

At the conclusion of the message this morning we have the honor of witnessing the Lord bring two people together in holy matrimony as Scott Haskett and Miranda Downing are united in marriage before God.

It is their desire that we share in their joy as they each commit their relationship to the Lord and ask His blessing upon their life together.

I have been excited about this morning for a number of reasons:

1. As a church we are blessed to be able to come alongside a young couple and assist them to follow God's will for their life by providing a place and a blessing for their wedding.

2. As individuals we get to participate in their joyful experience and have the opportunity to allow the Holy Spirit of God to quicken or make alive once again that 'first love' and the commitment we made to our spouse years ago.

In preparation for Scott and Miranda's wedding I want us to spend our time in God's Word this morning examining marriage.

Genesis 2:18-25

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.

Let us pray together:

What a beautiful story we have recorded here in Genesis, the book of beginnings. In addition to the recording of the creation of everything under the sun, including the moon and stars and the sun itself, we have the beginnings of mankind's existence which includes the beginning of marriage.

At the end of a very busy week of creation the LORD God said in verse 18 *'It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.'*

The rest is history. The woman is brought forth from Adam's side and God decrees in verse 24 *'therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.'*

The beginning of marriage.

I have heard it said that **'marriage isn't a bad institution, if you happen to like institutions!'**

However, I declare today that marriage is not only a great institution but it is God's divine plan, He created it. It is His idea. SO in spite of all the troubles that we, the creation, have with marriage, He, the Creator, in His infinite wisdom has ordained it to be!

Do I need to remind you that we are living in a world today where God's plans on just about everything seems to be viewed as out dated, old fashioned, or out of touch with the modern view? Regardless, God's plan still is the order of the day!

It is surprising to me there is a need to even mention this but marriage is as God ordained it to be, between a man and a woman, despite the unbelievable recent rulings of a few misguided justices.

So why marriage? What's the importance of this relationship?

Marriage is God's initial response to a need He saw in Adam

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.

Adam was on the job working alongside God in the naming of the animals. That must have been an incredible experience and loads of fun wouldn't you agree?

However, note that verse 20 says *'but for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him.'*

No matter how much fun or interesting this process of naming the animals was Adam soon realized there was not a suitable helper or companion for him.

There existed a need in Adam and the Lord God is the GREATEST NEED MEETER ever! In fact **Philippians 4:19** states *'And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.'*

God said *'it is not good for man to be alone'* and Adam realized *'there was not found a helper comparable to him.'*

[Maybe God realized Adam would soon be traveling and would need somebody to tell him where to turn? I don't know. It's just a theory!]

There was a need for companionship. Solomon wrote about this in

Ecclesiastes 4:7-12

7 'Then I returned, and I saw vanity under the sun:

8 There is one alone, without companion:

He has neither son nor brother.

Yet there is no end to all his labors,

Nor is his eye satisfied with riches.

But he never asks,

" For whom do I toil and deprive myself of good?"

This also is vanity and a grave misfortune.

9 Two are better than one,

Because they have a good reward for their labor.

10 For if they fall, one will lift up his companion.

But woe to him who is alone when he falls,

For he has no one to help him up.

11 Again, if two lie down together, they will keep warm;

But how can one be warm alone?

12 Though one may be overpowered by another, two can withstand him.

And a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

So God fashioned a helper comparable to Adam so he wasn't alone. I think it is important to mention that men and women should not be viewed as opposite as much as complementary, as helping complete each other and making each other whole.

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.***

Coming to the realization of this oftentimes takes some time and may occur only after a breaking within our self of our own sufficiency or superiority.

[Jerry Maguire clip 'you complete me.']

Let's read **Genesis 2:18** in a few other translations

KJV

'And the LORD God said, it is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.'

NIV

'The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."

The Message

God said, "It's not good for the Man to be alone; I'll make him a helper, a companion

NLT

'Then the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is just right for him."

The Amplified

'Now the Lord God said, It is not good (sufficient, satisfactory) that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper meet (suitable, adapted, complementary) for him.'

Your spouse is God's gift to you to complete you! He knew just what we needed even when we didn't!

EX: Differences between each other viewed as positives rather than negatives. [Morning/night; start/finish; detailed/abstract, etc.]

Notice what God had to do in order to get the job done:

*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.*

a. *'The Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam'* and some would say this was done so that Adam wouldn't be awake to give God advice on how to make woman. I am not sure about that one! [Maybe so Eve would be the answer to Adam's dreams?]

b. *'and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place.'* In my pre-marital counseling I like to point out to the prospective bride and groom that woman wasn't formed from a bone taken from Adam's foot so he is not to trample over her; nor was the woman formed out of a bone taken from Adam's head so she is not to rule over him. Rather, she was formed from a bone taken from Adam's side which signifies walking alongside each other together.

*Side note: Male and female skeletons do have the same number of ribs, 12 sets, contrary to the popular myth which I have often repeated myself and found recently to be wrong.

Lest we think more highly of ourselves than we should we must realize God didn't bring Eve forth simply for Adam; woman was in God's plan before the beginning of time.

Genesis 1:26-28 NKJV

'Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

27 So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. 28 Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

In verse 26 the word 'man' is mankind or humanity at large, not simply male. This instance is not gender specific but refers to both male and female. [Notice verse 28 says 'God blessed THEM...']

God desired to show Himself to the world through us. In reality, marriage is God's illustration of the church to the world according to Ephesians 5 which is another message for another time.

As we prepare to close with prayer and invite Scott and Miranda to come and share their wedding vows with one another I would ask each of us to present our heart to the Lord this morning and ask if by His grace He would stir our hearts once again and renew our love for Him and for each other.