

## BIBLICAL FAMILY MODERN WORLD: Reclaiming Intimacy<sup>i</sup>

### Genesis 2:18-25

#### OPENING:

Good morning! Thanks for joining us today.

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Possible announcements about fall events.....

#### INTRODUCTION:

Today we continue our sermon series called “A Biblical Family in a Modern Word.” We’re looking at marriage and family according to God’s intended design. That design is laid out in the Bible. So far, we’ve talked about God’s design for marriage, building godly homes, the differing roles of husband and wife, raising godly kids, and money matters in the home. Today’s message is entitled, “Reclaiming Intimacy.” We are going to be looking at the biblical view of intimacy in marriage.

As I mentioned last week, marriage gurus say the three greatest stressors in marriage are parenting, money, and sex. So, in this section of our sermon series, we have been tackling those issues from a biblical perspective. So, if you have missed any part of this teaching series, let me encourage you to go back and listen or watch them. You can do that by visiting our church’s YouTube channel by searching Trinity Baptist Church Mt. Pleasant Texas. Or you can listen on our website at [trinitytx.org/sermons](http://trinitytx.org/sermons) or subscribe to our podcast, “Hope for the Broken,” anywhere you listen to podcasts.

This morning we are going to go back to the passage that kicked off our series. I want to invite you to take your bibles and turn with me, to Genesis chapter 2. We are going to be in verses 18-25 again this morning. We will also look at some other verses in the Bible, but this will be our jumping off point. As you are turning there, let me share with you a story.

#### **OPENING ILLUSTRATION: Doctor Visit<sup>ii</sup>**

There was a man who was having some health issues, so he went to his doctor. The doctor gave him a series of tests to determine the problem and the extent of the issue. And after the tests were all completed, the doctor went back to the waiting room. The man and his wife were both waiting there. But the doctor called to the wife and wanted to go over the findings with her first.

The doctor called the wife into the consult room and said, you know, your husband is seriously ill. And you are going to need to do some things for him, or he's going to die. She looked at the doctor in shock and asked, what kind of things are we talking about?

Doctor said, well, you need to cook him three warm meals every single day. Second, you need to give him full-body massages twice a week. And third, have intimate physical relations with him on a regular basis.

She was puzzled and surprised as she walked back to the waiting room. The husband could read body language. So, he asked her, “What’s wrong? What did the doctor say? She turned to her husband and said, the doctor said you're going to die.

Well, the Bible has a lot to say about intimacy in marriage? And as a whole, the church has been kinda quiet on the subject matter. It’s almost as if the topic of sex and sexuality is embarrassing and something we tend to think we’re not supposed to talk about in church. Even parents struggle to talk about it with their kids hoping that they’ll just get it automatically.

I’m convinced that what makes it awkward to talk about in church is that culture has hijacked God’s design and has perverted it. Satan is winning a battle here because we are silent. Our culture has attempted to define and redefine intimacy. To such a degree that it has now become something God never intended and awkward for some to talk about in church. It’s time to reclaim it.

And here’s the deal; sex is God’s idea. God created marital intimacy and He knows the benefit it brings to the marriage relationship. So, it is vitally important for us to allow our views and our theology on this subject to be shaped by the Bible. And **here’s my position, if the church doesn’t talk about it, the world will continue to teach a false narrative.** But because God talks about it, we talk about it. And we align our thoughts here according to God’s Word because it is for human flourishing. As we look into God’s Word, we are going to see 4 biblical views of intimacy in marriage. Let’s look together at Genesis chapter 2, verses 18-25 as we allow our views to be shaped by God on this matter.

#### BACKGROUND/TEACHING:

*<sup>18</sup>Then the Lord God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.” <sup>19</sup>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. <sup>20</sup>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. <sup>21</sup>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. <sup>22</sup>And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. <sup>23</sup>Then 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." <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.*

This passage provides a beautiful theology on intimacy in marriage. It helps us to discover the biblical understanding of intimacy. A blessing to our marriage.

The first thing we see, regarding a biblical view of intimacy, is...

### **MESSAGE:**

#### **1) Intimacy isn't just physical**

Intimacy in the marriage relationship cannot just be physical. Of course, that is an aspect of it, but it is also deeply emotional and spiritual.<sup>iii</sup> But in our culture, we often mistake intimacy to mean sex. But it is so much more than that.

In Genesis 2, we see intimacy before sex. Let me point it out to us. In verse 18, Adam was alone. That was a feeling deep seeded in him. That feeling of loneliness was intensified by the process of naming all the animals.<sup>iv</sup> He would have noticed that every animal had a mate. That realization must have caused Adam to long for a companion of his own.

So, God, cased a deep sleep to fall upon Adam. The world's first surgery. And God took a rib from Adam and fashioned Eve. When God brought Eve to Adam, it was an intimate experience. Verse 23 of Genesis 2. *<sup>23</sup>Then the man said, "This at last..."* Do you hear the longing in this response? Not only the longing, the fulfillment. At last, finally! Adam's longing for a deep and meaningful relationship had been fulfilled. And sex hasn't happened yet!

Do you know how you spell intimacy? In to me you see. Intimacy in the marriage relationship is about being fully known and fully loved, all at the same

time. It is about a meaningful relationship with another human being that God has prepared just for you. This kind of deeper level intimacy is to be more meaningful than any other relationship in your life. And isn't that the level of intimacy this experience must of have been?

Verse 25 of Genesis 2 proves that to us. *<sup>25</sup>And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.* Absolutely no shame. No regret. Instead, what we see here is complete vulnerability. Fully known and fully loved. That's intimacy.

Again, culture has hijacked this and says intimacy is just a physical act. But we need to reclaim the biblical view. People often express fear regarding intimacy, souls have been tattered and torn, and people don't experience a sense of connectedness with one another. The reason for that is because sex is viewed as strictly physical.<sup>v</sup> But if it is only physical, then why to people feel those things? That's because intimacy is more than physical.

When we limit intimacy to just the physical, we've already hijacked it.<sup>vi</sup> And couples fight over this subject because they have bought into the lie that intimacy is just physical. Here's how it plays out. If sex isn't happening with the regularity that I desire, then we are not experiencing intimacy. That's the way we think. Either we think that we cannot be intimate unless it is physical, or we don't care to connect with one another on a truly intimate level. This is a misunderstanding of intimacy.

Intimacy isn't just physical. The second biblical view of intimacy is...

#### **2) Intimacy is for procreation.**

God designed the sexual relationship to be the way in which children are born. No kidding, Pastor Chris! I know. But I want you to the importance of this point.

When God placed Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, he gave them a command in Genesis 1, verse 28. *<sup>28</sup>And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."* Marriage is designed to have kids.

The reason this is important to point out is because there has been, in recent years, the emergence of a new secular ethic regarding having kids.<sup>vii</sup> According

to a study published by Pew Research, family size has been on the decline since 1970. In other words, fewer couples are choosing to have children.<sup>viii</sup> There are many reasons for that, one being fertility issues. But there is also a growing view where couples are not even considering having children. But it is important to see that it is God's desire to be fruitful and multiply. This is what God had in mind when He created marital intimacy.

So, intimacy is not just physical, it is for procreation. Thirdly, ...

### 3) Intimacy is unifying.

God designed sex to be unifying. While marital intimacy is not just physical, it is also physical. That is an important part. Look at Genesis 2, verse 24, as we see this. *"**24**Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh."* Becoming one flesh is the consummation of the marriage relationship. In Matthew 19, Jesus adds to this by saying a married couple is no longer two, but instead, one flesh. The exclusive sexual bond created in marriage, is so unifying that the two are no longer two, they're one.

It is also God's design for intimacy to serve as a protection to unity in marriage. As a result, the Bible encourages us to place boundaries around it. Verse 24 also says, *a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife*. In other words, this level of intimacy is reserved solely for the husband and wife. Intimacy must have boundaries. The reason for that is that if this relationship was to be shared with others, there would not be the unity that intimacy serves to achieve.

The Bible has many warnings urging us to protect unity in our marriages. For example, Proverbs 5:15-17. ***15**Drink water from your own cistern, flowing water from your own well. **16**Should your springs be scattered abroad, streams of water in the streets? **17**Let them be for yourself alone, and not for strangers with you.* Beloved, we must protect the unity of our marriages.

Now, I'm convinced that most affairs don't start off to be that intentionally. That's because the road to an affair begins with a slippery slope. And to protect our marriages, we must be intentional. I want to mention a few ways you can protect the unity of your marriage, a few guardrails.<sup>ix</sup> First, ...

#### A) Protect your heart.

This means that we are to shield our minds, our hearts from inappropriate thoughts. We keep a check on our emotions. Thoughts lead to behaviors. Emotions lead to actions. 2 Corinthians 10:5 says to, *"**take every thought captive to obey Christ.**"* Proverbs 4:23 urges us to, *"**Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the streams of life.**"* We guard our hearts and minds by keeping tabs on our thought life. To protect the unity of your marriage by protecting your thought life, we must avoid sinful thoughts about people other than your spouse. We must also guard our emotions from attaching to someone other than our spouse.

#### B) Protect your eyes.

Jesus said in Matthew 5:28, *"**But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart.**"* We need to guard our eyes because it is the means by which we allow sinful thoughts to enter. This means the shows we watch, the movies we see, and the websites we visit.

Paul tells Timothy to, *"**Flee sexual immorality.**"* The term translated as sexual immorality is the Greek word, "porneia," where we get the English word pornography. We are to flee that. Even the mutual watching of that is sinful. I believe that many marriages dissolve because of pornography.

We are to protect our hearts and our eyes. Thirdly, ...

#### C) Protect your mouth.

You protect your marriage by protecting what you allow yourself to say to someone other than your spouse. For example, when wives talk with a man that is not her husband about her husband's shortcomings, that is inviting an inappropriate relationship. When men say flirtatious things with someone other than their wife, that is inviting an inappropriate relationship into your life. Proverbs 21:23, *"**23**Whoever keeps his mouth and his tongue keeps himself out of trouble."*

Avoid the slippery slope of an affair by protecting your heart, your eyes, and your mouth. Fourthly, ...

#### D) Protect your body.

What do I mean by this? Well, you protect your body by protecting the situations you are in. For example, you need to establish boundaries in

situations where you are with the opposite sex. I am never alone with another woman. Even in counseling situations, there is a window on my office door and someone else in the office. I do not drive alone with a woman other than my wife. I don't position myself to be alone with another woman.

So, we protect the unity of our marriage by protecting our hearts, our eyes, our mouths, and our bodies. Sexual intimacy creates unity in our marriage, but it is something we must work to protect. The fourth view of biblical intimacy is...

#### 4) Intimacy is for pleasure.

God designed sex in the context of marriage to be pleasurable. The biblical view is to enjoy one another. When Adam says, "*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,*" he is actually composing a poetic love song in the original language. It's romance. We are to be romantic, to enjoy one another. But notice that this enjoyment is only in the context of a marriage covenant.

There is an entire book in the Bible dedicated to this very subject. Song of Solomon is a passionate love story. It is a story about people who fall in love, get married, and enjoy one another. I want to read you a couple excerpts from Song of Solomon that shows us that intimacy is intended for pleasure.

In chapter 5, verses 10-16, we read how a wife describes her husband. Listen to this. This is the Bible! *<sup>10</sup>My beloved is radiant and ruddy, distinguished among ten thousand. <sup>11</sup>His head is the finest gold; his locks are wavy, black as a raven [I'm picturing Fabio back in the day]. <sup>12</sup>His eyes are like doves beside streams of water, bathed in milk, sitting beside a full pool. <sup>13</sup>His cheeks [Cheeks or... cheeks, I don't know] are like beds of spices, mounds of sweet-smelling herbs. His lips are lilies, dripping liquid myrrh [sounds like a drooling problem]. <sup>14</sup>His arms are rods of gold, set with jewels [Yeah baby!]. His body is polished ivory, bedecked with sapphires. <sup>15</sup>His legs are alabaster columns, set on bases of gold. His appearance is like Lebanon, choice as the cedars. <sup>16</sup>His mouth is most sweet, and **he is altogether desirable**. This is my beloved and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.* This lady is into her man!

Now, I understand your husband may not be like polished ivory and sapphires. Some of us guys have abs that have turned to flabs. But what we learn from this passage is to be into one another. Ladies, that means that if your man's abs have turned to flabs, you are into flabs! Be into your man. Enjoy him.

Now, let's look at how the husband chimes in here. Song of Solomon, chapter 7, verses 1 – 5. *<sup>1</sup>How beautiful are your feet in sandals, O noble daughter! Your rounded thighs are like jewels, the work of a master hand. <sup>2</sup>Your navel is a rounded bowl that never lacks mixed wine [A little strange]. Your belly is a heap of wheat, encircled with lilies [Lost me]. <sup>3</sup>Your two breasts are like two fawns, twins of a gazelle. [Okay, I get that]. <sup>4</sup>Your neck is like an ivory tower. Your eyes are pools in Heshbon, by the gate of Bath-rabbim. Your nose is like a tower of Lebanon, which looks toward Damascus. [Not sure I'd use that one, fellas]. <sup>5</sup>Your head crowns you like Carmel, and your flowing locks are like purple; a king is held captive in the tresses.*

I understand that you might use different language than what the Bible uses, but do you see how this husband is enjoying his wife? By the way, guys, do you know how to know what your "type" is? Whatever type your wife is. That's what type of lady you are into. If your wife has blonde hair, then you are into blondes, until she changes hair color next week. The point is that intimacy is for the purpose of pleasure. We are to enjoy our spouse.

I also think it is important to point out that the context of these passages in Song of Solomon is in a marriage. The Bible does not condone sexual intimacy outside of marriage.

#### ILLUSTRATION: Fire

One of the things that we do in our house from time to time is make s'mores. That is more so the case when the kids were a little younger. But we have a fire pit in our back yard where we put all fallen branches. Then, when it accumulates, we light it and make s'mores. But we don't make a fire in our living room floor. If we did, it would burn the house down.

A fire is great in the right context, in it's proper place. But fire is dangerous outside of its proper place. The same is true with sex. It is a great thing in the context of marriage, it is a gift of God, but it is a dangerous thing outside of marriage.

This is important to understand. But while it might seem enjoyable outside of that context, it will burn you and drive a wedge between you and your spouse. Intimacy isn't just physical, it is for procreation, it is unifying, and it is for pleasure. When we hold to this biblical view, we will reclaim true intimacy and our marriages will benefit.

## **CONCLUSION**

I'm going to ask that Micah and the band come back up and lead us in a time of response. We always want to give people an opportunity to come to Christ or receive prayer.

If you are here today and you have never trusted Jesus as Lord and Savior, I want to invite you to do that today. The Bible teaches that we all have sinned and that has brought about a separation between us and God. But God loved us, even in our sin, that He provided a solution to our sin problem. That solution is His son, Jesus.

Jesus came from heaven, lived a perfect life, and died on the cross for our sin. Jesus took your place and mine on the cross. And the Bible says that by faith in Him, we can be saved. That is forgiven of our sin. When our sin is forgiven we have a right relationship with God restored. Doesn't mean you'll be perfect. But you can be forgiven and saved today.

If you would like to visit with someone about that, or maybe you have questions about your salvation, we would love to visit with you as well.

Maybe you just have another prayer need that you would like for us to pray for, you come as well.

We are going to stand and sing, but let's all respond to the prompting of the Lord on our hearts [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; Todd Kaunitz, “By Design: Theology of Sex,” sermon preached at New Beginnings Baptist Church, Longview Campus, 5 years ago, accessed online: <https://vimeo.com/nbbctx>; Tommy Politz, “Sex, Dating, Marriage: What a Woman Needs,” sermon preached at Hillside Christian Church, Amarillo, September 11, 2022, accessed online: <https://hillsideonline.com/message-detail?Item=1759&Message=1762>; Skip Heitzig, “The Smart Home: The Master Bedroom: Components of Marital Intimacy,” sermon preached at Calvary Albuquerque, September 16, 2018, accessed online: <https://calvarynm.church/connectwithskip/teachings/#/series/30/sermon/266>; Gregory Brown, “8. Foundation Eight: Intimacy in Marriage,” article published by Bible.org, July 7, 2015, accessed online: <https://bible.org/seriespage/8-foundation-eight-intimacy-marriage>; Josh Squires, “Marital Intimacy Is More Than Sex,” article published by Desiring God, March 2, 2016, accessed online: <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/marital-intimacy-is-more-than-sex>; L. Joseph Rosas III, “Marriage is for More than Two: Preaching on Marital Intimacy,” article published by Preaching.com, accessed online: <https://www.preaching.com/articles/marriage-is-for-more-than-two-preaching-on-marital-intimacy>.

<sup>ii</sup> Illustration taken from Skip Heitzig.

<sup>iii</sup> Pointed out by Tommy Politz.

<sup>iv</sup> <https://www.bibleref.com/Genesis/2/Genesis-2-19.html>.

<sup>v</sup> Tommy Politz.

<sup>vi</sup> Ibid.

<sup>vii</sup> Ibid.

<sup>viii</sup> “Parenting in America,” study published by Pew Research, December 17, 2015, accessed online: <https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2015/12/17/1-the-american-family-today>.

<sup>ix</sup> Guardrails inspired by Nancy C. Anderson’s article, “Adultery’s Slippery Slope,” published by MarriageTrac, accessed online: <https://www.marriageprac.com/adultery-slippery-slope>.