2:24. [24] Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. (ESV)

The creation of the first couple leads naturally to their relationship expressed through marriage since it is **the couple's charge to procreate and subdue the earth (1:28).** **This verse is not the continued speech of the man but the commentary of the narrator, which is attributed to God by Jesus (Matt 19:4–5) which we will consider in a minute.** The "**Therefore**" (*'al kēn*) here does **not indicate an explanation of the foregoing but rather describes the consequence of God's charge for the human family to propagate and rule.** This is not a continuation of the man's remarks in v 23, but **a comment of the narrator, applying the principles of the first marriage to every marriage** (Wenham, G. J. (1987). *Genesis 1–15* (Vol. 1, p. 70). Word, Incorporated.).

As a model for marriage this passage involves: a leaving (leave), a uniting (hold fast). Marriage is depicted as **a covenant relationship shared by man and woman. Monogamy is clearly intended.** "**Leave**" (*'āzab*) and "**hold fast/cling/cleave**" (*dābaq*) are **terms commonly used in the context of covenant,** indicating covenant breach (e.g., Deut 28:20; Hos 4:10) or **fidelity** (E.g., Deut 10:20; 11:22; 13:18; 30:20; Josh 23:8, 12). **The significance of the language "leave"** is that **marriage involves a new pledge to a spouse in which former familial commitments are superseded. The responsibility to honor one's parents** (Ex. 20:12) does **not cease with leaving and the union of husband with wife** (Matt. 19:5; Mark 10:7,8; 1 Cor. 6:16; Eph. 5:31), represents the inauguration of **a new and primary responsibility** (MacArthur, J. J. (1997). *The MacArthur Study Bible* (electronic ed.) (Ge 2:24). Nashville: Word Pub). **Marriage requires a new priority** by the marital partners where

obligations to one's spouse supplant a person's parental loyalties. The focus is upon the attraction, companionship, and suitability the man has experienced in the woman; and as a consequence of this he **separates** in some degree physically, socially, and spiritually from his parental home **to begin another home with his companion** (Reyburn, W. D., & Fry, E. M. (1997). *A handbook on Genesis*. UBS handbook series (75). New York: United Bible Societies.).

Also, **marriage involves the two united in commitment**; two parties are bound by stipulations, **forming a new entity or relationship**: "**hold fast/cling/cleave**" (*dābaq*). **The two people**, although freed from their parents, are **not** isolated or independent; **they become dependent and responsible toward one another**. **Marriage and family** are the divine ideal for carrying out the mandate. Thus, **marriage may be defined as a God-ordained, blessed, permanent, one-flesh, covenant relationship between a man and a woman**. The **permanence** of the relationship is implied in the word "**hold fast/cling/cleave**" (2:24; cf. Mal. 2:14, 16; Matt. 19:6–9; Mark 10:6–9; 1 Cor. 7:39) (Hughes, R. B., & Laney, J. C. (2001). *Tyndale concise Bible commentary*. The Tyndale reference library (11). Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers.).

Please turn to Matthew 19 (p.773)

The result in this new relationship is that the previous two now become: "One flesh" which echoes the language of **v. 23**, which speaks of the woman's source in the man; **here it depicts the consequence of their bonding, which results in one new person**. The term speaks of **a unity with diversity** (Heb. *ehad*) rather than absolute unity (as Heb. *yahid*) (Radmacher, E. D., Allen, R. B., & House, H. W. (1999). *Nelson's new illustrated Bible commentary* (Ge 2:24). Nashville: T. Nelson Publishers.).

Jesus' appeal to the garden was the basis of His teaching on marriage and divorce. The garden established a paradigm for marital behavior. He explains this in Matthew 19:

Matthew 19:3-9 [3] And Pharisees came up to him and tested him by asking, "Is it lawful to divorce one's wife for any cause?" [4] He answered, "Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, [5]and said, 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'?" [6] So they are no longer two but one flesh. **What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.**" [7] They said to him, "Why then did Moses command one to give a certificate of divorce and to send her away?" [8] He said to them, "Because of your hardness of heart Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. [9] And I say to you: whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery." (ESV) (cf. Mark 10:2–12)

- Polygamy, concubinage, polyandry, easy divorce, adultery, promiscuity, and other **distortions of the marriage covenant** have permeated many cultures; but, **as the Lord Jesus said: "From the beginning it was not so"** (Morris, H. M. (1976). *The Genesis record: A scientific and devotional commentary on the book of beginnings* (102). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.).

As Man is created a trinity of body, soul, and spirit, then **a husband and wife** are to be united on each of those levels—body, soul, and spirit—if the marriage is to be all that God intends for them. **A union of body with body** is a sexual union. This is important, for if a physical union does **not** or **cannot** take place, then the marriage is not a true marriage and it can rightly be annulled. On the other hand, **if the relationship is based on nothing but sex**, if it is a marriage of body with body alone and **not** of soul with soul and spirit with spirit, then the marriage is **weak** and is headed for the divorce courts. **When the glamour wears off**, as it always does if there is **nothing** more to sustain it, the relationship is finished, and there is **either total indifference, a divorce, or adultery**.

This is **the result of a marriage** that is **based purely on physical attraction**. **A better marriage is one that is also a union of soul with soul**. This refers to the **intellectual and emotional side of a person's nature**, involving the characteristics we normally associate with the functioning of the **mind**. A marriage that involves a union of souls is one in which **the couple shares an interest in the same things**—the same books, the same shows, the same friends—and **establishes a meeting of minds** (as it were) **both intellectually and emotionally**. What happens when a woman ... and a man ... **get married and begin to find out that the other person is not much like their vision?** One of two things! **Either they center their minds on the difference** between the **ideal** and **what they are increasingly finding the other person to be like** and then **try**, either openly or subversively, **to push their spouse into that image**, or **else by the grace of God they increasingly come to accept** the other person as he or she is, including his or her own standards of how *they* should be, and then **under God seek to conform to the best and most uplifting of those standards**. (Boice, J. M. (1998). *Genesis : An expositional commentary* (134). Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books.).

(Format note: Some base commentary from Mathews, K. A. (2001). *Vol. 1A: Genesis 1-11:26* (electronic ed.). Logos Library System; The New American Commentary (212–224). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.)

Closing Hymn:

Prayer Room Invitation

077 Benediction

May the Lord your God, the God of our families, **our help in ages past**, **Be your hope** for years to come, **As He has promised to be your guard** while **troubles** last, **And lead you to His eternal throne**. **This we know** through the person and promise of **Jesus Christ**, the Last Adam. **In His Name we Pray. Amen.** (Hymn Reference: *Our God Our Help in Ages Past*, Isaac Watts (1674–1748); TH p. 30)