

Created Male and Female

Gen 2:18-25

SS Lesson for 09/08/2013

Devotional Scripture: Eph 5:22-31

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Introduction

Overview and Approach to Lesson

The lesson teaches how and why God **Created Male and Female**. The **study's aim** is to discover what God did and purposed when He created mankind. The **study's application** is to learn to embrace God's relationship patterns so that we can experience His blessings in life and to bring our thinking and actions into conformity with God's established ways for mankind.

Key Verse: Gen 2:18

And the Lord God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him."

Commentary from the Bible Knowledge Commentary

This section records the creation of the first woman and the institution of marriage; so it says much about the mainstay of Israel's society. God intended husband and wife to be a spiritual, functional unity, walking in integrity, serving God, and keeping His commandments together. When this harmony is operative, society prospers under God's hand. Adam was alone and that was not good; all else in Creation was good (cf. 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25). As man began to function as God's representative (naming the animals [2:19-20] represented his dominion over them; cf. 1:28), he became aware of his solitude (2:20). God therefore put him to sleep (v. 21) and created Eve from his flesh and bone (vv. 21-23). God decided to make a helper suitable (lit., "a helper corresponding to him," or "a corresponding helper") for the man (v. 18). "Helper" is not a demeaning term; it is often used in Scripture to describe God Almighty (e.g., Pss. 33:20; 70:5; 115:9, where it is trans. "help" in the niv). The description of her as "corresponding to him" means basically that what was said about him in Genesis 2:7 was also true of her. They both had the same nature. But what man lacked (his aloneness was not good) she supplied, and what she lacked he supplied. The culmination was one flesh (v. 24)—the complete unity of man and woman in marriage. Since Adam and Eve were a spiritual unity, living in integrity without sin, there was no need for instruction here on headship. Paul later discussed that in relationship to the order of Creation (1 Cor. 11:3; 1 Tim. 2:13). The words, for this reason, Gen. 2:24), are used frequently in Genesis. If the words in verse 24 were spoken directly by God to Adam, then the verb "leave" must be translated as the future will leave (as in the niv). But if God said those words through Moses, they should be translated in the present tense: "that is why a man leaves..." The implication is that marriage involves one male and one female becoming "one flesh." Their nakedness (v. 25) suggests that they were at ease with one another without any fear of exploitation or potential for evil. Such fellowship was shattered later at the Fall and is retained only in a measure in marriage when a couple begins to feel at ease with each other. Here the nakedness, though literal, also suggests sinlessness

Commentary from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

The phrase "and God saw that it was good" appears at various stages of his creative work (Genesis 1:10, 12, 18, 21, 25). The assessment of the creation as "very good" concludes the entire account (Genesis 1:31). However, we now learn of a situation that is not good: the fact that the man should be alone. So God determines that he will make a helper suitable for him. Therefore the help to be provided for the man is someone who will serve as an appropriate companion. Thus something of the purpose for the creation of woman is already hinted at even before her creation takes place. She will complete the man, helping him become what he would not be capable of becoming were he to remain alone.

Commentary from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary

The key verse is a beautiful declaration from God of man's need for woman. It is amazing to consider that even after all He had made already—the sun, the stars, fish, birds, and plants, as well as Adam—God still

was not finished. Some key things can be learned if we examine the details of this verse. First, God said that it was not good for man to be alone. Adam could not live life as God intended if he was by himself. God's desire was for man to "be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it" {Gen. 1:28}. Adam could not fulfill this task without someone who could bear children— namely, a woman. Second, Adam was given a desire for relationship. The Triune God has existed in relationship from eternity. And He said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness" (Gen. 1:26). Agur, the human author of Proverbs 30, wondered in awe at this natural desire for relationship and intimacy built into the fabric of a man's soul (vss. 18-19). Third, this is the first time in the Genesis account of Creation that God declared something to be "not good." The previous five days of Creation ended with the label "good." Yet even after God miraculously created the first man from the dust of the earth, He could not consider this part completely good yet. The creation of woman would fulfill what was missing. Fourth, Eve was a helper "meet" for Adam. She would help Adam with the task of subduing the earth and taking care of God's creation. She was created with just the right mixture of physical, emotional, and mental qualities to assist her husband in the profound task to which he had been divinely assigned. The truths from the text present some very important applications for Christians of the twenty-first century. One such application is found in the humanity of the woman. Eve was created as a helper, but she was created just as human as Adam. Indeed, God created both male and female as equal in humanity, although different in roles. Moreover, both Adam and Eve were created as special beings. They were more than the animals in standing and importance. Such a distinction is vital to understanding the identity of humanity. Many popular scientists, teachers, professors, and textbook writers maintain that men and women are merely animals. They say that people are no better in quality and purpose than an ostrich or an orangutan. This line of reasoning traces the origin of man to biological randomness and happenstance. This kind of unbiblical thinking is especially dangerous because it ignores God's love for life. God is the Author of life, as evidenced in the personhood of Adam and Eve at Creation, and He commands His people to honor Him for that special gift. Scripture says that God "giveth to all life, and breath, and all things" (Acts 17:25). Psalm 150:6 reads, "Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord." Such is the responsibility of the born-again Christian. One of the best ways to honor God is to live out the gift of life He has given us in honor of Christ. Such a dedication will both honor God and serve as a light to those whose minds are darkened by faulty thinking.

Approach to the Major Outlines in Lesson

The outline of the lesson was adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary and from the points revealed by the study of the Scriptural text.

Verse	Phrase	Commentary
18	It is not good that man should be alone	God Saw Man's Need
20	But for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him	God Helped Man See His Own Need
22	God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man	God Fulfilled Man's Need
24	Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh	God Instituted Marriage Between Man and Woman

Lesson Introduction and Background

From the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

Today's lesson and the next three are drawn from the book of Genesis. Today's text deals with part of God's actions on the sixth day of creation. According to Genesis 1:24-31, this is the day God created land animals and the first humans. The picture becomes fuller when we see the first man (Adam) being placed "in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it" (Genesis 2:15). Some students maintain that the creation account in Genesis 2 is an entirely different, and even contradictory, account from that found in Genesis 1. But Genesis 2 should be considered supplementary, not contradictory, to Genesis 1. Some suggest that Genesis 2 is like the effect of a zoom lens, focusing especially on the events of the sixth day, primarily those involving the man and the woman created in God's image. The focus within Genesis 2 on the creation of the man and the woman is most appropriate given the special place that human beings have in God's creative activity. Only humans are said to be created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26, 27), as what might be called the grand finale of God's work. He saves the best for last, as confirmed by the additional details provided in Genesis 2.

From the Bible Expositor and Illuminator

John J. Davis wrote, "Evolution, as represented in Darwinism and neo-Darwinism, simply asserts that all living organisms arose from one simple, living cell. The origin of that cell is traced to the accumulation of chemical and protein elements brought together over a long period of time by unknown chance factors. "The concept of spontaneous generation, which is widely accepted and on which evolutionary theory is based, is -a prior assumption that lacks controlled scientific proof" (Paradise to Prison, Baker). Since Christian scientists are often under pressure to balance scientific explanations of origins with their belief in God and creation, many have accepted what is referred to as theistic evolution. This theory states that while God might have directly created the original life forms, He followed that by ordering and directing the evolutionary process through the laws of nature He had established. "When the Christian scientist agrees that living organisms were the result of chance factors, he has abandoned de facto a biblical concept of origins" (Davis). We believe that the creation of Adam was a direct act of God. Not only did God create Adam miraculously, but He also did the same with Eve. We live in a day when the natural and normal relationship between man and woman has been distorted by society. The normal sexual relationship has been perverted in the minds of many to something sinful and discouraging to the sincere Christian. We can only recover the right viewpoint by learning how God established the human relationship at the time of Creation. We then can begin to see how we can experience it ourselves. God created us male and female for His purposes and for our good. Like every other good creation of God, our experience of it can be ruined by sin and erroneous thinking. Understanding God's pattern for our relationships is essential in leading fulfilling and rewarding lives.

Major Theme Analysis

(Scriptural Text from the New King James Version; cross-references from the NIV)

God Saw Man's Need (Gen 2:18)

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

Need to resolve man's loneliness (18)

God not only recognizes the lonely, but He also acts to help them (Ps 68:6)

6 God sets the lonely in families, He leads forth the prisoners with singing; but the rebellious live in a sun-scorched land.

Take comfort in knowing that when we feel the loneliest, God shows His strength to us (Kings 19:9-11)

9 There he went into a cave and spent the night. And the word of the Lord came to him: "What are you doing here, Elijah?" 10He replied, "I have been very zealous for the Lord God Almighty. The Israelites have rejected your covenant, broken down your altars, and put your prophets to death with the sword. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me too." 11The Lord said, "Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by."

God is always our refuge when no one else seems concerned (Psalm 142:4-5)

4 Look to my right and see; no one is concerned for me. I have no refuge; no one cares for my life. 5 I cry to you, O Lord; I say, "You are my refuge, my portion in the land of the living."

When we need someone and no one is there Jesus is always at our side (2 Tim. 4:16-17)

16 At my first defense, no one came to my support, but everyone deserted me. May it not be held against them. 17But the Lord stood at my side and gave me strength, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it. And I was delivered from the lion's mouth.

When we are lonely we should pray for God's fellowship (Ps 25:16)

16 Turn to me and be gracious to me, for I am lonely and afflicted.

Need of a helper (18)

A helper to be a mother (Gen 3:20)

20 Adam named his wife Eve, because she would become the mother of all the living.

A helper to make the foundation of a family (Mal 2:15)

15 Has not [the Lord] made them one? In flesh and spirit they are his. And why one? Because he was seeking godly offspring. So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith with the wife of your youth.

A helper that is unified as one (Mark 10:6-8)

6 "But at the beginning of creation God 'made them male and female.' 7 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, 8 and the two will become one flesh.' So they are no longer two, but one.

A helper because it a favor from God (Prov 18:22)

22 He who finds a wife finds what is good and receives favor from the Lord.

A helper that is prudent from God (Prov 19:14)

14 Houses and wealth are inherited from parents, but a prudent wife is from the Lord.

A helper to keep from immorality (1 Cor 7:2)

2 But since there is so much immorality, each man should have his own wife, and each woman her own husband.

A helper that could lead to sanctification (1 Cor 7:14)

14 For the unbelieving husband has been sanctified through his wife, and the unbelieving wife has been sanctified through her believing husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy.

God Helped Man See His Own Need (Gen 2:19-20)

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.

Man's need for animal life (19)

God created and blessed the animal life of earth (Gen 1:20-22)

20 And God said, "Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky." 21 So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living and moving thing with which the water teems, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. 22 God blessed them and said, "Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth."

God allowed man to rule of the animal life (Ps 8:6-8)

6 You made him ruler over the works of your hands; you put everything under his feet: 7 all flocks and herds, and the beasts of the field, 8 the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, all that swim the paths of the seas.

God eventually allowed man to eat the animals (Gen 9:2-3)

2 The fear and dread of you will fall upon all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air, upon every creature that moves along the ground, and upon all the fish of the sea; they are given into your hands. 3 Everything that lives and moves will be food for you. Just as I gave you the green plants, I now give you everything.

All animals that God created are clean and man must not call them impure (Acts 11:4-10)

4 Peter began and explained everything to them precisely as it had happened: 5 "I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision. I saw something like a large sheet being let down from heaven by its four corners, and it came down to where I was. 6 I looked into it and saw four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, reptiles, and birds of the air. 7 Then I heard a voice telling me, 'Get up, Peter. Kill and eat.' 8 "I replied, 'Surely not, Lord! Nothing impure or unclean has ever entered my mouth.' 9 "The voice spoke from heaven a second time, 'Do not call anything impure that God has made clean.'

Man's need for companion (20)

A companion because two are better than one (Eccl 4:9)

9 Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work:

A companion to help carry life's burdens (Num 11:14)

14 I cannot carry all these people by myself; the burden is too heavy for me.

A companion to aid in life's work (Prov 27:17)

17 As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.

A companion to share authority (Mark 6:7)

7 Calling the Twelve to him, he sent them out two by two and gave them authority over evil spirits.

A companion to help enjoy the work of our hands (Eccl 4:8)

8 There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother. There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth. "For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?" This too is meaningless — a miserable business!

God Fulfilled Man's Need (Gen 2:21-23)

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."

God's fulfilled need by using Adam (21, 23)

Used Adam as the source (1 Cor 11:8-9)

8 For man did not come from woman, but woman from man; 9 neither was man created for woman, but woman for man.

Used Adam to provide a co-heir (1 Peter 3:7)

7 Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.

Used Adam to create Eve, but called them as "man" (Gen 5:2)

2 He created them male and female and blessed them. And when they were created, he called them "man."

Used Adam so that all off-springs would be of one flesh and blood (Gen 29:14)

14 Then Laban said to him, "You are my own flesh and blood." After Jacob had stayed with him for a whole month,

God's fulfillment by the creation of woman (22)

Commentary from Matthew Henry on the creation of woman

That Adam was first formed, then Eve (1 Tim 2:13), and she was made of the man, and for the man (1 Cor 11:8-9), all which are urged there as reasons for the humility, modesty, silence, and submissiveness, of that sex in general, and particularly the subjection and reverence which wives owe to their own husbands. Yet man being made last of the creatures, as the best and most excellent of all, Eve's being made after Adam, and out of him, puts an honour upon that sex, as the glory of the man, 1 Cor 11:7. If man is the head, she is the crown, a crown to her husband, the crown of the visible creation. The man was dust refined, but the woman was dust double-refined, one remove further from the earth. That the woman was made of a rib out of the side of Adam; 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. Adam lost a rib, and without any diminution to his strength or comeliness (for, doubtless, the flesh was closed without a scar); but in lieu thereof he had a help meet for him, which abundantly made up his loss: what God takes away from his people he will, one way or other, restore with advantage.

The woman is the glory of man (1 Cor. 11:7)

7 A man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of man.

Many women have been helpers all through the Bible (Acts 9:36)

36 In Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (which, when translated, is Dorcas), who was always doing good and helping the poor.

Two are better than one (Eccl 4:8-12)

8 There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother. There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth. "For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?" This too is meaningless-- a miserable business! 9 Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: 10 If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up! 11 Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? 12 Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

God Instituted Marriage Between Man and Woman (Gen 2:24-25)

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.

God's institution of family (24)

A family that started from Adam and Eve (Gen 1:28)

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."

A family that was restarted from Noah (Gen 9:7-9)

7 As for you, be fruitful and increase in number; multiply on the earth and increase upon it." 8 Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him: 9 "I now establish my covenant with you and with your descendants after you

A family that should be cared for (1 Tim 5:8)

8 If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

A family that Jesus is a part of (Heb 2:11)

11 Both the one who makes men holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers.

A family that became nations (Gen 17:15-16)

15 God also said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you are no longer to call her Sarai; her name will be Sarah. 16 I will bless her and will surely give you a son by her. I will bless her so that she will be the mother of nations; kings of peoples will come from her."

God's institution of marriage (25)

Commentary from Matthew Henry on the first marriage

The marriage of the woman to Adam. Marriage is honorable, but this surely was the most honorable marriage that ever was, in which God himself had all along an immediate hand. Marriages (they say) are made in heaven: we are sure this was, for the man, the woman, the match, were all God's own work; he, by his power, made them both, and now, by his ordinance, made them one. This was a marriage made in perfect innocency, and so was never any marriage since. God, as her Father, brought the woman to the man, as his second self, and a help-meet for him. When he had made her, he did not leave her to her own disposal; no, she was his child, and she must not marry without his consent. Those are likely to settle to their comfort who by faith and prayer, and a humble dependence upon providence, put themselves under a divine conduct. That wife that is of God's making by special grace, and of God's bringing by special providence, is likely to prove a help-meet for a man.

Man must always take care of home and family (1 Tim. 5:8)

If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

A wife is both good and a blessing from God (Prov 18:22)

22 He who finds a wife finds what is good and receives favor from the LORD.

Husband and wife are of one body, just as the Church is one body (Eph 5:28-30)

28 In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. 29 After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church-- 30 for we are members of his body.

Husband and wife are God's in both body and spirit as one (Mal 2:15)

15 Has not [the LORD] made them one? In flesh and spirit they are his. And why one? Because he was seeking godly offspring. So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith with the wife of your youth.

The noble wife is a blessing and praise of her husband (Proverbs 31:10-12; 27-28)

10 A wife of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than rubies. 11 Her husband has full confidence in her and lacks nothing of value. 12 She brings him good, not harm, all the days of her life. 27 She watches over the affairs of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness. 28 Her children arise and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her:

Conclusion and Other Thoughts

Concluding Thoughts from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

For as long as most of us can remember, God's ideal for marriage has been under assault in Western society. "Living together" (which used to be called "shacking up") has gained acceptance, even from some who have been brought up in the church. No doubt this cavalier attitude toward marriage is just one of many consequences that the Western world has experienced as a result of its rejection of a Judeo-Christian framework that defines marriage on biblical terms. But this is not the time (nor is it ever) for the church to wave the white flag in surrender. We cannot allow the culture to set the terms of the marriage issue. Churches can offer sermons, retreats, and Bible studies on God's plan for marriage. Premarital counseling can be offered (or made mandatory) to those considering marriage in the church. Youth should be instructed during (or before) the high-school years about the biblical teaching concerning marriage and how the Christian marriage can serve as a model of the relationship between Christ and the church. That last point is crucial. Ultimately,

the assault on marriage undermines a key witnessing tool of the church. Strong marriages are an essential part of how the church witnesses on behalf of Jesus to a lost world (compare 1 Timothy 5:14, 15). When Paul uses marriage to illustrate the relationship between Christ and the church in Ephesians 5, he cites Genesis 2:24. That illustration remains a vital part of the church's message to whatever culture it is confronting. Marriage is meant to honor the Creator, and it is meant to honor the head of the church, Jesus Christ. Unmarried Christians who are content to remain single may feel a bit uncomfortable by the declaration, "It is not good for the man to be alone" (Genesis 2:18). They may discover that their lifestyle allows them to serve the Lord with a freedom and flexibility that would not be theirs if they were married. The single lifestyle is not inconsistent with the overall teaching of Scripture. Paul, whose high regard for marriage we have already noted, told the Corinthians that a married person has additional cares to address (1 Corinthians 7:32-34). Jesus acknowledged that some remain unmarried "for the sake of the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 19:12). Genesis 2:18 must be seen in its immediate setting. It was certainly not good for Adam to remain alone for several reasons, among them God's desire for humans to "be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it" (Genesis 1:28). Adam could not do that alone! Living in a world affected by sin, we know that there are situations where singleness may be the preferred state in which one should live. Jeremiah was told to remain single and childless because of the hard times that God's people were to face (Jeremiah 16:1-4). Marriage would have made that man's prophetic task more difficult. One could even say that God demonstrated mercy toward Jeremiah through his command not to marry or have children: Jeremiah would be spared the heartache of seeing his wife and children suffer, and his family would be spared the heartache of seeing a husband and father suffer.

Concluding Thought From Bob Deffinbaugh

From the series: Genesis: From Paradise to Patriarchs

There is now adequate water, the beautiful and bountiful provision of the garden, and a man to cultivate it. But there is not yet a companion suitable for man. This need is met in verses 18-25. The garden, with its pleasures and provisions for food and meaningful activity was not sufficient unless these delights could be shared. God would provide Adam with that which he needed most. Then the Lord God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him' (Genesis 2:18). Adam's mate was to be a very special creation, a 'helper, suitable for him' (verse 18). She was to be a 'helper,' not a slave, and not an inferior. The Hebrew word ezer is most interesting. It was a word that Moses obviously liked, for in Exodus 18:4 we are told that this was the name he gave to one of his sons. And the other was named Eliezer (El=God), for he said, 'The God of my father was my help (ezer), and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh' (Exodus 18:4). The other three times ezer is found used by Moses in Deuteronomy (33:7,26,29), it refers to God as man's helper. So also in the Psalms (20:2; 33:20; 70:5; 89:19; 115:9; 121:1,2; 124:8; 146:5). The point of the word as it is most often employed in the Old Testament is that the help given implies no inferiority whatsoever. In a way consistent with its usage, God is helping man through women. What a beautiful thought. How far above some conceptions this is. Then also, she is a helper who 'corresponds to' Adam. One translation reads, "... I will make a helper like him." This is precisely opposite the point. Yet this is often what we consider the perfect wife—one who is just like us. Incompatibility is by divine design in many instances. As Dwight Hervey Small has correctly observed, Incompatibility is one of the purposes of marriages! God has appointed conflict and burdens for lessons in spiritual growth. These are to be subservient to high and holy purposes. Just as Eve was fashioned so as to correspond to Adam in a physical way, so she complimented him socially, intellectually, spiritually and emotionally. As a result, when I counsel those who plan to marry, I do not seek to discover as many points of similarity as possible. Instead, I am concerned that each partner has an accurate view of what the other is really like, and that they are committed to the fact that God has joined them permanently. A recognition that God has made man and woman differently by design, and a determination to attain unity in this diversity is essential to a healthy marriage.

Before creating this counterpart, God first whet his appetite. The creatures which God had formed are now brought to Adam to name. This naming reflected Adam's rule over the creatures, as God intended (cf. 1:28). It probably involved a careful study on Adam's part to note the unique characteristics of each creature. This

naming process may have taken some time. In the process, Adam would observe that no mere creature could ever fill the void in his life. Further, I would use a little sanctified imagination to conjecture that Adam observed each creature with its mate, a wonderfully designed counterpart. Adam must have realized that he, alone, was without a mate. At this moment of intense need and desire, God put Adam in a deep sleep, and from his rib and attached flesh fashioned the woman. He then presented the woman to the man. What excitement there is in Adam's enthusiastic response: And the man 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 (Genesis 2:23). I like the way the RSV renders Adam's initial response, "at last" In this expression there is a mixture of relief, ecstasy, and delighted surprise. "This (for Adam has not yet named her) is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh" (verse 23a). The name of Adam's mate is woman. The English translation nicely picks up the play on similar sounds. In Hebrews, man would be pronounced 'ish; woman would be 'ishshah. While the sounds are similar, the roots of the two words are different. Appropriately 'ish may come from a parallel Arabic root, conveying the idea of 'exercising power,' while the term 'ishshah may be derived from an Arabic parallel, meaning 'to be soft'. The divinely inspired commentary of verse 24 is of utmost import: For this cause a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh (Genesis 2:24).

From the account it is imperative that a man leave his mother and father and cleave to his wife. What is the relationship between this command to leave and cleave and the creation of women? Verse 24 begins, "For this cause" What cause is this? We can understand the reason only when we explain the command. Man is to leave his parents, not in the sense of avoiding his responsibility to them (e.g. Mark 7:10-13; Ephesians 6:2,3), but in the sense of being dependent upon them. He must cease to live under their headship and begin to function alone as the head of a new home. The woman is not commanded similarly because she simply transfers from one head to another. While she once was subject to her father, now she is joined to her husband. The man, however, has the more difficult transition. He, as a child, was dependent upon and submissive to his mother and father. When a man marries he must go through the more radical transition from a dependent, submissive son to an independent (from a parents) leader, who functions as the head of the home. As many have observed, the husband-wife relationship is permanent while the parent-child relationship is temporary. Even if the parents are unwilling to terminate the dependent relationship of son to parents, the son is responsible to do so. To fail to do so is to refuse the kind of bond necessary with his wife. Now, perhaps, we are in a position to see the relationship of this command to the creation account. What is the reason for its mention here in Genesis? First of all, there are no parents to whom Adam or Eve have been born. Eve's origin is directly from her husband, Adam. The union or bond between Adam and his wife is the union of coming from one flesh (Adam's) and of becoming one flesh (in physical union). This bond is greater than that between parent and child. A woman is, of course, the product of her parents, as the man is of his. But the original union involved no parents, and the wife was a part of the flesh of her husband. This first marriage, then, is evidence of the primacy of the husband-wife relationship over that of the parent-child relationship.

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Practical Points from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator

1. God never intended for Adam to be alone (Gen. 2:18)
2. Our wise God often allows us to recognize our deficiencies so that we might appreciate His provision and seek Him (vss. 19-20)
3. God's omnipotence is displayed by His ability to create however He chooses (vs. 21)
4. God's provision is always exactly what we need (vs. 22)
5. God's creation of woman forever symbolizes His designed oneness for a husband and wife (vss. 23-24)
6. Only the forgiveness of God can restore man's sense of innocence (vs. 25)