

MARRIAGE: THE PORTRAYAL OF CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH

I. [Genesis 2:18-25](#) [Matthew 19:1-6](#) [Mark 10:1-9](#) [Ephesians 5:22-33](#)

A. Today we're going to let the institution of marriage take us to the Communion Table. We're going to see how God was the Originator of the concept of marriage and how marriage ultimately is meant to portray and foreshadow Christ and His Bride, the Church. [Ephesians 5:25-27](#) (ESV) is where we're headed so here's the sermon trailer: "*Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her, that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that He might present the church to Himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.*"

B. So we'll begin in Genesis and see how God initiated the institution of marriage and how the notion of a man and a woman being joined in holy matrimony was His doing from the start. With the marriage union came the charge to be *fruitful and multiply*, birthing babies and enjoying the blessings of family, children, grandchildren, on and on. And all this for the honor and glory of His name!

C. [Genesis 2:18-25](#) (ESV) finds us in the Garden of Eden, before man fell. Creation needed an epilogue, an appendix: **18** Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." **19** Now out of the ground the LORD God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. (Bob Dylan sang about this! :-) "**Man gave names to all the animals, in the beginning, long time ago.**") **20** The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. **21** So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. **22** And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man, He made into a woman and brought her to the man. **23** Then the man said, "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." (Translation: **She's drop-dead gorgeous and she's mine!**) **24** Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. **25** And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

D. Now you might say, '*I don't believe that!*' But that would be an indictment against God. It suggests He's incapable of accurately giving us His Word. You say, '*It's a made up fairy tale!*' Or '*I'm just a NT guy, just give me Jesus!*' But did you know Jesus believed and affirmed and endorsed the Genesis account? Not to mention the whole OT!

E. [Matthew 19:1-6](#) (ESV) **1** Now when Jesus had finished these sayings, He went away from Galilee (His home turf area) and entered the region of Judea beyond the Jordan. **2** And large crowds followed Him, and He healed them there. **3** And Pharisees came up to Him and tested Him by asking, "Is it lawful to divorce one's wife for any cause?" (As religious as these guys were, they believed Moses gave them permission to divorce their wives for any reason, even burning their supper!) **4** He answered, "Have you not read ("**Have you not read**" means Jesus is affirming all that's been written!) that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female, **5** and said, 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? **6** So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate." (Read further to see Jesus' full answer regarding divorce.) (Mark's Gospel affirms the account.)

F. [Mark 10:1-9](#) (ESV) echoes Matthew: **1** And He left there and went to the region of Judea and beyond the Jordan, and crowds gathered to Him again. *And again, as was His custom, He taught them.* (Hey wait, Matthew says Jesus *healed* them but Mark says He *taught* them. Is that a contradiction? Relax! This indicates Jesus did both. He *healed* and He *taught*!) **2** And Pharisees came up and in order to test Him asked, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?" **3** He answered them, "What did Moses command you?" **4** They said, "Moses allowed a man to write a certificate of divorce and to send her away." **5** And Jesus said to them, "Because of your hardness of heart he wrote you this commandment. **6** But from the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female.' **7** 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, **8** and the two shall become one flesh.' So they are no longer two but one flesh. **9** What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate." (So if you had planned to leave Genesis and cleave to Jesus or leave the OT and cleave to the NT, you're in a pickle! The Word Made Flesh, after all, is Author of both!)

G. So can we also find clarity and affirmation in the NT Epistles that marriage between a man and woman was God's idea from the beginning? Wasn't it God who created sex, something to be thoroughly enjoyed in the context of His design? Could it be that the same people who thought it better to forsake their Creator and worship created things were among the same ones who perverted God's intended ideal for sex and marriage? Rebellion and perversion caused our eviction from the Garden and they've not subsided. Man takes the good things of God and twists and pollutes them beyond recognition. (Niagara Falls illustration)

H. Ephesians 5:22-33 (ESV) Paul weighs in...

1) **V22-27: 22** Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. **23** For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, His body, and is Himself its Savior. **24** Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. **(Here's the Gospel:)** **25** Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her, **26** that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, **27** so that He might present the church to Himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. **(While I believe any husband who truly loves his wife in Christlike manner will have little problem with his wife honoring him as Paul instructs, the bigger reveal here is that the marriage covenant, instituted by God in the pre-fall Garden, is meant to depict the New Covenant that Christ achieved by His shed blood on the cross in order to make us His own! The Bread & Cup not only remind us, they shout it out loud!)**

2) **V28-30: 28** In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. **29** For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, **30** because we are members of His body. **(The best marriages depict the covenantal bond between Christ and His Church. The Church, as the Scriptures proclaim, is the *Bride* of Christ. *(Be careful what you say about Jesus' Gal!)* What was ordained in Eden is this: Marriage between a man and a woman is meant to foreshadow Christ--the choosing of His *Bride*, making her His own, by way of the cross, in the everlasting bonds of covenant.)**

3) **V31-33: 31** "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." **32** This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it **(The mystery)** refers to Christ and the church. **33** However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband. **(Paul, like Jesus, affirms Genesis and reveals the mystery behind holy matrimony...)**

I. A few more things before we share Communion...

1) If you're running roughshod and dishonoring your wife, stop. Turn to the Lord, ask for His forgiveness. Ask for His grace to enable you to love her like Christ.

2) If you are dishonoring or disrespecting your husband, stop. Turn to the Lord, ask for His forgiveness. Ask for His grace to enable you to love him like Christ.

3) If you've gone through divorce and the grounds were different than what Jesus conveyed, go before the Lord, confess, and receive His forgiveness. Likewise forgive your ex-spouse, that God will show them mercy like He's shown you.

4) If you aren't married but should be married because you're enjoying the benefits of marriage, seek the Lord and take your vows. Marriage is His way.

5) If you know those who've written off, perverted or rejected God's Word regarding His design for marriage between a man and a woman, love them anyway. Love them mightily. Pray for them fervently. And yet cling to the truth and honor God's will, His word, and His ways without compromise or apology. John 1:14 (ESV) reveals Christ Jesus: "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth." Jesus was not half full of grace and half full of truth. He was one hundred percent full of grace and truth. Let us endeavor to be the same...

II. Communion

* There was a woman, caught in the act of adultery. Jewish leaders drug her before Jesus. (Where was the man?!) With stones in hand, the angry mob reminded Jesus what the Law said and asked Him to weigh in. Jesus, Author & Keeper of the Law, started writing in the dirt. The mob persisted. Then Jesus said, "He who is without sin, cast the first stone." Again, he wrote in the dirt. We don't know what He wrote. Maybe the Commandments. Maybe He scribbled their sins. Maybe the names of women they'd sinned with. One by one the mob dropped their stones and left. Then Jesus asked her, "Where are your accusers--has no one condemned you?" She said, "No one Lord." Jesus said to her, "Neither do I condemn you. (Grace) go and sin no more." **(Truth)** That's what grace and truth looks like. Shortly thereafter Jesus went to the cross for that woman. Also for me. Also for you. Our sins were placed on Him and He absorbed God's wrath against them. His sinless right-standing was imputed to us by faith. The Bread & Cup remind us.

* Pray & Serve Communion...

* **Benediction:** *"The Lord bless you and keep you: the Lord make His face to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you: the Lord lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."* (**Numbers 6:24-26+**)

Scriptures, Videos, & Bonus Stuff

Genesis 2:18-25 (ESV)

18 Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." **19** Now out of the ground the LORD God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. **20** The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. **21** So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. **22** And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man He made into a woman and brought her to the man. **23** Then the man said, *"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."* **24** Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. **25** And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

Matthew 19:1-6 (ESV)

1 Now when Jesus had finished these sayings, He went away from Galilee and entered the region of Judea beyond the Jordan. **2** And large crowds followed Him, and He healed them there. **3** And Pharisees came up to Him and tested Him by asking, "Is it lawful to divorce one's wife for any cause?" **4** He answered, "Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female, **5** and said, 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? **6** So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate."

Mark 10:1-9 (ESV)

1 And He left there and went to the region of Judea and beyond the Jordan, and crowds gathered to Him again. And again, as was His custom, He taught them. **2** And Pharisees came up and in order to test Him asked, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?" **3** He answered them, "What did Moses command you?" **4** They said, "Moses allowed a man to write a certificate of divorce and to send her away." **5** And Jesus said to them, "Because of your hardness of heart he wrote you this commandment. **6** But from the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female.' **7** 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, **8** and the two shall become one flesh.' So they are no longer two but one flesh. **9** What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate."

Ephesians 5:22-33 (ESV)

22 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. **23** For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, His body, and is Himself its Savior. **24** Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. **25** Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her, **26** that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, **27** so that He might present the church to Himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. **28** In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. **29** For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, **30** because we are members of His body. **31** "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." **32** This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. **33** However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

Bonus Stuff

"How Beautiful" - Twila Paris

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jVu5VZsCNOI>

Marriage for the Glory of God - Paul Washer, John Piper, & Voddie Baucham

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZACkRe_W4Gg

Sustaining Marriage Love (John Piper, Timothy Keller, D.A. Carson)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cZiM362HN-Y>

Marriage is About Christ and the Church - John Piper
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4vAq9sWgZ74>

Marriage--The Picture of Christ and His Church - Francis Chan
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yhykiuTPIfA>

"Man Gave Names to All the Animals" - Bob Dylan :-)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=awafD8ck-dc>

"Man Gave Names to All the Animals" - Johnny Cash Version :-)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3CTHkmwIOV0>

John 8:2-11 (NKJV)

2 Now early in the morning He came again into the temple, and all the people came to Him; and He sat down and taught them. **3** Then the scribes and Pharisees brought to Him a woman caught in adultery. And when they had set her in the midst, **4** they said to Him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in adultery, in the very act. **5** Now Moses, in the law, commanded us that such should be stoned. But what do You say?" **6** This they said, testing Him, that they might have something of which to accuse Him. But Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground with His finger, as though He did not hear. **7** So when they continued asking Him, He raised Himself up and said to them, "He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first." **8** And again He stooped down and wrote on the ground. **9** Then those who heard it, being convicted by their conscience, went out one by one, beginning with the oldest even to the last. And Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. **10** When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, "Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?" **11** She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said to her, "Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more."

Romans 1:18-32 (ESV)

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. **19** For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. **20** For His invisible attributes, namely, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. **21** For although they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks to Him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. **22** Claiming to be wise, they became fools, **23** and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things. **24** Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, **25** because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen. **26** For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; **27** and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error. **28** And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done. **29** They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, **30** slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, **31** foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. **32** Though they know God's righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them.

1 Corinthians 6:12-20 (ESV)

12 "All things are lawful for me," but not all things are helpful. "All things are lawful for me," but I will not be dominated by anything. **13** "Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food"--and God will destroy both one and the other. The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. **14** And God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by His power. **15** Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! **16** Or do you not know that he who is joined to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, "The two will become one flesh." **17** But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with Him. **18** Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. **19** Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, **20** for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

Revelation 21:1-3 (NIV)

1 Then I saw "a new heaven and a new earth," for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. **2** I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a

bride beautifully dressed for her husband. **3** And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and He will dwell with them. They will be His people, and God Himself will be with them and be their God.

Theological Note on Ephesians 5:32

The ESV Study Bible

31 "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." 32 This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. - Ephesians 5:31-32 (ESV)

5:32: By **mystery** Paul means the hidden plan of God that has come to fulfillment in Christ Jesus (see 1:9; 3:3-4, 9; and 6:19), thus his quotation about marriage from Genesis 2 (in Eph 5:31) ties in to the relationship between Christ and His church. Paul's meaning is **profound**: he interprets the original creation of the husband-and-wife union with the church as His "body" (see v. 23). Therefore, marriage from the beginning of creation (Genesis 1) was created by God to be a reflection of and patterned after Christ's relation to the church. Thus Paul's commands regarding the roles of husbands and wives do not merely reflect the culture of his day but present God's ideal for all marriages at all times, as exemplified by the relationship between the bride of Christ (the church) and Christ Himself, the Son of God.

- Theological Note on Ephesians 5:32, *The ESV Study Bible*, Crossway, p. 2272.

Theological Note on Ephesians 5:31-32

The Reformation Study Bible

31 "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." 32 This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. - Ephesians 5:31-32 (ESV)

5:31, 32: Paul says the quotation from Gen. 2:24 in v. 31 is a "mystery." The idea is that God's pre-fall commission for a man to leave his family and become one with his wife was ultimately intended to foreshadow Christ's relationship with His bride, the church. This was not so clearly seen in the Old Testament but now has been fully revealed in Christ. As a man leaves his family and cleaves to his wife, Christ left His Father's side and came to cleave to His bride. Having returned to His Father, He brings us with Him to dwell before God forever.

- Theological Note on Ephesians 5:31-32, *The Reformation Study Bible*, Reformation Trust, p. 2100.

Taken Out of Man

- Ligonier Ministries / *Tabletalk* Magazine

<https://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/taken-out-man/>

"Then the man said, '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'"(Gen. 2:23).- [Genesis 2:21-23](#)

Even though the Lord declared His creation to be "very good" at the end of His work on the sixth day ([Gen. 1:31](#)), chapter 2 of the book of Genesis reveals to us that at one point before God was finished, complete goodness was lacking. The first man ever created was placed in a garden where he was provided with everything he needed for life. Everything, that is, except a fit helper. Although many other creatures were made by the Lord's good pleasure, none of them was suitable to be Adam's companion (2:18-21).

As we noted on Friday, man was not designed to accomplish dominion over creation for God's glory by himself; therefore, God fulfilled his need for a helper. In the creation of woman, God provided man with such a helper — a being who is his kin spiritually, physically, socially, and intellectually.

Eve is taken from the side of Adam (v. 21), indicating that women are equal to men in dignity and importance. When Adam joyfully received her and called her "flesh of my flesh" (v. 23), he meant that whatever he is, she is as well. She too bears the image of God (1:27) and mirrors the glory of her Lord.

While men and women both bear God's image, however, this does not mean our ways are exactly the same. An honest look at the differences between men and women reveals, generally speaking, that men act out certain characteristics of God more than women do, and women act out certain other characteristics of God more than men do. We bear His image equally, albeit in complementary ways.

Moreover, while men and women are equal in dignity, this does not mean they have the same roles. Adam exercised leadership over the animals by naming them, and he does the same with Eve by naming her (2:23). Within the context

of the family and the church, men bear the responsibility of godly, loving leadership, while women have the duty of honorable, caring submission ([Eph. 5:22-33](#)). But this should not alarm us, for just as we see both equality and subordination among the persons of the Trinity ([John 1:1](#); [5:19](#)), so too do we see it in the human race that bears His image.

Coram Deo

What is your opinion of the opposite sex? If you are a man, do you display a chauvinistic attitude in the way you talk to, or talk about, women? If you are a woman, do you dismiss men as oafish? Perhaps, whether you are male or female, you dishonor the other sex as made in the image of God by being overtly concerned with their physical appearance and not the qualities of their heart. If you have offended another in any of these ways, go and seek forgiveness.

Passages for Further Study: Ruth 3; Esther 8-9; [1 Cor. 11:2-16](#); [1 Tim. 2:8-15](#)...