

## HERE COMES THE BRIDE

Part 2

Genesis 2:18-25

WEFC October 5, 2008

As we concluded last week, we left you with two questions that I hope you have given some thought to through this past week:

**Who am I as a woman?  
Who am I as a man?**

...and then ...

**How do I define or explain myself? ... by my past or  
by what God has made known in His word?**

It was mentioned that we too often describe ourselves on the basis of what has happened to us ... and that has more weight in shaping our outlook and approach than does God's Word.

### Genesis 2:22-25

**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.**

*Key Thought:*

**There is both rhyme and reason to what God did in marriage. To experience it requires both of the "R's".**

God, the "Father" of the Bride, is ready to take the first woman down the aisle to meet the Groom.

Adam is just waking up and as his eyes focus on the creature now present in the garden and sees God's work for the very first time, he could have said ...

He might have said, "'O Lord, not this!"

... or "Surely, Lord God, you could have done better than this!"

Perhaps he might have said, "Lord, why didn't you put me on the committee? We could have rally come up with something great!"

Or he might just have taken a look and said, "Lord, just put me back to sleep!"

Instead we find what did happen. Had we been there we would have seen his answer in his eyes.

... in his words:

**"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 has not had much time to process what was happening. He sees this woman, and recalls that he has just spent some time naming the animals, but in that process discovered that he was alone.

With that aloneness lingering in his mind, he knows that he is no longer lonely when he sees this woman.

... and out of his mouth come the first recorded words of man in history ... and it was an assessment of woman.

### **1. What we do not think about, but simply comes out of our mouth is a very accurate reflection of what we believe 2:24**

For Adam it was a no-brainer. She was definitely God's amazing creation.

His words are an accurate and honest reflection of what he thought about her.

Don't get too academic with the statement. As poetry it is not to be taken as a CSI clue that is to be microscopically and clinically analyzed.

He says a few things:

In regards to relationships, where in English we speak of blood relationships, Hebrews spoke of relatives as one's "flesh and bone".

While none of the other creatures that he had just finished naming suited him, this creature was precisely one that would compliment, correspond to him.

Adam, in relief cries out, "At last ... Yes, she is it!"

... **bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh** ... may be like saying, "Heaven and earth" or "City and country" or "Night and day." The opposites are to mean TOTALITY ... FROM ONE EXTREME TO THE OTHER AND EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN.

It could be that Adam was indicating the following: In weakness or strength, across the whole gamut of possibilities ... or in the language of wedding vows – "For better or for worse; in sickness and in health ..." God has made you everything for which I could have wished."

He most certainly is saying ...

**I identify with you.**

**I love you.**

**You are not a rival, but a partner.**

**You are a treat, not a threat.**

**You complete rather than compete with me.**

**I have what you need and you have what I need. God has put us together!**

You are so much like me that I am going to embed my name into yours ... proof down the road that we understood that we were meant for each other by God.

He is **MAN**; she **WOMAN** ... closely knit together in likeness and name. ... *and the English translation gets across the gist of what the Hebrew language has said. (Hebrew man – ISH and woman - ISHAH*

It is day six of creation ... and God is done with creating ... now that He has put MAN and WOMAN to be in charge of His "universal studio".

Together, in harmony, they were intended to ...

## Genesis 1:28-31

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."**

Then God said,

**"I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food."**

**And it was so.**

Neither Man nor Woman were a mistake.

God was responsible for the creation of both, and both recognized that God was in charge of their lives.

Adam accepts Eve, Eve accepts Adam ... and life could not have been better.

This, though, was not just an afternoon where Adam recited poetry to his favorite person.

Behind the razzmatazz and excitement of the wedding, the writer coaxes out the meaning, the universal truths that we need to pick up on for our lives.

**Getting the principles (the nuts and bolts – the basics) sets up the necessary structure of the marriage relationship.**

Then follows the transitional statement at the end of the chapter ...

**Getting the feel of the marriage relationship keeps it alive.**

We might put it this way:

**Genesis 2:24** is a musical score, the sheet that has the notes, the lines, the symbols, the musical terms on it.

**Genesis 2:25** is the actual music that comes when you play off the sheet.

There is no music that comes from the principles. The music comes from "living" the notes.

So God does not want us to simply take notes, or have the notes; He wants to hear the music from our lives, the music of relationship.

As the emotion of Adam settles down, we are given the principles of the marriage relationship ...

## 2. Defining boundaries allows for the relationship to expand **2:24**

With deliberateness God marks three absolutes necessary for marriage from His design.

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

Marriage is the ...

## Set Up of a New Relational Unit

Leaving father and mother does not mean moving away from them and getting your own property.

The separation is primarily emotional rather than physical.

The point here is not the abandoning of one's parents, or treating them as insignificant.

It is the breaking of ties of what is one's primary loyalty.

The prospective father-in-law asked, "Young man, can you support a family?"

The surprised groom-to-be replied, "Well, no. I was just planning to support your daughter. The rest of you will have to fend for yourselves."

Recall that **family, not the individual**, was where the emphasis lay in Moses' day.

A son's most important obligation, next to honoring God, was to honor his parents.

To be told, as we are here in **Genesis** to "cut ties" with parents was a bold and rather revolutionary directive.

We were visiting friends when they received a telephone call from their recently married daughter. After several tense minutes on the phone, the mother told the father to pick up the extension. The newlyweds had their first big fight.

In a few moments, the father rejoined us and tersely explained, "Said she wanted to come home."

"What did you tell her?" I asked.

"Told her she was home."

God's point is obviously that **MARRIAGE IS A BIG TICKET ITEM. It shakes up the whole extended family.**

**MARRIAGE REALIGNS LOYALTY. The husband and wife become the key link in the family.**

**MARRIAGE IS A NEW BEGINNING. There needs to be the freedom for the development of a new family.**

That leads to ...

Marriage is ...

## Getting Stuck Together and Staying That Way

Being UNITED carries with it the ideas of CLINGING TO, STAYING CLOSE.

The man and woman in marriage are to be GLUED TOGETHER.

If we take two pieces of paper and glue them together, they STICK to each other.

**MARRIAGE BECOMES THE CLOSEST OF RELATIONSHIPS. From God's insight we recognize that the connection is deep.**

**MARRIAGE IS INTENTIONAL. The being stuck together is not automatic, but a choice from which there is to be no return or escape.**

**MARRIAGE IS RUN ON LOVE.**

No where in **Genesis 2** is **LOVE** even mentioned. If we were writing this account from our perspective, we would have inserted LOVE in a number of places.

But God doesn't ... and it must be for a good reason.

The text does not tell us point blank, but as we go through God's Word we begin to get the point that LOVE as we often define it, is not what God means.

For God **LOVE** has less to do with feelings and more to do with commitment.

So when a man is UNITED or STUCK to his wife, there will be times when ***emotion will run thin, but the glue should still be as strong.***

To tear them apart is to destroy something in both of them.

... and so we might fill out the statement, **MARRIAGE IS RUN ON LOVE ... that is far more a commitment rather than emotion.**

In Thornton Wilder's play "The Skin of Our Teeth" the character Mrs. Antrobus says to her husband, 'I didn't marry you because you were perfect. I married you because you gave me a promise.'

She takes off her ring and looks at it.

'That promise made up for your faults and the promise I gave you made up for mine. Two imperfect people got married, and it was the promise that made the marriage.'

Then come the words ...

**... and they will become one flesh.**

Moses hears what God is saying.

Marriage is ...

### **The Reunion of Sacred Life**

Before woman stepped on the scene, man was fully man.

But when God took a part out of man, man "lost" something of himself – that which God made into a woman.

So man, in a sense, became two parts.

But through marriage there is a re-union of what was originally and literally ONE FLESH.

***... with this exception ... with this improvement ...***

**This new and improved ONE FLESH (out of two) was far better than was man being ONE FLESH all by his lonesome.**

At that time he was ONE FLESH, but a lonely ONE FLESH.

In the TWO BECOMING ONE, God produced a far greater joy and satisfaction, a fact to which both MAN and WOMAN would agree.

**MARRIAGE ALONE IS WHERE THE ONE FLESH EXPERIENCE IS PERMITTED. It is so unique, so revealing, so intimate that it is to be entered only in protective commitment.**

On the books, marriage is leaving parents, getting glued and becoming one flesh.

Recall back in **Genesis 1** somewhere about here, God, upon reflecting what He had done, comes to the conclusion we read ... **God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.**

**Getting the principles** (the nuts and bolts – the basics) **sets up the necessary structure of the marriage relationship.**

My husband's uncle thought he had conquered the problem of trying to remember his wife's birthday and their anniversary. He opened an account with a florist, provided him with a florist, and provided him with the dates and instructions to send flowers along with an appropriate note signed, "Your loving husband."

His wife was thrilled by this new display of attention and all went well until one day when he came home, kissed his wife and said offhandedly, "Nice flowers, honey, "Where'd you get them?"

Then comes that which takes the book stuff and puts it into a live setting.

**Getting the feel of the marriage relationship keeps it alive ...** is what is given to us in the concluding statement of this chapter.

This is the "feel" or the "atmosphere" of the marriage. This is where what has been said up to this point gives us the music.

**The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.**

**3. The boundaries followed allow for full disclosure which is greeted by complete acceptance** – marriage according to design **2:25**

What we read is not a fashion statement, but an intentional message.

This is not a statement about clothing, but again the explanation of what clothing signifies.

Neither Adam's or Eve's eyes were closed to the fact that they did not have clothes. They could see that.

The point being made is that **both accepted each other as a gift of God.**

***Their differences did not separate them,*** rather they complimented them.

There was no competition between the two. Instead, they saw it as completion.

Neither one saw themselves as the center of his or her life.

God was their center and with the their partner for there was no tug or inner tendency to be SELFISH.

There was nothing to hide, nothing to protect.

**There was the blessing of not thinking negatively about God's positive gift, their spouse.**

It was all in the open.

The expectations that each had of the other were met. They did not fall short either with God or with one another.

Each possessed what their partner did not. The man had that which the woman did not have. The woman possessed what the man lacked.

But both of them, rather than leveraging that, or using that lack to gain advantage over the other, instead, met the others "deficiency" without being put out or becoming miffed.

Here was marriage ... working ... working well.

God wants us to get the original picture.

Marriage was this good.

Relationship was this rich.

Adam was genuinely interested in what Eve said and did; Eve was genuinely interested in what Adam said and did.

Life was experienced on a level of which today we only dream.

We could really write over top of **Genesis 2:25 - LOVE IN ACTION.**

What made it work so well?

**... FULL DISCLOSURE WITHOUT REPERCUSSIONS ...**

That's the idea behind NAKEDNESS.

There were no secrets, no trying to figure out whether you should or should not tell them about what you are thinking.

They could tell each other everything.

There was never a nasty response where the other would twist their words around.

There was no misunderstanding.

A man who was telling his friend about an argument he'd had with his wife commented, "Oh, how I hate it, every time we have an argument; she gets historical."

The friend replied, "You mean hysterical."

"No," he insisted, "I mean historical. Every time we argue she drags up everything from the past and holds it against me!"

... and today we say,

- "Impossible"
- "If only ..."
- "I can't tell them anything without getting a sermon."
- "What's the use of telling them? ... they don't care because they are living in their own little world."

Here is what God has still has in store for His people ... at least to a degree ... after **Genesis 3.**

**What once upon a time came naturally, now comes through a combination of grace and hard work.**

Relational intimacy in marriage comes at a big price. It is expensive.

Our human love is riddled with inconsistency, selfishness ... all activities or attitudes that fly under the banner of sin.

This human love today is severely deficient and deformed ... and it disfigures the closest of relationships.

And what we will find through **Genesis 3** and the rest of God's Word is that our human love requires a major reworking.

To get us to see things as we should, God expressed His love to us in Jesus – an unselfish, genuine, sacrificing kind of love.

But we cannot get this love at the pawn shop, or at any of the stores in the mall.

It comes through only one avenue – Jesus Christ.

It is received for free, as a gift to us when we ...

- Admit that we do not have what it takes.
- See that what it takes is found in Jesus Christ
- Ask Him for His forgiveness and love

... that reconnects us to the ONLY SOURCE that can restore us to a right relationship with God ... the prime relationship that shapes and affects all other relationships.

It is this choice, that if you have not made, that we need to make, or else we find ourselves trying to produce the impossible.

That is why ACCEPTING JESUS CHRIST is so important.

It gives us what we do not have and opens the door for us to do what we could not do.

Therefore, today, you may want to make that commitment ... one that we would encourage you to make.

But accepting Jesus does not mean that everything goes great after that.

At that point we now have the resources to start doing what we know should be done and what we ourselves long for.

There is not a one of us that would turn down a good friendship or a good relationship with our husband or wife.

Yet it is where life ought to be the richest is where we find it toughest.

Marriage remains a design of God's. It is His domain. He made it to be the best of the best of experiences – a relationship in which ONENESS out of TWONESS became a living and satisfying reality.

**When we say that our marriages are for God's glory, what is meant is that through our relationship with our spouse, others should see the delightfulness and commitment that there is and recognize God's presence and we should be genuinely satisfied as we follow God's plan.**

Many of us are not there ... and yet this is the PRIME RELATIONSHIP where we should be somewhere there.

As we wrap up this morning let us do a bit of personal work.

We do not gather here to be polite and soothe our consciences. We gather to bring glory to God and at times we need to face issues that we could ignore for another couple of years.

But in the process of avoiding or not dealing with those issues, we rob God of His glory ... and it is evident in our disposition, our kids walk away from God because they do not see His influence in our lives, we become stubborn and hard-hearted and there anytime someone tries to put some music into our lives we scowl.

God wrote this for a purpose ... so that we might glorify Him ... and He wants to bless us.

... and if we are not dealing with this we are impoverishing not just ourselves, but those who we touch.

**MARRIAGE is to be the PRIME EXAMPLE OF HOW GOOD GOD IS.**

We want to be able to be like ...

There is one couple I shall always remember from my days as a hospital admitting clerk. The husband, a heart-attack victim, was immediately whisked away by the staff. Hours passed, though, before his wife was allowed to see him. She was dismayed to find him hooked up to elaborate machines that blipped, hissed and beeped.

She tiptoed toward his bed and, bending over him, whispered, "George, I'm here."

Then she kissed him. Suddenly there was a blippety-blip-blip from the equipment. "He was okay," she later explained.

"But after forty-seven years of marriage it's nice to know that I can still make his heart skip when I kiss him."

It may be that we need to get back to using His grace and our hard work to discover the richness of **Genesis 2**.

It may be helpful if we would start by answering to ourselves the following:

**Our relationship is presently ...**

- **not perfect, but good as we work on tweaking it**
- **such that one of us wants to see change but the other does not**
- **deteriorating, but still manageable**
- **in a crisis, but we would not admit it**
- **in a crisis and we admit it**
- **in a crisis and we do not care**

**If there needs to be improvement or change in our marriage**

...

- **I will not be making the first move**
- **I hold little hope in things changing**
- **I would rather have a marriage that has no conflict than try to work things to next level**
- **I don't trust anyone, not even my spouse**
- **I am tired to trying**
- **I am to embarrassed to ask for help**

**I am skeptical that we can change because ...**

- **we tried before and nothing worked**
- **my spouse is unwilling to make any effort**
- **I personally am not willing to follow through on God's revealed Word**
- **I am scared at what would happen**

**Do I see the relevance or practicality of God's Word in my marriage? ... and do I at least accept it intellectually?**

**Yes No**

**I am ready to shed some of my protective gear to let my spouse see my heart yet once again.**

**Yes No**

Do you ever wonder How could we get so far off base?

How far we have come when we today misinterpret ...

- closeness as invasion, a lack of privacy
- concern as bother
- a question as interrogation
- help as a hindrance
- patience as lack of interest
- kindness as manipulation

Once again, please hear me clearly.

For some of us talking to Jesus will not cut it this morning. It may be that God wants you to do more than talk to Him. Talk, cry out to Him ... but for some of us we have cried and remained paralyzed.

God's solution might involve others ... others in the family who will commit to you, not criticize and preach at you, but give you their time, heart and help ... as family members, so that they may help you in God's ways ... over time ... and help encourage you when you would want to give up.

Get over the embarrassment ... and take the some steps.

If you sense that you as a couple need to let God's grace work in you ... please do not get into your car and say, "See, even the preacher says we need to do something. When will you get the point?"

What then should you do or say to your husband or wife?

**Marriage is designed to be good, very good.**

**Marriage never works when "I" am at its center. It is always "We".**

**Unless I can see my spouse as God's gift, I will start on the wrong foot.**

**I must see God's WorldView – His Word still most accurately reveals what I need to do.**

The story is told of a man who came to visit his old friend, a music teacher. As the man came in, he said, "What's the good news today?" The old teacher was silent as he stood up and walked across the room. He picked up a small hammer and struck a tuning fork. As the note sounded throughout the room, he said, "That is 'A'. It is 'A' today; it was 'A' 5,000 years ago, and it will be 'A' 10,000 years from now. The soprano upstairs sings off-key, the tenor across the hall flats on his high notes, and the piano downstairs is out of tune." He struck the not again and said, "That is 'A' my friend, and that's the good news for today!"

Let God's Word be your "A"



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Permit me to interject, what I think is an important consideration.

As soon as we bring God or His Word into our discussion, we find ourselves going on a guilt trip.

At times that is good, and we should be on a guilt trip because we have done wrong.

To get the picture we need to bring in God's expressed love to us.

To define love by the way we love, is to severely under estimate love.

Human love needs a major renovation and transformation if it is to become anything close to resembling real love.

The kind of love that brings about the openness and freedom of **Genesis 2:25** is not something that is found in us, it does not come to us naturally.

That we receive from Jesus Christ ... for in Him we find LOVE that is so radically different from ours ... and when we admit to Him our incompetence, inability and sinfulness in this most important area ... He forgives and begins to rebuild in us a new reality that is able to begin back on the path of **Genesis 2:25**.

That is why we mention the acceptance of Christ. It is foundational.

Without it we are trying to do that which we cannot do on our own. It is plain impossible.

We cannot handle sin with our abilities.

May we ask you not just to consider this step, but to do it.

For those of us who have made that step, there may be a cynicism that accompanies us ... a cynicism that says, "In actual reality, Jesus Christ does not make a difference, nor does He help us in our relationships, of which marriage would be the prime example."

We, followers of Christ, saved people, as we call it, live in marriages that are anything but what we have seen here in God's Word.

We do not gather here to be polite and soothe our consciences. We gather for the glory of God.

May we take a moment to consider our relationships ... for some of us that will mean our friends, for others of us our spouses.

If we are not displaying God's glory in our marriages, then we are shaming Him through them.

If we are not working at **Genesis 2:23-25** we are avoiding one of God's priorities.

Whether we have given up on our marriage, whether we have chosen to live isolated lives under the same roof, or if we are ho-hum ... any of these kind of response indicate that we are selfish beings stuck either in our pain or arrogant in our advantage.

Neither is good ... and it does no good to God or us to continue this way.

Blaming will not help.

Working with the Spirit of God will ... and He will soften our hard resolve and bring us into the richness of what He laid out in the beginning.

Here is an attempt to lead you to some initial steps ... These cannot be just steps to improve your marriage.

That is not what we are talking about here.

We are dealing with putting life together under the authority of God ... who uses His authority not to make life difficult, but who uses it to get us to stop wasting His goodness ... the goodness of relationship.

The first thing that we need to find out is just where we are at in our marriage, our relationships.

Permit me to give you some directives to maybe kick-start the process.

Answer for yourself the following questions:

Our relationship has ...

- deteriorated and continues to do so
- hit crisis mode but I am not doing anything about it
- hit crisis mode and I am doing something about it

– we are working consciously on making improvements

– one of us is making improvements, the other is not interested

– we are not perfect, but life is good, and we are constantly tweaking things to keep them on the right side

If I were to describe the “feel” of our relationship it would be ...

- open, refreshing and engaging, though far from perfect
- closed, tight and cool
- not bad, but not good
- eating away at me

The truths of Genesis 2:24 – the three principles of relationship –

- we are living by three of the three
- we are living by one of the three
- ... two of the three

The last time there was any “poetry” (kind and spontaneous words) in our marriage was ...

- when we last received a card with a poem in it
- 

We are at the stage where ...

- we have heard sermon after sermon, and nothing has changed – so why would I build up new expectations and be disappointed
- we are fighting like cat and dog and though we love each other we are barking and scratching each other and it hurts
- we are too embarrassed to talk to someone about our situation
- we tried and no one in the church helped ... forgive us and give us another try

If we are past a certain point, it may be extremely helpful to ask for help within God's family. No, I am not suggesting you go to a counselor. As I have met with people, I personally do not counsel you. We, your pastors are shepherds ... and we shepherd.

Here is the difference.

You go to see a counselor and they tell you what to do and you meet them again for the next session.

Not always are we great at it, but we will attempt, not just the pastors, but us as a church family, to shepherd ...

Shepherds live and walk with you, and direct you to God's word creatively and specifically, and allow you to call on them whenever ... to see your life changed.

Here is why there needs to be action:

Our relationships, our marriages, are the most accurate indicator of our relationship with Jesus Christ. Through these we glorify Him. This is how we bring Him honor and credit.

If I persist in my embarrassment, I am more concerned about keeping face rather than God's glory.

I would rather cover rather than work at this relationship; I become lazy.

I would rather have some semblance of peace; instead of stirring the hornets nest.

Our hurts may be so many that we cannot ever dream of being naked and unashamed.

Please do not get in the car and say, "See, even the preacher says we need to do something, so what are WE going to do?"

What should you say?

I'm not certain.

... wait a day or two, pray much, and then talk.

We must talk, but not just talk.

There comes the need to be first sensitive to God's WorldView.

We have to accept that Genesis is more than a fairy tale. This is where God intended us to be.

He planned this to be a great experience.

Secondly, do we see steps that should be taken ... to work out the three principles?

Third, let's get rid of the protective gear ... the helmet, the shoulder pads, the kidney pads, the cleats, the mouthguard ... no, keep that.

Why do we dig at this point?

If we look at the New Testament we find out that MARRIAGE is the prime reflector of Christ's relationship to His church.

Let me suggest a few thoughts to think about:

If God wants to be glorified in and through His church ... and marriage is the most reflective and prime example of that glory ... what are we reflecting?

... are our children turning of Jesus Christ because they do not see the reality in our marriage?

... are we hesitant to tell other about Jesus Christ because we ourselves have not seen the evidence that God can make a difference in our own lives?

We are the body of Christ.

We are in relationship to one another.

We are not in competition. We are not here to point fingers at each other.

We are here to compliment, care for, weep with, rejoice with and pray for, and work with one another.

This is not the place where we display a façade. This is where we

We need to stop being so heavily clothed and protected. The return to vulnerability and transparency is about as exciting as having our arm amputated without an anesthetic.

But it is necessary. Everyone of us wants to come to that point where after 42 years when the lips touch, the heart goes blippety-bleep – bleep. That is the work of God . through a heart submitted to Him.