

“The Creation Ordinance of Marriage” Gen 2:18-25

- Authorship: Moses (Ex 17:14, 24:4, Num 33:2, Deut 31:22-26, Josh 1:7, Ezra 6:18, Neh 13:1, 2 Chron 25:4, Dan 9:11-13, Mt 19:7, Mk 7:10, cf. Num 12:3, Deut 34, 31:9-13, 31:24-26, Neh 8:8).
- Genre: Historical narrative, *including* the first chapters of Genesis (not poetry, allegory or myth).
- 18-20 – We have already been told that God created mankind “male and female” (Gen 1:27). In chapter two’s recapitulation, we see *why* and *how* God did so. Here in v18, for the first time we are told that something is “not good” – that man should be alone. By naming the creatures, Adam fulfills the dominion mandate (Gen 1:26-28) but also realizes his solitary state. None of the animals, fundamentally different from Adam (not made in God’s image), are a suitable companion. Despite their impressive diversity, Adam needs someone a spiritual/emotional/intellectual “fit” for him. Eve is that perfectly designed companion... Adam’s response once God creates woman as his companion is joyous elation (“at last” in v23)!
- Companionship is not the only purpose of marriage, but an important one (cf. Song of Solomon 2:16, 4:1, Prov 5:18-19, 18:22, 31:10, 1 Cor 7:9, Heb 13:4). Amazingly, the intimacy of marriage images the Trinity (Eph 5:22-33). Also significantly, God fills the earth with mankind by marriage and builds His church through covenant children (Gen 1:28, Mal 2:15). Singleness has its advantages for kingdom work (1 Cor 7:7-8) and is not to be dismissed, but marriage is the God-given norm for men and women – and a blessing to all, though Satan opposes and seeks to undermine it (Mt 19:3-5, Mk 10:9, Thess 4:3-7, *Westminster Confession* 24.6).
 - App: For marriage to be held in honor by all in a culture challenging *basic* truths, Christians must be like God: holy in thinking and practice, whether single or married.
 - App: Though marriage is a blessing God gave mankind pre-fall, Jesus Himself tells us that there will be no marriage in heaven. The fullness of companionship found in the presence of God Himself will be all-sufficient, the sign and shadow of human marriage being superseded by the reality of this communion (Lk 20:34-36, Rev 19:6-9, 21:1-4)!
- 21-23 – The *how* of the creation of woman: with a merciful deep-sleep operation by God Himself, out of man’s rib. They are meant to be one flesh, as woman is derived from man (1 Tim 2:13).
- 24 – Looking forward to future generations, God gives the “leave and cleave” principle, not necessarily to dictate physical distance by a new reality in marriage: No longer are the parents the primary concern, but one’s spouse. App: Appreciating extended family while also developing independence as your own family unit can be a struggle, especially for newly married couples.
- 25 – Naked and unashamed is God’s design for unbroken human intimacy. John Currid: “The verb ‘to be ashamed’ in Hebrew expresses the sense of confusion, embarrassment and dismay that occur when matters turn out differently than expected. It is the antonym of ‘to trust’, and thus it indicates that the humans had complete faith and trust in one another. And, indeed, they had nothing to be ashamed of! No imprudent or immoral act lay in their past. No guilt or remorse existed” (*Genesis*)
- Shame comes with the fall where Adam hides, citing his own nakedness – graciously, God Himself clothes mankind afterward, the animal skins prefiguring the sacrifices prescribed later in the Torah, pointing forward to the only source of forgiveness of sin: being clothed in the righteousness of Christ and His atoning blood (Gen 3:9-10, 3:21, Lev 5, Heb 10:4).
 - App: Our culture wants to suppress the sense of personal shame due to sin (Rom 1:18-25). But ultimately, what we long for is to be “comfortable in the presence of God” (R.C. Sproul). The reason we are scared in the presence of God is because He is holy and (due to the fall) we are not (Isa 6:5, 53:6, 1 Jn 1:5-8, Rev 1:17)! Either we have Christ or wrath.