

## BIBLICAL FAMILY IN A MODERN WORLD: The Design' Genesis 2:18-24

### INTRODUCTION:

We do want to say a special welcome to those of you that are guests with us this morning. We are so glad that you are here. My name is Chris Wigley, I'm one of the pastors here at Trinity. If you are a guest, we'd love to get to connect with. You can provide information to us by texting the keyword, TBCMP, which stands for Trinity Baptist Church Mount Pleasant, to the number 94-000. When you send that keyword, a link will be sent back to you and that will take you to a form that is less 30 seconds to fill out. When you click "submit," it notifies me, and I always look forward to following up with our guests each week.

If text messaging isn't your thing, please swing by our information center located in the fellowship area, right out these doors in the lobby. We have a gift there for you just as a way of saying thank you for being our guest today. Again, we are thrilled you have chosen to worship with us today.

### SERIES OVERVIEW:

Today we are beginning a new teaching series that we are calling "A Biblical Family in a Modern World." Over the next several weeks we are going to be studying marriage and family God's way. We will be looking at topics like romance, marriage, family, kids, as well as leaving a lasting legacy. I hope you will make plans to be a part of each week of this series. Today we are going to talk about marriage in a message I've entitled, "The Design."

Now, I know that in the room today I am talking to many different people. I know that today there are those of you that are single. And you might be thinking, "Oh great! This is not for me; I'm going to check out." Well, I hope you don't. Instead, I hope you come each week. For a couple reasons.

First, statistics still show that the majority of singles desire to be married at some point. So, if that's you, I would say that the best time to be learning and discovering what you want for your future is right now. What we will be discussing will be an opportunity for you to lay a foundation for your future.

Secondly, I believe that God has a plan for your life. Even now. And that how you learn to hear and follow Him will serve as a blessed preparation for what

He has for you both now and in the future. It is vital to understand the whole counsel of God by the study of His Word.

And let me just say, for you single parents in the room, I believe God has a purpose and plan and design for you and your family. It is my prayer that you would come to know that in and through this teaching series as well.

So, with that said, I want to invite you to turn with me to the first book of the Bible, Genesis, chapter 2. We are going to be in verses 18-25 this morning.

### **OPENING ILLUSTRATION:**

By a show of hands, how many of you have purchased anything from IKEA?

You know, the concept of IKEA is awesome. When you walk through the store, you see all this really cool looking furniture. I realize that people don't walk through stores anymore. But even if you're looking online. Everything is a great price. So, it kinda gets you thinking, this is awesome! I need some furniture. So, you pick out what you want and grab the box, or have it delivered.

Now, when you first get the box, you're thinking, "How in the world does a couch fit a box the size of a TV?!" Then you realize that at IKEA, you are just buying the supplies and you have to build it. And, like a typical guy, I think, "No big deal. I got this." I mean, how hard can it be, right?! Fellas, you with me?!

So, you unpack the box, pieces spread out everywhere. You look at the instruction booklet. The problem with IKEA, though, is that the instructions are in another language, and they look like ancient hieroglyphics. You think, I don't have time to learn another language just to put a table together.

So, you just start putting it together. That's when frustration sets in. You can't make sense of the instructions, there's always parts left over, and you just want to throw it in the firepit and make smores. Know what I mean?!

And it's usually at that point, frustration level through the roof, my wife, Cathy, walks into the room and says, "There shouldn't be any parts leftover. Why would they give you more screws than necessary? I'm not going to sit on that. Are you sure it's sturdy? I think maybe you put it together wrong. Is it upside down? And it's at this point that you start questioning every decision you've ever made in your life. Know what I mean?"

But it goes back to understanding the directions. Because we don't take the time to learn and understand the directions, frustration often sets in. The same is true when it comes to marriage and family.

God has created marriage and the family. And God's Word, the Bible, is an instruction manual as to how the family is to be put together and how it is to work. In many ways, our culture has hijacked and twisted what God has invented. We have allowed Hollywood to speak louder than God's voice on this matter, and that has resulted in frustration and confusion.<sup>ii</sup> So, over the next several weeks, we are going to consult the instruction manual, God's Word, as we seek to develop biblical families in a modern world.

### **MESSAGE:**

Our text this morning, Genesis 2, is the primary source, the primary reference to the idea of marriage. This very passage is referred to four times in the New Testament.<sup>iii</sup> It is the very first time that God gives His ideas and instructions on marriage. We are going to see God's design, God's gift, and then God's directive. So, let's begin by looking at...

#### **1) God's Design**

God is the author of marriage, and this passage takes us to the origin, the very beginning. You follow along in your copy of God's Word. Genesis, chapter 2, beginning in verse 18. ***18**Then **the Lord God** said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a **helper** fit for him." **19**Now out of the ground **the Lord God** had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. **20**The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a **helper** fit for him. **21****So the Lord God caused** a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while **he** slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh.*

In verse 18, God makes an observation. Up to this point, with each day of Creation, God has proclaimed it as good. And when Creation was completed, God remarked that it was all very good. But then here in verse 18, it was not good that man was alone. And it was at this time that God purposed to provide Adam with a wife, a helper. I'm going to come back that word in just a minute. But we clearly see that God purposed to create the marriage relationship.

Notice the number of times we read the phrase, "the Lord God." 4 times in 5 verses we read that phrase. Why is that important to point out? We must see that The Lord God is taking initiative here. Verse 21 it says, "**21****So the Lord God caused** a deep sleep to fall upon the man." God has a purpose; a cause.

Marriage is God's idea, it's His invention, it's God's design. The Bible doesn't say that over the course of time, Adam came up with a great idea, was so in love with Eve, and proposed to her. No. Marriage is God's idea, He is the designer, and it is the foundational building blocks of the family and society.

Why is it important to begin here? Talking about the origins of marriage? Well, because God is the designer of marriage, then He alone gets to be the definer of marriage.<sup>iv</sup> And God clearly defines marriage as one man and one woman in a life-time covenant relationship together.

But you know, we live in a world that is confused about that. They have disregarded the instruction manual. Our culture has taken God's sacred invention, perverted it, and attempted to redefine marriage.

Culture tells us that marriage can be between two men or two women. Our children are being taught that sex is predetermined but gender is fluid. And I want to be sensitive and caring here, we need to be loving here, but we cannot abandon the truth. Right? And I have to tell you, culture has lied, and culture is perpetuating the lie in hopes that the next generation will believe the lie and accept it as normative. But we ought not and cannot compromise and accept the lie.<sup>v</sup> And the most loving thing we can do is hold to God's truth on this issue and share it with the culture.

Follow me for just a moment. It is in the context of Creation that God institutes marriage. Of the three institutions God created, marriage, government, and The Church, marriage is the first. Marriage is woven into God's creation from the beginning. And for one to suppose that they can even begin to redefine marriage is to say that they are God and have the ability to reshape all of Creation. No one can do that! And God says that He made us male and female and that these two shall be joined together in marriage. And because God is the designer, He alone gets to be the definer.

And listen, in case you need more support that God's ways are best, just look at the statistics that prove our culture's got it wrong. Marriage has been so

devalued that did you know that marriage rates are the lowest in the United States since keeping records in 1867? 70 years ago, 80% of all US households were married couples. Compare that to 49% now.<sup>vi</sup> The average length of marriage prior to divorce in our country is 8 years.<sup>vii</sup> Studies show that majority of couples that did not cohabitate before marriage stayed married longer than those that do.<sup>viii</sup> What do these statistics tell us? That God's ways are best. He knows what He's talking about.

The point is that marriage is God's design and following that design is for our flourishing. And we find the instructions in God's Word. It's important to know that from the beginning. Secondly, we see marriage is...

## 2) God's Gift

Seeing that it was not good for Adam to be alone, God gifted Adam with his wife, Eve. And what you and I need to know is that God has continued the expression of His good gifts, to this very day, by gifting you and I with our spouse. Before we begin to think that we are the ones that have pursued one another and we are the ones that have chosen marriage, consider what Jesus said in Matthew 19:6. ***6So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.*** If you are married, God has joined you together. It is God's gift. Adam viewed Eve that way. Let's look at it.

Pick up the story again beginning in Genesis 2:19. ***19Now out of the ground the Lord God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. 20The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him.***

Let's stop there for a moment. Kind of a strange process. Adam is all alone, naming the animals. This seems a bit out of place. But I read one commentator that said that in naming the animals, Adam discovered there were both male and female causing him to see the necessity of male and female partnerships.<sup>ix</sup> That would have made Adam long for a companion of his own. Keep reading.

***21So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. 22And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man [God] made into a woman and brought her to the man.***

God satisfied Adam's need by fashioning Eve just for him, making her. Then God performs the first wedding ceremony by bringing Eve to Adam. Eve was God's gift to Adam. And Adam recognized it as such.

Do you remember your wedding day? Every time I get to officiate a wedding, I always like watching the groom as his bride comes down the aisle. Guys are usually all nervous and anxious. But when the doors open, and he sees his bride, they are often overcome with emotion. You know, I think that's the point of the bride coming down the aisle in a wedding ceremony, to mimic the first wedding, to also cause us to realize the gift God has given us in each other.

In Genesis 2, Adam is so overwhelmed by God's gift of Eve that he writes a poem. There she is, standing in front of him and boy is he lovestruck. Look at Adam's poem. Verse 23. ***23Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man."*** Now, I'm no Hebrew scholar, but I think Adam came up with the name woman because when he first saw her, he was like, "Whoa! Man!"

My point is that Adam considered Eve as God's gift to him. How much would our marriages be different if spouses recognized one another as God's gift to each other? I think guys would cherish their wives more. I think wives would be more grateful for their husbands. That sounds like Ephesians 5. The truth of the matter is that **you are God's gift to each other**. God has joined you together!

Now, in verse 20, God creates Eve as a helper. I think it is important to point out that word. Ladies, you might not be too impressed with that, but that word in the original language is the same word that God often uses to describe Himself.<sup>x</sup> Psalm 46:1, ***"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."*** Psalm 33:20 says, ***"Our soul waits for the Lord; he is our help and our shield."*** When Jesus talked about the coming Holy Spirit in John 14, He says, ***"16And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever."*** Now, this does not mean, ladies, that you are God. Right?! The point I want to make is that the word helper is a beautiful picture of God meeting a need in a way that the man can depend on. It is another depiction of God's gift.

So, we've looked at God's Design, we've looked at God's Gift. Now, let's look at...

## 3) God's Directive

This is where God gets practical about marriage. Verses 24 and 25, God gives a directive on what makes marriage work. Let's look at it together. *<sup>24</sup>Therefore a man shall **leave** his father and his mother and **hold fast** to his wife, and they shall become **one flesh**.* *<sup>25</sup>And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.* Two things that I think these verses highlight as God's directive in marriage. First, ...

### A) Leave and Cleave

The leave and cleave principle. This is huge! Jesus quotes verse 24. In fact, He quotes it when answering a question about divorce. Jesus was saying that leaving and cleaving produces staying power in marriage. God says that *a man shall **leave** his father and mother and **hold fast** to his wife.* And the same is true on the other side. A woman is to leave her father and mother and hold fast to her husband. This is why we give away the bride in wedding ceremonies.

Listen, for a healthy, marriage to be established, there has to be a change in previous relationships. All relationships; with parents and friends. Marriage will not work without it. We change the old relationships so that we can cling to the new relationship. That's the leaving and cleaving principle.

When a couple gets married, the relationship they had with their parents changes so that their relationship with one another can be launched. There is no new relationship if the old relationship remains the same. **I'm convinced that one of the greatest threats to marriage is failure to leave and cleave.**

Now, this leaving and cleaving doesn't mean abandoning. God does not expect you to abandon your parents or to abandon your friends. But God does expect a change in relationship with them. You are to leave your parents emotionally, spiritually, financially, and physically so that you and your spouse can establish a new home. There must be a shift in dependence on your parents to dependence on one another.

Let's talk practically here for a moment. How do you do this? Did you know that dealing with in-laws is one of the greatest stressors in a marriage? It's true. This is why a change in relationship is necessary. And it requires the establishment of boundaries. And these boundaries are to be upheld and honored both by parents and the married couple. And these clear boundaries will produce a cleaving to one another.

When Cathy and I got married, we enjoyed great relationships with our parents. To this day, we love our parents and they have done so much for us. However, one of the things we did early on, and our parents helped us do this, was establish boundaries as to what was acceptable and what was crossing a line. I'm grateful that my parents and my in-laws not only understood that but celebrated it with us. Let me give you a couple examples.

You know, when you first get married, you learn a lot. For example, fellas, when replacing the toilet paper, did you know that it's not acceptable to use the toilet paper holder like a shelf? I didn't learn that until I got married. It's not okay to save time, you have to take the time and actually put it on the roller, and then put the roller back in the holder. The shelf thing drove Cathy up the wall. I don't know why, but it did. So, when she was on the phone with her mom, she started in about it. Do you know what Chris did?! And Patty, my mother-in-law, just said, "Cathy, sounds like something you need to talk to your husband about."

You know, that's a small thing. And there were much bigger things that we dealt with in that first year of marriage, but that was a leaving a cleaving moment. It demonstrated a change in relationship and encouraged Cathy and I to depend upon one another. We had to figure it out.

Boundaries are a great thing. Husbands need to talk to his parents and wives need to talk to her parents about the boundaries in your marriage. And word to the wise, you need to surround yourself with people that will encourage marriage by pointing you back to one another. Because our world does not celebrate marriage, it is so easy to find people that are willing to join in on the pity party instead of pointing you back to your spouse. Leaving and cleaving.

Another thing that was huge for us was 6 months into our marriage, I graduated from seminary. We moved to Littlefield, Texas out in West Texas, 35 miles Northwest of Lubbock, in the middle of cotton fields. A north wind from the feed lots would rival the smell of chicken in the air. We were 8 hours away from our parents. It was there that we became parents, Carsyn came along. But we were out there on our own. We look back on that time with such gratefulness. It was a time for us to have to depend on one another and really establish our home together. I'm not going to lie, it was hard at times, and we had to navigate difficult things. But we look back on that time as foundational in our marriage.

God's first directive is to leave and cleave. It is part of God's design. Secondly, God's directive is...

## B) True Intimacy

Intimacy is something that is more than physical but is something you must work hard at to develop in marriage. We are going to have an entire sermon on intimacy, so I'll only briefly mention it here today. But look at verse 24 and 25 again. ***24Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. 25And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.*** One flesh carrying the idea of intimacy.

Now, most of the time when you talk about marriage and mention the word intimacy, people immediately go to physical intimacy. And yes, that is a big part of intimacy. But the way you really spell intimacy is "Into me you see." It's a vulnerability with one another.

Notice that God's directive is to **become** one flesh. In other words, it is something that is developed, over time, with intentionality. And verse 25 says they were naked and not ashamed. The idea of nakedness, here, is far more than nudity. It is the idea of being totally open and exposed; vulnerable with one another.

God has created and designed the marriage relationship. It is a wonderful design, and if we learn to operate His way, we will have a happy and meaningful marriage and happy and meaningful family. Does it mean that life will be perfect? No. But I promise that if you and I align to God's principles for marriage and family, we will experience happiness. And marriage is a gift from God for which we praise Him. And God's directive lays the foundation to build a great relationship where we leave and cleave and experience true intimacy.

## **CONCLUSION:**

I'm going to ask Micah and the team to come back up and lead us in a time of response. As they come, let me share something with you. The marriage of your dreams begins with Christ as the center of your marriage.

It has been said that a Christ-centered marriage is like a pyramid. The corners at the base of the pyramid represent you and your spouse. The peak of the pyramid represents Jesus. As you each scale the sides of the pyramid, seeking

a closer relationship with Jesus, you'll actually grow closer to one another. But in order to grow closer to Jesus, you have to begin a relationship with Him.

The Bible says that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. And that sin in our lives separate us from God. That's a problem. But because of God's great love for us, He sent His one and only son, Jesus, to die on the cross for our sin. And that when we place our faith and trust in Jesus, we are forgiven of our sin and a relationship with God is restored. But the Bible says we must determine, in this life, to place faith in Christ.

Have you placed your faith in Jesus? Maybe you are here, and you have questions about what that is all about. Our elders will be here at the front and would love to visit with you about placing your faith in Jesus as Lord. You come this morning.

Maybe others of you have a prayer concern. We would love to pray with you and over you today. You come with that.

Still yet, maybe others of you want to take your spouse by the hand and begin praying for God to work in and through your marriage.

There is freedom in this place to respond to The Lord's prompting upon your heart. I'm going to pray, we will stand and sing, but let's all respond to The Lord this morning. [PRAY]

## ENDNOTES:

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<sup>i</sup> Works consulted in preparation for this message: Connor Bales and Todd Kaunitz, *Gospel in the Home: Turning Chaos Back into Order*, Houston: Lucid Books, 2016; Skip Heitzig, *God Plans a Wedding*, sermon preached at Calvary Church Albuquerque, May 5, 2002, accessed online: <https://calvarynm.church/connectwithskip/teachings/#!/series/153/sermon/2030>; Steven J. Cole, *Lesson 7: God's Design for Marriage (Genesis 2:18-25)*, published by Bible.org, 1996, accessed online: <https://bible.org/seriespage/lesson-7-god-s-design-marriage-genesis-218-25>; J.D. Greear, *Jesus on Marriage*, sermon preached at Summit Church, February 2, 2020, accessed online: <https://summitchurch.com/message/jesus-on-marriage>; David Guzik, *Enduring Word Commentary: Genesis 2 – Creation Completed; Adam in the Garden of Eden*, accessed online: <https://enduringword.com/bible-commentary/genesis-2/>; Travis Ogle, *Love Life: Marriage*, sermon preached at Hope Church Las Vegas, October 22, 2017, accessed online: <https://hopechurchlv.com/messages/marriage/>; Michael Youssef, *Marriage The Way God Intended It: Crisis in the Family*, published by Leading The Way, February 11, 2019, accessed online: <https://www.ltw.org/listen/teaching/series/marriage-the-way-god-intended-it/part-1>; Jonathan Mast, *Sex, Dating & Marriage: The Secret to a Successful Marriage*, sermon preached at Hillside Christian Church, August 28, 2022, accessed online: <https://hillsideonline.com/message-detail?Item=1759&Message=1760>; Matt Chandler, *What is Marriage*, sermon preached at The Village Church, May 28, 2017, accessed online: <https://www.thevillagechurch.net/resources/sermons/what-is-marriage?mode=watch>.

<sup>ii</sup> Wording inspired by Jonathan Mast.

<sup>iii</sup> Skip Heitzig.

<sup>iv</sup> Connor Bales and Todd Kaunitz, page 16.

<sup>v</sup> Inspired by Tony Evan's sermon, *Who Owns Your House: Who Owns Your Marriage*, sermon preached at Oak Cliff Bible Church, July 9, 2023, accessed online: <https://www.ocbfchurch.org/downloads/who-owns-your-marriage>.

<sup>vi</sup> Stephanie Pawlak, *61 Marriage Statistics in the US for 2023*, published by Fling or Love, January 11, 2023, accessed online: <https://flingorlove.com/marriage-statistics>.

<sup>vii</sup> Christy Bieber, JD, *Revealing Divorce Statistics in 2023*, published by Forbes Advisor, August 8, 2023, accessed online: <https://www.forbes.com/advisor/legal/divorce/divorce-statistics/#:~:text=Key%20Divorce%20Statistics%20in%202023,-In%202021%2C%20a&text=During%20that%20same%20year%2C%201%2C985%2C072.couples%20decide%20to%20end%20them>.

<sup>viii</sup> Article published by Attorney Scott J. Stadler, *Divorce Statistics for 2023*, published online: <https://www.unhappymarriage.info/divorce-statistics-for-2023>.

<sup>ix</sup> Steven J. Cole.

<sup>x</sup> Pointed out by Skip Heitzig.