

God's Design for Marriage Outline

Genesis 2:24-25

- I. God speaks.
 - A. The most important thing you can do in your life is hear God's voice and respond to it.
 - 1. Our western culture has replaced what "God said" with the wisdom of man.
 - 2. Will you listen to what God has said?
 - B. God spoke the cosmos into existence.
 - 1. Our western culture has replaced God with humanist physical evolution and social evolution.
 - a. Social evolution—the progressive development of social norms and institutions (Eg. Marriage).
- II. God's design for marriage:
 - A. Separation—24 *For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother.*
 - 1. A "severance" of the most important relationships.
 - B. Permanence—24... *and cleave to his wife.*
 - 1. To cleave, be joined to, inseparable.
 - C. Unity—24 ...*one flesh*
- III. "One flesh"—quoted three times in the New Testament.
 - A. Matthew 19:3-6
 - 1. A defining verse for marriage: **What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.**
 - a. Jesus quoting Genesis 2:24 reveals that the definition of marriage doesn't change over time. MARRIAGE DOES NOT EVOLVE.
 - b. Obergefell v. Hodges, 2015 Attempt to change God's definition.

The Supreme Court, and our culture in general did not change the definition of marriage, they simply blasphemed almighty holy God!

2. Jesus attributes marriage as the work of God.
 - a. It is God who joins couples together in marriage!
3. God not only puts couples together in marriage, He is the source to sustain it.
 - a. “...we always marry the wrong person” -- Stanley Hauerwas

B. 1 Corinthians 6:15-20

1. A theology of the physical body.
 - a. Salvation doesn't just include the soul, it includes the physical body.
 - b. You (and your body) are not your own.
2. Why such high standards for the body?
 - a. **19 Or do you not know that your body is a sanctuary of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God?**

C. Ephesians 5:28-32

1. The Christian is a member of Christ's body **30 because we are members of His body**
2. Every time a bride and groom stand there reciting their vows...God is bearing witness to the gospel.
3. When two “become one flesh”, they are representatives of the relationship of Christ and His church.

IV. Intimacy (V.25) **And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.**

- A. Very helpful in obeying God's command **Be fruitful and multiply!**
- B. Marriage is God's design for complete intimacy between two people.

V. So what?

- A. Every marriage here this morning has problems, but marriage itself is NOT a problem!
- B. According to Matthew 19...your less than perfect marriage is no less from God than the original marriage of Adam and Eve.
- C. According to 1st Corinthians 6, the risen Christ has made your own physical body so dear to Him...He indwells you!

D. According to Ephesians 5 the world will see the gospel in your imperfect but profound marriage.

God's Design for Marriage Pastoral Notes

Genesis 2:24-25

God speaks... and **the most important thing you can do in your life is hear His voice and respond to it**...hearing God's voice in his word...is God's primary, or first and foremost, means of grace (his "chief" means, as Jonathan Edwards called it, or the "soul" of the means).

God did not have to speak to humanity. He could have just created the world — embedded his truth and justice, as it were, in the world through the principles and laws of nature. He might have chosen to reveal himself only through creation, rather than human words.

But that is not what He did... God has spoken. Our Father, in all his majesty, has stooped to speak to us in human words. The God who made everything, including you, has spoken — and that changes everything.

God speaks...but are we listening?...we began this short series on Genesis 1-3 for the purpose of rediscovering or reminding ourselves of the Biblical foundations we are to build our lives upon...God spoke these foundations to us through His word...

But His word is being ignored... revised... hated... replaced by the wisdom of man... the very basic definitions of life...defined by God Himself... are being dismantled in front of our very eyes... *what a human being is... what it means to be human...the value of a human life...* such obvious common sensical realities like *what a man is... what a woman is...* Have been redefined and God's words discarded...

We have "progressed" from the sanctity of life to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

Now it's hard to have women's sports... the Olympics... and the latest report of a woman secret service agent who was to protect Donald Trump...allegedly left her post to breastfeed her baby... can you identify the irony in that?...the majority of the world no longer listens to God.

will you listen to what God has said?

God said in the very first chapter of the Bible... in Genesis 1 "**God said**" nine times... **God said** **Let there be light and there was light...then God said** "let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters.... God made the expanse... Then **God said** let the waters below the heavens be gathered into one place...and dry land appear....and it was so.

Then **God said**... let the earth sprout vegetation...then **God said** let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night...then **God said** Let the waters swarm with living creatures.. then **God said** let the earth bring forth living creatures after

their kind...then God said...Let us make man in Our image... then God said... to the man... I give it all to you!...to manage... take care of ...steward...enjoy

Every time “God said”... according to His specific design...His purpose... His timing... His sovereignty... God created the cosmos...and let us not forget... HE SAID...**and it was good...** it was very good.... God said and it was.

No...evolution

The wisdom of this world has ripped out chapter one from Genesis and replaced with humanistic evolution...the atheist’s method of discarding the Almighty.... It is no longer “creation”... it is “The origin of the species”... *you can’t say creation... that requires a creator.....*

replacing God’s voice in Genesis 1 with physical creation was the beginning not only have the physical sciences rewritten but also the social sciences... chapter two of Genesis has been ripped out and discarded as well...now along with a physical evolution... is a social evolution.

Where physical evolution deals with the natural world...the physical world... social evolution deals with **the “progressing development” of social norms and institutions**... it is the idea that cultural norms and social institutions.... Such as marriage... are progressively evolving into more efficient... more inclusive... more sophisticated institutions.

It’s the thought.... Take marriage for instance...which is our topic for this morning...[a continuum...we’ve seen the Darwin continuum.....] friendships are good... same sex friendships are a good thing...same sex marriages would be a great thing... so... they rip out chapter two out of Genesis...

For in these pages...we find a very conflicting message... we find that **marriage does not evolve**... we find that marriage was designed...and instituted by God Himself and the design hasn’t changed since the creation of man.

We’ve worked our way through Genesis chapter two...God said **It was not good for man to be alone...** with the promise that He would **Make a helper suitable for him...**after having Adam name the animals...God proceeded to follow through with HIS DESIGN for woman and create her...

God tells Adam to go lay down and take a nap... I think he had Adam go to sleep so he wouldn’t take any credit for the making of Eve....

Can't you hear it... Adam and Eve's first argument Adam would say something like...*hey I helped make you!*...God's so wise. **The Lord fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man...and brought her to the man.**

Adam gets his first look at this new creation and I think he was quite impressed..... WO!...MAN! and he erupts in a song... a poem... a chiasmic like Hebrew poem verse 23 of chapter 2

**This is now bone of my bones
And flesh of my flesh
She shall be called woman
Because she was taken out of man...**

I know that doesn't sound all that sexy... but for the first Hebrew male... this is quite a poem!...what follows is God's design and definition of marriage... if you want to know where to go in the Bible for God's design for marriage... it's right here in two verses.... Verses 24 and 25

Therefore because of all that just happened... **a man shall leave his father and his mother, and cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh. 25 And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.**

Well... what is God's design for marriage?... there are four parts to His design...

Separation... Permanence... Unity, and Intimacy

We could spend a Sunday on each one of those...but this morning we'll spend most of our time on Unity...for "**one flesh**" is the crux of God's design....it incorporates the other three... but quickly... the first one... God's design includes a "separation" or a more radical way to say it... a **severing**....

1. Separation

For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother... this is usually good news to the father and the mother! It's an interesting verse because Adam and Eve did not have a father and a mother.

Adam was formed out of the dust of the ground... and Eve was formed from Adam's side... but every human that would follow would have a father and a mother who like to practice procreation!...so obviously this was written to an audience that would follow after the two first humans....

This really is a big step for a young couple... A father and mother in most cases is the most important relationship in a child's life... the father and mother brought them into the world... took care of them... nurtured them... provided EVERYTHING for them... so it would only be normal for the child to have a very special love and bond for and with his parents....

[The groom takes over the payments!]

God knows that this familial relationship must have a severing if the marriage relationship is to succeed and become **the most important relationship outside of God Himself**...so at the time of marriage... this very special love dynamic must be severed...not destroyed!... but rearranged so that from the moment of marriage... the focus is no longer the family relationship but the marriage relationship.

This could be extended to any relationship outside of the marriage that could interfere with the intensity of love for each other.

It is a problematic marriage when one or both of the partners haven't left their parents the next one is permanence.

Permanence

A man shall leave his father and his mother, and cleave to his wife.

To cleave... to be joined...to hold fast...joined together...it is the idea of being permanently attached to each other...Nothing is to come between...God's design for marriage is not a holding of hands but being sowed together at the hip.

Marriage is a covenant relationship not a contract...

God designed marriage to be permanent in this life... It is **till death do us part** not *you snore too much I'm out of here!*

As I said... the third one... Unity is the most important one... it incorporates the other three... **a man shall leave his father and his mother, and cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.** They're not just permanently stuck together...they become one...unified means to make or become whole...

Unity: "One flesh"

...**one flesh**... One is the idea of once and for all... that's permanence... flesh is one body... that's permanence...God's design for marriage is for two to become **one flesh.**

So how do we “flesh out” one flesh?... so much we can say... but one way is to see other places in the Bible where these same words are found... when verses in the Bible are repeated elsewhere in the Bible... it emphasizes the importance of them... three times in the New Testament we read these same words from Genesis 2:24... God’s definition of marriage...

God’s definition of marriage is Genesis 2... the glory of marriage... the first time the New Testament quotes Genesis 2:24 is in the context of marriage after Genesis 3... the fall of man...

Mathew 19:3-6

In Matthew 19:3-6... The Pharisees ask Jesus a question about divorce. They don’t ask Him about marriage... they ask Him about divorce... which is marriage in the fallen world of today... after chapter three.

Matthew 19:3-6

3 And some Pharisees came to Jesus, testing Him and saying, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any reason at all?” 4 And He answered and said, “Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female, 5 and said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’? 6 So they are no longer two, but one flesh.

Now this is important... **What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.**... In that one sentence is a defining moment for marriage... grabbing on to the implications of that one sentence could transform how you think about marriage... how you think about your marriage.

A couple things.... First... just the mere fact that Jesus quotes Genesis 2 tells us something... Moses wrote Genesis 2 somewhere around 1400 years before Christ... Jesus did NOT answer the Pharisees with something like....

Marriage the way God first made it was great... but that didn’t last long... to bad... He also didn’t say something like... We all know that old verse about marriage in Genesis 2... but we’ve progressed so much since then... we’re much smarter now... marriage has evolved into a far more nuanced institution...

He didn’t say anything like that... He said **“Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female, 5 and said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’? 6 So they are no longer two, but one flesh.**

Point... The definition of Marriage didn’t change over the 1400 years... God’s design for marriage was as true in the year 30 as it was 1400 years before... Jesus saw Genesis 2 as the

definition and standard of marriage unchanging over time EVEN THOUGH man has messed it all up!

Now were 2000 years past Jesus's life on earth.... And God's design for marriage still has not changed... God's definition of marriage has not changed!... your sitting there thinking...well... *I'm pretty sure the definition of marriage HAS changed...*

Remember the Supreme Court's decision to re-define marriage in Obergefell v. Hodges back in 2015? Marriage is no longer defined as a union between a man and a woman... Obergefell overturned Hodges and now requires states to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples and to recognize same-sex marriages....

Have you ever read justice Anthony Kennedy's comments on the decision?... He wrote the majority opinion... Referring to the traditional definition of marriage...a Genesis 2 view of marriage... Kennedy writes:

"Marriage, in their view (God's view...and the minorities view), is by its nature a gender-differentiated union of man and woman. This view long has been held—and continues to be held—in good faith by reasonable and sincere people here and throughout the world" ...that's a compliment!...But he adds... It is this view which Court's majority declares is now obsolete.....

Obsolete!... Marriage has "progressed" in its definition!...NO! it has not!... The definition of marriage is the same today as it was in the Garden at Eden!...that's what Jesus is showing here in Matthew 19.

[The history of marriage is one of both continuity and change. That institution — even as confined to opposite-sex relations — has evolved over time.]

The Supreme Court.... And our culture in general did not change the definition of marriage... they simply blasphemed almighty holy God!... but a bigger even more important point coming out of Matthew 19 is that Jesus attributes marriage as the work of God!... What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate."

AS I said...grasp that verse and it could transform what you think about marriage including your own... Jesus is saying that just as God created man and woman... He also created marriage... not only that... but God is at work in this marriage thing... He is the one who puts it all together!

It is God who joins couples together in marriage!.... You thought you did!... I can almost hear some of your thoughts... *God couldn't have put my marriage together!... I can't blame God for me marrying this guy!...*

I know I married the wrong person!... God would never have put me with this person... I did this all by myself!... Your marriage is an act of God Himself!... this means... if you have a good marriage... God put that together and is with you in it!

It also means if you have a troubled marriage... God put you together and HE IS WITH YOU IN IT!... He is there to help you with it!... your IMPERFECT marriage is as sacred in the sight of God as was Adam and Eve's in that garden.

Your marriage is not hopeless!... God put you together and He wants you to work it out WITH HIM!... He thinks your marriage is worth fighting for... if you are sitting there with a broken heart because of the state of your marriage... so is His!

In a room this size... with some 200 people... most are married... even though mostly Christians... statistically half of you who are married are having SERIOUS troubles in your marriages... the other half not so serious... but you still encounter troubles.

There's so much to say on this which I don't have time for this morning... I could easily do a series on marriage... once I figure it all out maybe I will... for now remember **It is God who joins marriages together... it is us that messes it up!**

*You don't know my husband... you don't know my wife... we're so... so ... different from each other!... thank God for that!... would you really want to be married to someone like yourself!?... not a great book but it has a great title... 1990's... *Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus* YES!*

I love this quote... I use it early in my premarital counseling sessions... some of you will maybe bristle a bit... but stop and think about it... I think there's truth in it.

Stanley Hauerwas: Duke ethics Professor and Christian theologian

*Destructive to marriage is the self-fulfillment ethic that assumes marriage and the family are primarily institutions of personal fulfillment, necessary for us to become "whole" and happy. The assumption is that there is someone just right for us to marry and that if we look closely enough we will find the right person. The moral assumption overlooks a crucial aspect to marriage. **It fails to appreciate the fact that we always marry the wrong person.***

*We never know whom we marry; we just think we do. Or even if we first marry the right person, just give it a while and he or she will change. For marriage, being [the enormous thing it is] means we are not the same person after we have entered it. The primary problem is... **learning how to love and care for the stranger to whom you find yourself married.****

God has His purposes for why He puts two people together in marriage... it is always to grow them into ONE FLESH for the purpose to glorify Him.... I must get moving...the second place Genesis 2:24 is mentioned in the New Testament is in 1st Corinthians 6:15-20.

1 Corinthians 6:15-20

This is truly an amazing set of verses... the apostle Paul does something here that is crucial for us to understand... this is really **a theology of the physical body**... we tend to separate the spiritual from the physical... after all this body is deteriorating and always changing... the soul... the spirit will continue in eternity.

But Paul shows us here our salvation doesn't just include the soul... but it includes the human body as well... did you know that?

1 Corinthians 6:15-20

15 Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take away the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? May it never be! 16 Or do you not know... in other words... YOU ALL KNOW THIS, HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN?....Come on people! that the one who joins himself to a prostitute is one body with her? For He says, "The two shall become one flesh."

You have two separate bodies... they couple together in marriage and become one flesh...but this is saying that any two physical bodies that have sexual relations with each other are as a married couple...they become one body...one flesh....

C.S. Lewis in *Screwtape Letters* wrote that *each time a man and a woman enter into a sexual relationship a spiritual bond is established between them which must be eternally enjoyed (married) or eternally endured (sexual relationship outside of marriage)...*

What you do with your physical body effects your spiritual life!

17 But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him. remember this!... just as two people become one flesh when joined together... you are joined with the Lord as one when you accepted Christ... because of that...

18 Flee sexual immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral man sins against his own body. 19 Or do you not know that your body is a sanctuary of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? 20 For you were bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.

God sent His Son to earth to pay the price for your sin...you were bought for a price!... God paid the life of His Son for your salvation.... Jesus died on the cross for your sin...as Ray Ortlund often says...*Jesus paid a price for you... and He doesn't have any buyer's remorse!*

Today... **in the church**... the carefully protected sexual norms of the Bible are being stretched... in many cases completely dismantled...Remember the purpose of this series in Genesis 1-3 is to solidify God's foundations for all of life... the foundations that are being radically dismantled...

Listen to this SHORT list of "Christian" denominations, just in the United States that have caved in to some degree on same sex marriage, homosexuality, casual sex between unmarried couples...they refused what God has said....

Mennonite Church USA

Episcopal Church USA

Evangelical Anglican in America"

American Baptist

Progressive National Baptist Convention

National Baptist Convention

Cooperative Baptist Fellowship American National Catholic Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

United Methodist Church

Presbyterian Church USA

Reformed Church of America

United Church of Christ

Southern Baptist NOT YET

And literally hundreds more.... Those just in the USA!

Just because so many churches have defected from God's standards does not change Paul's words one bit...just like the definition of marriage has not changed... the fact is... God wants us to set the highest of standards when it comes to sexual relationships.... Within marriage only....

Why?... why so tough on this?

Paul nailed it!.... **19 Or do you not know that your body is a sanctuary of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God?**... your body has become a sacred place!... The world will never tell you this!...How all these denominations can shut their eyes to God's word... remember... *will you listen to what God has said?*

15 Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ?

Your hands... your legs... your head...they are all a part of Jesus Christ!...the living Christ has gotten so involved with us that even our sexuality is joined to Him!... one flesh...the Christian standards for sexuality are so high because the physical body is so valuable being members with Jesus Christ!...and being indwelt by the Holy Spirit.

So verse 18 is some of the greatest advice... or more a command... **Flee sexual immorality!**

RUN! ... get this... what Paul did not say... He did not say to RESIST sexual immorality... He did not say to BE CAREFUL... He says RUN!...FLEE... Run for your life!... *It has been proven that the person most likely to give in to sexual sin is the person who tries to resist sexual temptation.* – Kim Riddlebarger.

The third time the New Testament quotes Genesis 2:24 is in Ephesians 5:28-32...

Ephesians 5:28-32

So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church, 30 because we are members of His body.31 For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.32 This mystery is great, but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church.

Now where we started in Genesis two... the context of marriage was the creation of Eve from Adam's side... his body... but look what Paul says here in Ephesians five... **we are members of Christ's body...therefore... a man shall leave his Father and Mother and get married...** isn't that interesting?

So... this "one flesh" is much, much more profound than it was 40 minutes ago... the ULTIMATE reason a man and woman fall in love and get married...the way we truly become one flesh is not only the physical uniting of you and your spouse by God.... Adam and Eve... Genesis 2... but... for the Christian....it's God's uniting you and your spouse to Jesus Christ... Ephesians 5!

Marriage is so, so much more than two people trying to eke out a life with someone of the opposite sex in this world... it is more than procreation... it is more than having companionship...

Every time a bride and groom stand there reciting their vows...God is bearing witness to the gospel...of Christ and His bride whether that couple knows that or not... we Christians put the gospel on display with full awareness through our marriages.

The two become one flesh... and this is representative of the amazing relationship that Christ has with His church... which is made up of all Christians!... Paul calls all this a **profound mystery!**... does it look like a mystery?

We've been married for 37 years... not once have Julie and I have anyone come up to us and say...*You're married?!...Really?... That's amazing!... come here everybody... these two are MARRIED!... what an amazing thing!...what a mystery!*

Marriage does not astound us...We are not in awe over marriage... that is why Paul is putting it in front of us... to remind us of it's amazing glory...he wants us to open our eyes to the glory we tend not to see... your marriage... points to the ultimate romance!

That's why your marriage is a profound mystery... your marriage is prophetic... it shows the world the gospel of Jesus Christ!... one flesh!... how is that representation going?

Oh... one more aspect of God's design for marriage:

Intimacy

a man shall leave his father and his mother, and cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh. *25 And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.*

There are no boundaries in marriage!...boundaries exist outside of marriage.. Marriage is God's design for complete intimacy between two people...

So what?

1. Every marriage here this morning has problems...but marriage itself is NOT a problem!

2. According to Matthew 19...your less than perfect marriage is no less from God than the original marriage of Adam and Eve.....

Receive it...with wonder.

3. According to 1st Corinthians 6...the risen Christ has made your own physical body so dear to Him...He indwells you!

Because of Christ... you're clean again!...Jesus is present within you through the Holy Spirit... and He will never leave you or forsake you!

4. According to Ephesians 5 ... the world will see the gospel in your imperfect but profound marriage...

You are making a statement in your marriage.... You are a statement in your Christian life....when the world around you sees your marriage... is it a testimony of the gospel of Jesus Christ!