

## A NEW LIFE TOGETHER

Genesis 2 & 3

### INTRODUCTION

Last week we took a look at God’s definition of marriage and how His command to have dominion and to be fruitful have a significant impact on the marriage relationship. As well as the lens we need to see marriage and our spouse through... the image of Christ. We also saw the importance of learning about marriage from God’s perspective and as an institution under His authority.

As last week was more of an examination of the “what” of marriage, this week we are going to be looking more at the “how’s” of marriage. Specifically we’ll be talking about the new patterns that get established, the new “one-flesh” nature of marriage, and also the necessity of the new “Spirit filled” nature needed for marriage.

### RHYTHMS, PATTERNS, AND REST

As image bearers under God’s authority we establish rhythms and patterns based on God’s Word that will bear fruit in our marriage and lives. In understanding God’s authority, we see the command to rest.

**Read:** Genesis 2:2-3 – “<sup>2</sup> And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. <sup>3</sup> Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.”

**ASK:** Why do you think God rested?

- The primary reason was to set a model for us (Mark 2:27).
- We need rest and if we neglect it, our bodies and lives begin breaking down.
- This was the 7<sup>th</sup> day, the first “full day” for Adam and Eve on earth, and it was given as a day of rest, presumably God’s rest would also allow unfettered fellowship with His creation. God had no other agenda than to be with those whom He had created.

Jesus reiterated a similar concept in Matthew’s gospel.

**Read:** Matthew 11:28-30 – “Come to Me, all *you* who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup> Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup> For My yoke *is* easy and My burden is light.”

**ASK:** How might we distinguish general “rest” from what Jesus says here as “rest for our souls”? (Or: What are some of the different types of rest that we can (and should!) experience?)

- Spiritual rest – This is at the core or center of it all. In this we have the assurance of our salvation; being fully forgiven and loved by our creator.
- Psychological rest – Our minds and thoughts find an anchor in the truths God declares to us and we no longer need to fret or worry about things.
- Emotional rest – Knowing that we are fully known and fully loved can help to abate any emotional turmoil and keep our emotions from running rampant.
- Social rest – we no longer have to live to impress others or to seek to gain others approval. Our identity is not bound up in how others see us, nor in how we see ourselves, but only in how God sees us. (Which we then must learn to adopt as the way we also see ourselves.)
- True rest is only found when we come to Him

**EXPLAIN:** Establishing rhythms and patterns that reflect God’s authority is key to the blueprint of your foundation. (Note: this ties into Lesson 1’s definition of marriage, using the blueprint in an analogous way.)

When properly conducted, rest demonstrates trust in God. We could work and toil for 7-days a week because we believe the demands on us are too great. But by regularly resting, we embody the belief that it is all within God’s control and our trust is ultimately in Him rather than in our persistent efforts.

All of us who are married would likely agree that we want a healthy marriage, and those not yet married would likely say that they would desire to have the same when the time comes. So how do we build that? What might that look like?

- A healthy marriage starts with healthy individuals who are growing in Christ
- A healthy marriage thrives when a couple is in the Word together and growing in Christ.
- Some practical examples are:
  - Set aside time to daily be in God’s Word. If you have children, then it may also be a good idea to take things off of your spouse’s plate so that

he/she can spend time in the Bible. The more demanding life becomes, the more you need to a team approach to your personal and corporate devotional times!

- Set aside time to talk about what you are reading and how you are applying it. This can be as formal or informal as you want it to be. The point is simply to find a way to meditate on God’s word and its ramifications, together.
- Pray together daily and regularly ask each other how you can pray for the other. Don’t assume that you know what is on your spouse’s mind and heart if you haven’t recently asked them.
- Worship together  
(This will be further explored in our Q&A time with our guest speakers)

Ultimately, as we learn to rest and trust God in the details of our lives, and as we cling to Him, we become healthier spouses, able to love another better.

## LEAVE AND CLEAVE

Another principle teaching on marriage that we find in this chapter of Genesis is the importance of leaving and cleaving. And similar to what we just discussed about rest, this too challenges us to shift our trust, our reliance from what we’ve known in the past to what God has directed for our future.

**READ:** Genesis 2:22-24 – “Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man. And Adam said: “This *is* now bone of my bones And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called woman, Because she was taken out of Man.”<sup>24</sup> Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

**ASK:** “*What does it mean to leave and cleave?*”

- As they begin their new life together they both individually “leave” their families authority, influence over them, and ties.
- Another way to say this is that once married, the husband and wife now answer to each other first and foremost. Their former relationships with their parents has ended and a new relationship should now exist.

- This does not mean that you will not honor and love your families, but under normal circumstances, you should not be taking your laundry to your mom's house.
- To cleave means you will be joined to each other as you start your new life together. You will begin to build your own traditions, rhythms and patterns and ways of doing things.

It is important to note that both individuals will bring unspoken expectations into the marriage as well as customs and traditions of their upbringing. It will be important to recognize expectations and talk through them.

**Examples:** Two different ways of loading the dishwasher.... *share your own personal stories.*

## ONE FLESH

Another principle we see from this same passage is that the two are no longer two but one flesh.

**ASK:** *“What does it mean that the two shall become one flesh.”*

- Many of us will immediately think of the sexual union which should exist in marriage, and that is entirely correct.
- Once married, God blesses sexual intimacy between the husband and wife, and there should be no shame or barrier between both being able to mutually enjoy each other.
- But physical intimacy is not nearly all that is meant in this verse.
- In addition to the physical intimacy of one flesh there is a unity that happens between a husband and wife that goes beyond sexual intimacy.
- There is a death, so to speak, to their individual preferences and goals. It does not mean they lose who they are, rather, as they seek to know each other and grow together they set goals together for life. Each must sacrifice themselves and both must serve one another.
- They are a team and joint heirs, pointing each other to Jesus, and thus growing in spiritual intimacy.

Because we are no longer “just” individuals, we are not “only” concerned with our own needs, wants, desires, etc. Rather, every aspect of our life as a couple should

come together. There should be no secrets. Passwords should be shared, bank accounts merged, etc.

To those who are not married, this is something you should think about before and during any dating relationship. You should ask yourself: “Am I comfortable merging my life, my finances, and my future with this person? Do I think he/she is trustworthy enough for me to share my secrets and open myself up to?” If the answer is no, then you probably should not pursue the relationship any further.

The authority and nature of our connection changes with marriage. Often we approach relationships with a “consumer approach” – what do I get out of it?

In the meaning of one flesh, each person gives 100% notwithstanding what the other person does. It’s not a 50/50 partnership as we might find in the business world. Instead, the biblical model is for both individuals to give themselves entirely to each other. When both individuals are giving 100% there will never be a deficit.

In a practical sense, for example, chores of the home should be viewed as 100% belonging to both persons. Therefore when one person does the chore it can be received as a gift by the other. There should not be a mentality that it is “his or her” job, because that is the separating of the two.

It is *both* of their responsibilities and one should not feel exempted from something or entitled to not do a certain chore (for example cooking, washing). Then you can give generously because it is not the other person’s job and there can be excess or surplus.

This is not to say that a division of labor is not good and helpful. Communicating what one is able to do and take on relieves the other of having to think about it. Some of these things come naturally, others are worked for. But if you begin by both recognizing that you are each equally responsible for the duties of your home, then you’ll have a diminished tendency to “complain” when something is not done.

## **THE NECESSITY OF THE NEW NATURE**

The last thing we are going to look at today is how sin affected Adam and Eve, and thus their marriage, and by extension how we can apply the gospel to our lives in a way that frees us from the effects of the curse of sin.

- Summarize Genesis 3:1-8 (i.e. Eve’s temptation by Satan; Adam’s choice.)

**Read:** Genesis 3:9-19 – “Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, “Where *are* you?” <sup>10</sup> So he said, “I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself.” <sup>11</sup> And He said, “Who told you that you *were* naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?” <sup>12</sup> Then the man said, “The woman whom You gave *to be* with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate.” <sup>13</sup> And the LORD God said to the woman, “What *is* this you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.” <sup>14</sup> So the LORD God said to the serpent: “Because you have done this, You *are* cursed more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly you shall go, And you shall eat dust All the days of your life. <sup>15</sup> And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel.” <sup>16</sup> To the woman He said: “I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; In pain you shall bring forth children; Your desire *shall be* for your husband, And he shall rule over you.” <sup>17</sup> Then to Adam He said, “Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, “You shall not eat of it’: ‘Cursed *is* the ground for your sake; In toil you shall eat *of* it All the days of your life. <sup>18</sup> Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, And you shall eat the herb of the field. <sup>19</sup> In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread Till you return to the ground, For out of it you were taken; For dust you *are*, And to dust you shall return.”

As we consider this passage, we want to ask ourselves how we see the effect of sin on both the man and woman and what are the similarities and differences.

For both of them, life got harder. For the woman there became an internal struggle in the relationship with her husband and for the man an external struggle with his work in the world.

For the woman there became a desire to rule over her husband (Gen. 3:16). In many relationships today women can be quick to lead and the man simply follows. The husband therefore needs to walk in his role as the head and the woman must help him in this role. A woman can do several practical things to help her husband lead if it does not come naturally to him. (We’ll discuss more of this in our Q&A time.)

- **TEACHER NOTE:** Some interpret the statement that Eve’s desire would be for her husband (Genesis 3:16) as a good thing. However, this is not the case as can be seen when the same phrase is used in Genesis 4:7, in which God told Cain that sin crouched at the door and its desire was for him (i.e. to rule over him).

Furthermore in vs. 22-24 we see their relationship with God was broken as they were put out of the garden. Sin, if left unchecked or not dealt with in marriage will work its destructive power. Small compromises lead to bigger ones. (James 1:14-15)

The only way to fulfill what God has called us to in marriage is to live submitted to Jesus and filled by His Spirit. We’ll consider what Ephesians 5 says as it will also set us up for our discussion next week on roles in marriage.

**Explain:** the importance of Ephesians 5:1-15. Being imitators of God, walking in love, walking in light and walking in wisdom and the effect of this on marriage.

**Read:** Ephesians 5:15-21 – “<sup>15</sup> See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, <sup>16</sup> redeeming the time, because the days are evil. <sup>17</sup> Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. <sup>18</sup> And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, <sup>19</sup> speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, <sup>20</sup> giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>21</sup> submitting to one another in the fear of God.

In applying the Gospel to our lives and to our marriage we see that first and foremost we cannot fulfill what God has called us to on our own strength. We must first be set free from the power of sin in our lives and learn to live by the Spirit and not by the flesh.

Here Paul talks about “being filled with the Spirit” which in the Greek tense could be translated “continue being filled with the Spirit”. In other words, this is a daily dependence on the Lord.

God has also given us the opportunity to speak words of life to one another. This is crucial in marriage. Learn to speak psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, to one another and learn to give thanks. This can be done by pointing each other to God’s Word, reminding each other of what God has said, or simply spending time

together in prayer, giving thanks to God for what He has done. We'll discuss more practical ways to live this out during our next section with our guests.



## **Q & A with Guest Speakers**

### **From: RHYTHMS, PATTERNS, AND REST**

- What does Sabbath look like in your lives, and are there any ways that you observe this in your marriage that you've found helpful?
- Are there any other rhythms or routines that you've found helpful to your marriage, such as a regular date night? How does this look for you and how have you protected it?
- How can you as a spouse help foster your spouse's relationship with God?
- Can you share some practical tips in how to do the above in different seasons of life. (for example)
  - Allowing time for each other to do devotionals; establish habits before children arrive!
  - Building in time to read the Word and pray together.
  - Taking walks and praying
  - Scheduling and protecting the devotional/quiet time.

### **From: Leave And Cleave**

- How did the "Leave and Cleave" principle work for you? Was it easy or hard?
- What advice would you have for a young couple with strong family ties that is struggling to make this separation?
- What were some of the "unspoken expectations" that you discovered after you were married? And how did you work through those differences?

### **From: ONE FLESH**

- How have you navigated the 2 shall become 1? Any advice that you would give to avoid unhelpful mindsets or pitfalls of bad habits?

### **From: THE NECESSITY OF THE NEW NATURE**

- Is there a "natural" leader in your marriage? How have you learned to combat the struggle for control of leadership?
- What advice do you have on how to regularly "speak Psalm, Hymns, and Spiritual" songs to one another in your home?

## **ON YOUR OWN**

### **Discuss the following:**

#### **From: RHYTHMS, PATTERNS, AND REST**

- What does spiritual and emotional rest look like for you individually?
- How have you experienced “rest” as a couple?
- What has been modeled for you regarding rest?
- Why do you think rest is an important aspect of marriage?
- How can you find rest individually and corporately as a family?
- Talk about what your rhythms and patterns and schedules can look like (Daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly)?
- Discuss any changes that need to be made so that both of you have a rhythm of spending time with Jesus.

#### **From: Leave And Cleave**

- Discuss how the “Leave and Cleave” principle worked for you? Was it easy or hard?
- What were some of the “unspoken expectations” that you discovered after you were married? And how did you work through those differences?

#### **From: THE NECESSITY OF THE NEW NATURE**

- Is there a “natural” leader in your marriage? How have you learned to combat the struggle for control of leadership?
- Discuss some ways that you can regularly “speak Psalm, Hymns, and Spiritual” songs to one another in your home? (i.e. how can you build one another up in the Word?)

## Resources

### Resources mentioned by Brett & Krista Miller

#### [Conversation Goal Setting Weekend for Married Couples](#)

With regards to our family worship and rest, we have the used the following:

**Jesus Storybook Bible by Sally Lloyd-Jones** (gospel-centered and great for very young kids)

**Long Story Short by Marty Machowski** - the tagline is "Ten-Minute Devotions to Draw your Family to God." We **\*\*love\*\*** this devotional because you are reading straight from Scripture, and the questions are very gospel-centered and help your kids understand the big story of God's redemptive plan, and it's not super long so elementary aged kids can handle it! This author also has several other devotionals written for families.

**The Wonder of the Greatest Gift: An Interactive Family Celebration of Advent by Ann Voskamp** - helps us live by the Christian calendar during Advent... we also use some of her stuff for Lent, too.

**New City Catechism** - There is an adult version but there is also a kid version. It's a great way to ground kids in the faith in a systematic way. We use it in family devo time every now and then. <https://a.co/d/i9FOwTd>

**Thankfulness Jar or Thanksgiving Jar** - We just have a Mason Jar full of colorful pieces of paper with things we are thankful for written on them. We've tried once a week to have everyone in our family fill out a small piece of paper with several things they are thankful for. Then we all share what we wrote and put them in the jar. At around Thanksgiving (or other times of the year?) we pull out old pieces of paper and read them to remember all that God has done in the past and then we stick them on branches that are on display in a jar on our kitchen table and we make a "Thanksgiving tree" to display during the Thanksgiving season.