

TRUSTING GOD'S PLAN, PURPOSE, AND DESIGN

"It is Not...." Genesis 2:18-25

June 30, 2024

INTRO.: Good morning and welcome to our ongoing series, **Trusting God's Plan, Purpose, and Design**, from the book of Genesis, the first book in the Bible. I thank Pastor John for the excellent job he did preaching on Genesis 2:15-17, *"You will surely die."*

Genesis 2:15–17 The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. **16** And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; **17** but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die."

Genesis 3 records the sin of Adam and Eve in eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. As Pastor John shared: Sin brings death to us, spiritual death, separation from God. Jesus Christ took our death on the cross and with His resurrection from the grave Jesus brought death to death. Through Christ, we can bring death to sin. Only someone who has a personal relationship with God through Christ can have the power to bring death to sin. This is part of the process called sanctification; becoming more like Christ.

Do you believe that God has a plan, purpose, and design when it comes to your life? What does God want to accomplish in the life of the believer? By believer I mean one who has recognized they are a sinner, under the rightful judgment of God, and their only hope of forgiveness of sin and reconciliation with God is through Jesus Christ and His sacrifice on the cross. The Scriptures speak of the need for us to repent of our sin (turn from it), seek God's forgiveness of our sin through what Jesus did on the cross, giving our lives to Him. So, back to my original question, "What does God want to accomplish in the life of the believer?" What is God's plan, purpose, and design for those who know Him? Sam Eckel, one of our deacons, sent this picture to me while he, Jei and his daughter were visiting family in Korea.

If you were to just look at the object you would be hard pressed to see any design, but when the light is shined on it in just the right manner you see a little girl painting. This picture illustrates what God has done in redemption through Christ. We are all messed up but through Christ we are a new creation. In Romans 8 we are reminded that God is continuing to sanctify us, making us more like Jesus, using all kinds of circumstances in our lives to transform us.

Romans 8:28–29 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. **29** For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

So, as I begin this morning I ask this question: "Are you and I willing to trust God's Plan, Purpose, and Design?" We are going to spend the next few weeks looking at what God's Word has to say about marriage in Genesis 2:18-25. There are many different ideas about marriage in the world today but what does God have to say. To do this we're going to examine: The Declaration, The Design, and The Decision.

Let's read the passage together:

Genesis 2:18 The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him." Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air. 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 of the air and all the beasts of the field. But for Adam no suitable helper was found. So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and closed up the place with flesh. Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man." For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh. The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.

THE DECLARATION

Genesis 2:18 The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."

"the Lord God said:" literally this means "And Jehovah God said"

There are two things in this verse that should cause neon lights to go off in our brains. The first thing is the One who is speaking. This is a statement made by Almighty God so you and I should sit up and take notice. Sometimes people try

to impress others by quoting somebody who is famous. If so and so said it, you should listen. God is speaking here, and we had better listen. The second thing is what He begins His declaration with:

"It is not good..." Up to this point in the creation account everything has been assessed as being good or very good. Let's take a few minutes to review.

Genesis 1:10 God called the dry ground "land," and the gathered waters he called "seas." And God saw that it was good.

Genesis 1:12 The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good.

Genesis 1:17–18 God set them in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth, **18** to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good.

Genesis 1:25 God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good.

Genesis 1:31 God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.

Did anyone here have your school papers marked by the teacher in blue and red ink? Blue was for something that was good and red for when you got things wrong. Maybe you're going along and it's all blue ink and then there it is, that red check mark indicating that wasn't the right answer, it wasn't good. The statement, *"it is not good,"* would have caught the attention of those reading. It would have been shocking to hear! Who is the one who is evaluating and declaring it is not good? It is God!

"good:" describes that which is "appropriate" or that which is "fitting" within the purpose of God. (Fruchtenbaum)

So, what is not good?

"It is not good for man to be alone:" God declares the need of man to have a companion that corresponds to him. Not only does God make the declaration what is not good, He also provides the solution. This brings us to:

THE DESIGN

Genesis 2:18 The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."

"I will make:" this literally means "build," and the verb *"built"* by its very definition implies beauty, stability, and durability (Victor P. Hamilton). What God is about to create is designed specially by Him for Adam. This should remind us of the infinite value of women.

What will God make?

"a helper suitable for him (Adam)." God is not describing someone that is a second-class person by using the term *"helper."* God Himself is referred to by this same term.

Exodus 18:4 and the other was named Eliezer, for he said, "My father's God was my helper; he saved me from the sword of Pharaoh."

Deuteronomy 33:29 Blessed are you, O Israel! Who is like you, a people saved by the LORD? He is your shield and helper and your glorious sword. Your enemies will cower before you, and you will trample down their high places."

Psalms 33:20 We wait in hope for the LORD; he is our help and our shield.

Psalms 46:1 God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.

Psalms 70:5 Yet I am poor and needy; come quickly to me, O God. You are my help and my deliverer; O LORD, do not delay.

Psalms 115:9–11 O house of Israel, trust in the LORD— he is their help and shield. **10** O house of Aaron, trust in the LORD— he is their help and shield. **11** You who fear him, trust in the LORD— he is their help and shield.

Psalms 124:8 Our help is in the name of the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth.

Psalms 146:5 Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the LORD his God,

But God doesn't just say any kind of helper will do.

"a helper suitable for him (Adam)." (NKJV: compatible to him) In Hebrew this is only one word and is found in only one other place (Genesis 2:20).

Arnold Fruchtenbaum, "Literally it means, "a helper as in front of him," and so emphasizes that which is conspicuous, that which is in full view, in front of. Putting these two Hebrew words together (*helper* and *meet for him or suitable for him*) together gives the basic range of "a helper like him," "a helper fitted to him," "a helper worthy of him," "a helper corresponding to him," "a helper ascending to his opposite," or "a helper to his counterpart."

Right after God declares His solution, we have Adam naming the animals. This was part of the fulfillment of Genesis 1:26 & 28.

Genesis 1:26 Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

Genesis 1:28 God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

The naming of the animals indicates the authority that mankind is to have over the animals. God brought the animals to Adam so that he could name them. I also believe it was to show Adam that he wasn't going to get this *helper* from the animal kingdom.

Genesis 2:20 So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds of the air and all the beasts of the field. But for Adam **no suitable helper was found.**

This further emphasizes the huge gap between animals and mankind. No animal has been created in the *image of God*. I have shared before that I have a dog. This dog knows the sound of my car pulling in the driveway and before I can get out of the car, she is at the window barking and scratching in anticipation of me walking in the door. She has learned how to do certain tricks and she will play fetch if I have the appropriate treats, but my relationship with the dog can only go so far because the dog is not created in the image of God.

After making it clear that none of the animals will fill this void in the life of Adam, we have the description of what God does to fill this need.

Genesis 2:21-22 So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and closed up the place with flesh. Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

"*he took one of the man's ribs:*" This is the first surgery ever performed. God causes Adam to fall into a deep sleep (didn't even need anesthesia) and most translations say that God took one of Adam's ribs. The Hebrew word actually refers to Adam's side and would have included both flesh and bone. After taking part of Adam's side God closed up the flesh (immediate healing).

What is the last thing that God does in providing the solution?

Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he **brought her to the man.**

God delivered her to Adam and we have the first recorded words of mankind.

Genesis 2:23 The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man."

Adam is expressing his commitment to this woman that God created and brought to him. Eve was made from man and for man which is further emphasized when Adam calls her *woman* which literally means, "out of man."

It is at this point that this passage is reaching a crescendo. God has made a declaration, "It is not good for man to be alone." He then provides the solution, "I will make a helper suitable for him." God brings the animals and birds to Adam to name, making it clear that none of them will fulfill the need in Adam's life. Out of Adam's side God makes this helper that He promised to Adam. He brings her to him, and Adam calls her woman which means "out of man." The conclusion is an explanation of the covenant of marriage.

For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.

"*leave his father and mother:*" forsake, a breaking of the emotional ties

"*be united to his wife:*" ("cleave" in other translations) It means to "stick like glue." This word was often used to describe the covenant relationship of God to His people.

Deuteronomy 10:20 Fear the LORD your God and serve him. Hold fast to him and take your oaths in his name.

Deuteronomy 11:22 If you carefully observe all these commands I am giving you to follow—to love the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways and to hold fast to him—

Deuteronomy 13:4 It is the LORD your God you must follow, and him you must revere. Keep his commands and obey him; serve him and hold fast to him.

Deuteronomy 30:20 and that you may love the LORD your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him. For the LORD is your life, and he will give you many years in the land he swore to give to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

"become one flesh:" this includes the physical relationship but also much more than just that. There is a joining together, a gluing together in marriage. To get married in the state of Pennsylvania what do you need? You need a marriage license. Is that all that marriage is? It is a binding covenant made, first and foremost, before God and to your spouse. We're going to talk more about that next week.

God's design in marriage is for a man (biological man) to be united, joined together with a woman (biological woman) in a covenantal relationship before God. In the creation of woman God is placing a high value on her, created in His image just as Adam was created in His image.

This account in Genesis begins with God's declaration which leads to God's design and brings to each one of us:

THE DECISION

The question that must be answered is this: Am I going to follow God's design in all areas of my life, including marriage? If what I think does not line up with God's Word what has to change? The culture has been redefining marriage to include something other than what I have just described to you from God's Word.

Many years ago, the leadership developed a marriage policy based on what the Scriptures teach. As a follower of Christ, the Word of God must be our guide. We need to continue to speak the truth in love to those who disagree with the Scriptures. We need to continue to pray for and share the gospel with those who have yet to come to faith in Christ.

SO WHAT???

There are many who believe that man created this idea of marriage. This could not be further from the truth. God created man in His image and for His glory. Eve was specially designed by God, also in His image, for Adam. Thus, God created marriage, a covenant relationship made, before God, between a man and a woman. This uniting of man and woman was to be a picture of Christ's relationship to the church as explained in Ephesians 5.

Faithful Christian Marriage Models God's Love

Christopher Ash reflects on the testimony of Christian marriages in his recent book:

Some years ago a dispute arose in Britain between Foreign Office and the Treasury. The argument was about which British ambassadors would be provided with a Rolls-Royce for their official duties in a foreign capital. The Treasury unsurprisingly wanted these wonderful cars restricted to a few: perhaps Washington, Moscow, and Paris. The Foreign Office argued for many more based on the following reasoning: most people in a foreign capital have never been to Britain, they said. But when they see this magnificent car gliding through their streets with the United Kingdom flag on the hood, they will say to themselves, "I have not been to Britain. I don't know much about Britain. But if they make cars like that there ... then Britain must be a wonderful place."

In a similar way, it is Christ's hope that men and women may say to themselves as they watch a Christian marriage, "I have never seen God, sometimes I wonder, when I look at the world, if God is good, or if there is a God. But if he can make a man and a woman love one another like this; if he can make this husband show costly faithfulness through sickness as well as health; if he can give him resources to love his wife with Christ-like sacrifice; well, then he must be a good God. And if Christ can give this wife grace to submit so beautifully, with such an attractive spirit, then again he must be a good God."

Source: Adapted from Christopher Ash, Married for God: Making Your Marriage the Best It Can Be (Crossway, 2016), pages 91-92

*Do I have a personal relationship with the Lord?

*Am I committed to trusting God's plan, purpose, and design for my life?

*Am I willing to seek Biblical counsel if needed?

*With whom am I sharing the life-changing message of the gospel through my words and actions?