



God's Style of Marriage

Wiersbe, Warren W. 1998. Be Basic. "Be" Commentary Series. Colorado Springs, CO: Chariot Pub.



GENESIS 2:18 – 25 (NKJV)

¹⁸ And the LORD God said, “It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper **comparable to him.**”

¹⁹ Out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam called each living creature, that was its name.

²⁰ So Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field. **But for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him.**



²¹ And the LORD **God caused a deep sleep** to fall on Adam, and he slept; and **He took one of his ribs**, and closed up the flesh in its place.

²² Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He **made into a woman**, and **He brought her to the man**.

²³ 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.**”

²⁴ Therefore a **man shall leave his father and mother** and be **joined to his wife**, and **they shall become one flesh**.

²⁵ And they **were both naked**, the **man and his wife**, and were not **ashamed**.



THE FIRST MARRIAGE

Genesis 2:19 – 25

At the close of the sixth day of Creation, God had surveyed everything He had made and pronounced it “very good” (1:31).

But now God says that there’s something in His wonderful world that is not good: the man is alone.

In fact, in the Hebrew text, the phrase “not good” is at the beginning of the Lord’s statement in 2:18.



What was “not good” about man’s solitude? After all, Adam could fellowship with God, enjoy the beauty of the Garden and eat its fruits, accomplish his daily work, and even play with the animals.

What more could Adam want?

God knew what Adam needed: “a helper suitable for him” (v. 18, NIV). There was no such helper among the animals, so God made the first woman and presented her to the man as his wife, companion, and helper.

Eve was God’s special love gift to Adam (3:12).



The Dignity of Woman (vv. 18 – 22)

The woman was by no means a “lesser creature.” The same God who made Adam also made Eve and created her in His own image.

Genesis 1:27 (NKJV)

So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

Both Adam and Eve exercised dominion over creation (v. 29).

Adam was made from the dust, but Eve was made from Adam's side, bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh (2:23).

The plain fact is that Adam needed Eve.



They are to rule together – not each other.

Not a single animal God had created could do for Adam what Eve could do. She was a helper “meet [suitable] for him.”

When God paraded the animals before Adam for him to name them, they doubtless came before him in pairs, each with its mate, and perhaps Adam wondered, “Why don’t I have a mate?”

Though Eve was made to be a “suitable [face-to-face] helper” for Adam, she wasn’t made to be enslaved.



“She was not made out of his head to rule over him, nor out of his feet to be trampled upon by him, but out of his side to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected, and near his heart to be beloved.”

- Matthew Henry



Woman is the glory of the man.

Paul wrote:

- “the woman is the glory of the man” (1 Cor. 11:7, NIV)
- for if the man is the head (1 Cor. 11:1 – 16; Eph. 5:22 – 33), then the woman is the crown that honors the head.



The Sanctity of Marriage (vv. 23 – 24)

God's pattern for marriage wasn't devised by Adam; as the traditional marriage ceremony states:

- “Marriage was born in the loving heart of God for the blessing and benefit of mankind.”**
- No matter what the courts may decree or society may permit, when it comes to marriage, God has the first word, and He will have the last word.**



Hebrews 13:4 (NKJV)

Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.

Revelation 22:14 – 15 (NKJV)

¹⁴ **Blessed are those who do His commandments**, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city.

¹⁵ But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie.



The Sanctity of Marriage (vv. 23 – 24)

Jesus made it clear that not everybody is supposed to be married, although most people expect to be married and probably want to be married.

Singleness is not a curse.



The Sanctity of Marriage (vv. 23 – 24)

Matthew 19:10 – 12 (NKJV)

¹⁰ His disciples said to Him, “If such is the case of the man with his wife, it is better not to marry.”

¹¹ But He said to them, **“All cannot accept this saying, but only those to whom it has been given:**

¹² **For there are eunuchs who were born thus from their mother’s womb, and there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven’s sake. He who is able to accept it, let him accept it.”**



God gives people different gifts and calls people to tasks commensurate with their gifts.

1 Corinthians 7:7 – 9 (NKJV)

⁷ For I wish that all men were even as I myself. **But each one has his own gift from God, one in this manner and another in that.**

⁸ But I say to the unmarried and to the widows: It is good for them if they remain even as I am;

⁹ but if they cannot exercise self-control, let them marry. For it is better to marry than to burn with passion.



God's original plan was that one man and one woman will become one flesh for one lifetime.

God had at least four purposes in mind when He performed the first marriage in the Garden of Eden.



First, God wanted suitable companionship for Adam, so He gave him a wife.

God gave Adam a person and not an animal, someone who was his equal and, therefore, could understand him and help him.

Martin Luther called marriage “a school for character,” and it is. As two people live together in holy matrimony, the experience either brings out the best in them or the worst in them.

It's an opportunity to exercise faith, hope, and love and to mature in sacrifice and service to one another for God's glory.



Second, marriage provides the God-given right to enjoy sex and have children.

The Lord commanded them to “**be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth**” (Gen. 1:28). This doesn’t imply that sexual love is only for procreation because many people marry who are beyond the time of bearing children; but the bearing of children is an important part of the marriage union.

1 Timothy 5:14 (NKJV)

Therefore I desire that the younger widows marry, bear children, manage the house, give no opportunity to the adversary to speak reproachfully.



The Song of Songs magnifies the enjoyment of married love and says nothing about conception or children.

In ancient Jewish society, it was considered a disgrace not to have children; yet many fine marriages were not blessed with offspring, and such is the case today.



A third purpose for marriage is to encourage self-control (1 Cor. 7:1 – 7).

1 Corinthians 7:1 – 7 (NKJV)

¹ Now concerning the things of which you wrote to me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman.

² Nevertheless, because of sexual immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband.

³ Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband.



A third purpose for marriage is to encourage self-control (1 Cor. 7:1 – 7).

⁴ The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does.

⁵ Do not deprive one another except with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

⁶ But I say this as a concession, not as a commandment.

⁷ For I wish that all men were even as I myself. But each one has his own gift from God, one in this manner and another in that.



“It is better to marry than to burn with passion” (v. 9, NKJV). A marriage that’s built only on sexual passion isn’t likely to be strong or mature. Sexual love ought to be enriching and not just exciting, and marriage partners need to respect one another and not just use one another.

Throughout Scripture, sexual union outside of marriage is condemned and shown to be destructive, and so are the perversions of the sexual union (Rom. 1:24–27).

No matter what the judges or the marriage counselors say, “God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral” (Heb. 13:4, NIV).



Finally, marriage illustrates the loving and intimate relationship between Christ and His church (Eph. 5:22 – 33).

Paul called this “a great mystery,” that is, a profound spiritual truth that was once hidden but is now revealed by the Spirit.

- Jesus Christ is the Last Adam (1 Cor. 15:45) and, therefore, a type of the First Adam.
- Adam was put to sleep and his side opened that he might have a wife, but Jesus died on a cross and His blood shed that He might have a bride, the church (John 19:33 – 37).
- Christ loves the church, cares for it, and seeks to cleanse it and make it more beautiful for His glory.



The Church is the Bride of Christ

One day Christ will claim His bride and present her in purity and glory in heaven (Jude 24; Rev. 19:1 – 9).

When Adam saw his bride, he burst into joyful praise (Gen. 2:23), as though he were saying, “At last I have a suitable companion!”



Adam didn't speak the words recorded in verses 24 – 25.

²⁴ Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

²⁵ And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

- They are God's reflection on the event and His enunciation of the principle of marital unity declared by Adam.
- The woman is one with a man both in origin (she came from a man) and in marriage.
- In the sexual union and in their children, the man and woman are "one flesh."



Marriage is a *civil* relationship regulated by law.

It should also be a spiritual and heart-centered relationship governed by the Word of God and motivated by love.

But marriage is basically a physical relationship.

The man and the woman are not primarily “one spirit” or “one heart,” as essential as those things are, but “one flesh.”



In marriage, it's important to “leave” the former family and “cleave” to one's mate thus forming a new relationship that must be nurtured and protected.

Ephesians 5:30 – 31 (NKJV)

³⁰ For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones.

³¹ “For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, **and the two shall become one flesh.**”



The phrase “one flesh” implies that anything that breaks the physical bond in marriage can also break the marriage itself.

- One such thing is **death**; for when one mate dies, the other mate is free to remarry because the marriage bond has been broken (Rom. 7:1 – 3; 1 Cor. 7:8 – 9; 1 Tim. 5:14).
- In Matthew 19:1–9, Jesus teaches that **adultery** can also break the marriage bond.

Under the Old Testament Law, anybody who committed adultery was stoned to death (Deut. 22:22–24; John 8:3–7), thus leaving the innocent mate free to remarry; but this law wasn't given to the New Testament church.



It appears that divorce in the New Testament is the equivalent of death in the Old Testament and that the innocent party is free to remarry.

However, sins against the marriage bond can be forgiven and couples can exercise forgiveness and make a new beginning in the Lord.

We live in a world created by God, and we are creatures made in God's image. We also enjoy multiplied blessings from God's hand – and that includes marriage!

