

A SUITABLE HELPER

“The Lord God said, ‘It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him’.” —GENESIS 2:18

The word ‘helper’ in the above verse is very much misunderstood. Some have used it to argue for a subordinate position for women in their relationship with men. Adam is the man, supreme; Eve is his helper, supportive like his personal assistant. This is, however, a misreading of the significance of the word ‘helper’. It is used eight times in the Old Testament, and six times it is used of God. Deuteronomy 33:29 says, “The Lord is your shield and helper.” Psalm 27:9, “You have been my helper.” Psalm 118:7, “The LORD is with me; He is my helper.”

What is the meaning of God being our helper? Does that put Him into a subordinate role? Of course, not. What that speaks of is the indispensability of God to human beings. ‘Helper’ is a very high word, which means to be indispensable and interdependent, one to the other. God saw it was not good for man to be alone, so He created a companion for him. In the very beginning, man and woman were equal in status and commission. God gave them a joint responsibility to be fruitful and multiply and to rule over all the creatures of the earth.

Then God gives this instruction: “A man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh” (Genesis 2:24). This is the doctrine of marriage God has ordained; a

union of two persons into one, made one flesh - male and female – two equal parts of one whole. As one flesh, they will procreate; they will create new life, and those new lives will be united to another person, and become another unit. And so as God intended, the building block of society is the man leaving his father and mother and he cleaves to his wife. They become one flesh. They procreate.

Husbands are not the fixed point and wives the adjustable ones. In Ephesians, Chapter 5, Paul talks further about the relationship of husband and wife. Husbands are to love their wives sacrificially as Christ loves the church (5:25). One of the things a wife needs to know most about her husband is that he will protect and provide for her, but if that sense of protection is undermined, everything else in the marriage is undermined. Ephesians 5:28 says, “Husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies” - two equal parts of one whole. So ‘helper’ is a beautiful word that speaks of the husband and wife relationship. They are indispensable and interdependent on each other.

PRAYER: Dear Lord, help me to love my spouse sacrificially as Christ loves His church.

TO REFLECT UPON: Is my marriage an equal union of man and wife?