

A Man and a Woman in Marriage

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Gen 2:18-25

Dr. Jeff H. McCrory Jr.

Synopsis:

After looking at the Trinity: One God, three persons in a loving relationship; and at humanity, created in the image of God, male and female in partnership to carry the image in ruling creation; we now turn to human community.

Here's what we find:

Yahweh God says that it is not good that a man (or a woman) is alone. So, God separates and then joins together a male and a female in good intimacy as the basis for all human community.

I.

Marriage is in Trouble

Gen 2:24 "And they become one flesh"

Trouble:

Less people married in West

More shacking up

More sexual freedom:

Unprotected book in WSJ, by anonymous M.D.

(campus Dr. at a major university)

Review: "Bad for the Health, but No One Dare Say So"

"Cardiologists hound patients about fatty diets and insufficient exercise. Pediatricians encourage healthy snacks, helmets and discussion of drugs and alcohol. Everyone condemns smoking and tanning beds. Unfortunately, the young women described in "Unprotected" have fallen victim to one of the personal troubles that our caring professionals refuse to treat or even acknowledge: They have been made miserable by their sexual choices."

50% marriages end in divorce

Gay marriage

Serial monogamy
Plural marriages
Partner, Significant Other language

What's the response from Christians?

Prude?

New freedom?

Find ourselves?

Alarm at missing the mark for human relationships?

II.

God, Humanity, Community

Gen 2:18 "I will make him a helper as his partner"

Trajectory of Genesis: Gen 1-2

God as Trinity: One God, three persons in loving relationship

Humanity: Image of God, M and F in partnership to rule

Community: What's the basis? What's absolutely necessary?

Tell the story of Gen 2:18-25

-second creation story

-an etiology (*just so* story) 2:24

-not good = no helper (helper is not slave)

-animals as partners?

-naming = ordering life

-process of woman is different than creation:

-sleep

-rib or side (complement)

-“made” (NRSV) actually “build,” not “form” or “create”

-words changed:

no longer male-female (Gen 1)

husband-wife (ish-ishah) (2:23) footnote

-poetry at v 23 (notice *this one*)

-flesh, separated (rib or side) but now united

-no shame (good)

God means to order all society in building the complementary union of husband and wife in marriage. This is the basis of all human community. Without this, or with alternative ordering, human community will fail.

III.

What Marriage Does Not Mean

Gen 2:18 “And it is not good that the man should be alone”

What About Singles?

- Jesus was single
- OT and NT people are single
- Bible never speaks against singles
- meant to have complementary relationships, male to female (Gen 1) in ruling creation, no male without female, etc.
- marriage is not necessary to humanity (Gen 1), but to community (Gen 2)

What About Sexuality?

- sexual activity doesn't make one human (Gen 1)
 - our society assumes active sex life is norm
- partnership as male and female in rule is human (Gen 1)
 - working together in friendship to rule
- sexual activity is for male and female in marriage (Gen 2)

IV.

What You Should Do About Marriage And Singleness

Gen 2:25 “Both naked and not ashamed”

Promote healthy and long lasting male/female marriages

- celebrate your spouse
- go on marriage retreats
- go to counseling
- singles encourage your married friends
- widows and widowers encourage married friends
- MOPS volunteer
- young couples help
- volunteer in nursery and with children in Sunday School
- celebrate sex tied to procreation and human community

Promote healthy and long lasting friendships without sex

- healthy friendship is a casualty of sexual freedom
- singles make friends
- marrieds make friends

-men with men, and women with women, men with women

Do not fear to speak against alternative marriages, illicit sex

-say no to gay marriage, plural marriages, serial monogamy

-shacking up, sexual freedom apart from marriage

Remember:

-Jesus affirmed marriage in Matt 19

-Paul in Eph 5

-In Jesus Christ you are a new creation (2Cor 5:17), called into renewed and restored relationships