

# God Ordained Marriage: A Wedding Sermon

Genesis 2:18–25; Ephesians 5:17–33

I will read two passages from the Bible, one from the Old Testament and the other from the New: first, from the book of Genesis, chapter 2. The word of *God*:

“And the LORD God said, ‘It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.’ 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. 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. 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. Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man. 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.’ Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.”<sup>1</sup>

And from the New Testament, Ephesians chapter 5. Again, the word of *God*:

“Do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not be drunk with wine, in which is excess<sup>2</sup>; but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another in the fear of God. Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church. For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.’ This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

---

<sup>1</sup> Genesis 2:18–24 NKJV

<sup>2</sup> Word substituted from the KJV; NKJV has “dissipation”

Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.”<sup>3</sup> The word of *God*.

The family is the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood or adoption.<sup>4</sup> The heart of the family is the union of husband and wife established by the marriage covenant.

Man is the unique creation of a loving Creator, formed from the dust of the earth in order to fellowship with the triune God through Christ the Son. God made man male and female, in his own image. Man is unique among living creatures, for only man bears the divine image—only man, not dogs or horses, has the capacity for fellowship with God. Here is the high and holy purpose for which we were made: to have a spiritually fulfilling, life-giving relationship with the God of heaven—to be on speaking terms with God Almighty. Man lost such vital fellowship because of Adam’s sin, but it is restored through Christ, in his saving work on the cross. Man’s chief purpose is to glorify God and enjoy him forever. This is a purpose that extends beyond acquiring material possessions and pursuing pleasure. It is a purpose that extends to life eternal.

It was God himself who performed the first wedding ceremony in the Garden of Eden. That is more than just an interesting historical fact; it reveals that marriage is the ordinance of God. A legislative body such as the U.S. Congress might try to redefine marriage, but marriage is *God’s* institution, not man’s. No human authority has the power to overturn the ordinance of Almighty God. Those who attempt it will be judged at the final day.

Why did God institute marriage? He told us himself. He said, “It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.”<sup>5</sup> All the cattle, birds of the air and beasts of the field that were created had *mates*—a male and a female—but for man, there was not found a helper comparable to him. So God made a woman out of Adam’s rib—a woman who shared his humanity, shared his own DNA. The woman was made from one of Adam’s bones. She was not made from a bone in his head, that she might be thought to be superior to him, and have power over him; neither was she made from a bone in his foot, as being beneath him, to be trampled on by him; but out of his *side*, from one of his ribs, that it might be evident that she is equal to him—and from a part near his heart, and under his arms, to show that she should be affectionately loved by him, and be always under her husband’s care and protection.<sup>6</sup>

In our Genesis account God brought the woman to the man and she became his wife. Adam was delighted in this amazing creature that completed him and fulfilled

---

<sup>3</sup> Ephesians 5:17–33 NKJV

<sup>4</sup> <https://bfm.sbc.net/report-of-committee-on-baptist-faith-and-message/> accessed 7-15-22

<sup>5</sup> Gen. 2:18 NKJV

<sup>6</sup> Adapted from Matthew Henry, commentary on Gen. 2:22

his manhood. He 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.”<sup>7</sup> Clearly, Adam joyfully received his wife as a gift from a loving God and recognized her as his very own flesh. Here was the first wedding in human history, and it took place *before* sin entered into the world. This shows that the institution of marriage was no afterthought, but part of God’s original plan for the human race. It is the bedrock upon which human civilization is built.

According to the Bible, marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in a lifetime covenant commitment. This was understood until very recent times. In 1828, Noah Webster defined marriage this way: “the legal union of a man and woman for life ... a contract both civil and religious, by which the parties engage to live together in mutual affection and fidelity, till death shall separate them.”<sup>8</sup> Nowadays silly people imagine that other arrangements beside biblical marriage are morally equal to marriage ordained by God—but wishing cannot make it so.

Marriage is God’s unique gift to mankind to provide for man and woman the framework for intimate companionship, the divinely-ordained channel of sexual expression, and the means for the procreation of the human race.

The marriage relationship models the way God relates to his people. [Groom], you are to love your wife as Christ loved the church. It is your God-given responsibility to provide for, protect and lead your family. [Bride], it is your God-given responsibility to submit lovingly to your husband’s servant-leadership, as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ; you have the God-given responsibility to respect your husband and serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the children God may give you.

The reason God instituted marriage was that marriage might be a living object lesson revealing Christ’s heartfelt love for his church. Just as a man loves his bride and desires to have deep, abiding, lifelong fellowship with her, so Christ loves his church and desires to have deep, abiding *eternal* fellowship with his elect people who were given to him by the Father in eternity past. Christ is the heaven-sent bridegroom who has now returned to heaven to prepare a place for his bride. Someday he will come back to take his bride—his church—to himself, so that his elect people will live in joyful fellowship with him forever. It is the Christian’s yearning to experience perfect fellowship and communion with our heavenly bridegroom.

We live in a broken world—broken because of sin and rebellion against God. All around us are shattered relationships that are the bitter fruit of alienation from God—former lovers who despise one another, family members that are estranged from one another, former friends that now hate one another and refuse to speak to

---

<sup>7</sup> Gen. 2:23

<sup>8</sup> Noah Webster, *An American Dictionary of the English Language* (New York: S. Converse, 1828), “Marriage”

one another. Christ came to reconcile us to himself and bring harmony with our fellow man. His gospel is the gospel of peace; it is our only hope of salvation. “All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God ... The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”<sup>9</sup> Sin brings alienation; Christ brings reconciliation. Through faith in Christ alone we are reconciled to a holy God. We who turn from our sins and trust in Christ alone for salvation will experience unbroken fellowship with our Savior throughout all eternity.

[Groom] and [Bride], it is God’s plan that you build a Christian family together, to the glory of God and a witness to the world. Today you have taken the first step in forming a Christian family. May Christ Jesus fill your hearts and ever be Lord over your home. Amen.

---

<sup>9</sup> Romans 3:23, 6:23