

Thought For The Week

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Beginnings: Genesis 2:18-25

Man, Woman, and Marriage

In the sweeping panorama of Genesis 1, everything God makes is declared “good.” Yet when Genesis 2:18 arrives, we hear a startling divine verdict: “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.” How can anything in God’s creation be “not good”? Critics quickly claim contradiction, but the explanation is simple and profound. These words are spoken before the creation of woman—before the sixth day is complete and creation is pronounced “very good.” Far from a mistake, this is divine intentionality. God is teaching.

He is teaching Adam. He is teaching the watching angels. And through Scripture, He is teaching us.

I. A Classroom for Angels and Men

Scripture repeatedly reveals that the angels are spectators of God’s great redemption drama. They shouted for joy at the earth’s founding (Job 38:7). Paul says they observe headship and submission in the church (1 Cor 11:10). Here in Eden they learn something crucial: the natural realm is radically different from the spiritual. Angels do not marry or reproduce (Matt 22:30). Humans do. We are embodied, sexual, generational creatures designed for covenant relationship.

II. Adam Must Feel His Aloneness

God does not immediately create the woman. Instead, He brings every animal to Adam to name—perhaps in male-female pairs. As Adam names them, a painful truth dawns: no creature corresponds to him. “But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him” (v. 20). Only when Adam feels his need does God act. Experience precedes provision. The lesson must be learned in the heart, not just the head.

III. Divine Surgery and the First Poetry

God causes a deep sleep (the Bible’s first anesthesia) to fall upon Adam, opens his side, and builds the woman from his rib. The Hebrew verb is not “made” but “built”—a deliberate, architectural act. Then, like a Father giving away His daughter, God presents her to the man.

Adam awakens and explodes into humanity’s first recorded poetry: “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.”

The emotion is palpable. “At last!” After every animal failed, here is one who shares his very substance. Eve is not formed from dust like the animals or Adam. She alone is taken from humanity itself—instant, perfect, miraculous. This is the closest Scripture ever comes to anything resembling “macro-evolution,” and God does it in a moment by divine fiat.

IV. The Law of Marriage

Verse 24 is not Adam speaking; it is Moses, inspired by the Spirit, giving the universal principle Jesus and Paul will later quote: “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.”

Notice the “therefore.” Marriage exists because woman was built from man’s side. Sexuality itself demands the covenant of marriage. Jesus makes this explicit in Matthew 19, quoting Genesis 1:27 (“male and female he created them”) and then Genesis 2:24, concluding, “What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.”

V. Why Male and Female? Two Great Purposes

1. The Natural Purpose: Godly Offspring Even before sin entered, God commanded, “Be fruitful and multiply.” Death was not yet present, yet reproduction was already built into human nature. Malachi 2:15 reveals the heart of God: “Did he not make them one... And why one? Because he was seeking godly offspring.” Every covenant marriage belongs to God—“in flesh and spirit they are His”—so that through them He might raise up generations of image-bearers trained in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.
2. The Spiritual Purpose: A Parable of Christ and the Church Paul unveils the mystery in Ephesians 5:31–32: the one-flesh union “refers to Christ and the church.” Every element of marriage is a living gospel drama:
 - Leaving father and mother pictures leaving the world of sin.
 - Cleaving to the spouse pictures cleaving to Christ.
 - The one-flesh union pictures the mystical union of Christ and His bride.
 - The husband’s sacrificial headship pictures Christ’s headship.
 - The wife’s glad submission pictures the church’s submission to her Lord.

This drama is performed on a stage watched by angels (1 Cor 11:10), by the world, and by our children.

Application: Living the Mystery

Married Couples Husbands: the command is to love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for her. This is not a feeling; it is a daily decision. Wives: the command is to respect your husbands as the church submits to Christ—again, a decision, not a feeling. Angels are watching. Your children are watching. The gospel is on display.

Singles Your ultimate marriage is still ahead—the marriage supper of the Lamb (Rev 19). Until then, the church is your family. If it is not good for you to be alone, the answer is not serial relationships that distort the picture of Christ and His bride. The answer is covenant marriage that glorifies the gospel.

Struggling Marriages Look again to the One who built woman from Adam’s side and then allowed His own side to be pierced on the cross to build His church. There is healing, forgiveness, and resurrection power in the gospel.

Conclusion

From the very beginning, before sin ever entered the world, God placed marriage on center stage before the courts of heaven. He showed that we are not angels. We are embodied, sexual, relational creatures designed to display—generation after generation—the covenant-keeping love of Christ for His bride.

May every home, every bedroom, every act of leaving and cleaving, every raising of godly children proclaim: “This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh— and greater still, Christ is bone of our bones and flesh of our flesh, that we might be one with Him forever.”

To Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus, and in every marriage that displays His love, throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

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Beginnings: Man, Woman, and Marriage

Genesis 2:18–25 zooms in on the sixth day of creation to reveal God’s deliberate design for humanity and the very first institution He established: marriage. After declaring everything “good,” God surprisingly says, “It is not good that the man should be alone” (v. 18). This is no divine mistake or contradiction with Genesis 1; it is a deliberate teaching moment—before woman exists and before creation is declared “very good.”

God is instructing Adam, the watching angels, and now us. He parades the animals before Adam so the man will feel his profound aloneness. No creature is a suitable counterpart. Only after Adam recognizes his need does God perform divine surgery, taking a rib from Adam’s side and building the woman. When Adam sees her, he erupts in the Bible’s first poetry: “This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh!” (v. 23). She alone shares his essence.

Verse 24 then gives the unchanging “Law of Marriage”: a man shall leave father and mother, hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. Jesus quotes this very text (Matt 19:4–6) to show that marriage flows directly from God’s creation of humanity as male and female. Sexuality itself demands marriage.

Why did God make us male and female? Two great purposes emerge:

1. Natural: “Be fruitful and multiply.” Even before sin, reproduction was woven into human nature (unlike angels, who neither marry nor reproduce). God seeks godly offspring raised in covenant homes (Malachi 2:15).
2. Spiritual: Marriage is a living parable of Christ and His church (Eph 5:31–32). The leaving, cleaving, one-flesh union, sacrificial headship, and glad submission all display the gospel on a stage watched by angels, the world, and our children.

Therefore, husbands must decide daily to love their wives as Christ loves the church. Wives must decide daily to respect their husbands as the church submits to Christ. Angels are watching (1 Cor 11:10). Struggling marriages find healing at the cross, where Christ’s pierced side built His bride. Singles await the ultimate wedding—the marriage supper of the Lamb.

From the very beginning, God placed marriage on display before heaven and earth so that every covenant home would echo the unbreakable love between Christ and His church. To Him be glory in every marriage, forever. Amen.

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