

Adam—Marvellously Completed

Genesis 2:18-25
Halifax: 6 July 2014

Introduction:

This is now our sixth week in our sermon series in Genesis.

- Three weeks ago, I preached an overview of chapter 2 in which we looked at God's gracious provision for us at creation.
 - It included that we were created with both a body and a spirit...
 - that we were placed in a beautiful garden that was already cultivated...
 - that we were given work to do...
 - that God revealed to us His relationship to us in a covenant...
 - and that He provided us with companionship.
- Today, we want to take a closer look at that last item—the provision of companionship.
 - This is spoken of in Genesis 2:18-25.
- Please give me your attention as I read to you from this portion of God's Word.
 - Each week, we spend much time reading and then hearing the exposition of scripture because it is in scripture that we have the very Word of God revealed to us in writing.
 - The only appropriate way to approach the word is with reverent joy.
- So hear now, with reverent joy, the Word of LORD, beginning in Gen 2:18:

Genesis 2:18-25: 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.

May the LORD bless to us the reading of His holy Word.

Back in chapter 1, we saw that the LORD created man, male and female, after His own image.

- But we are not given any specifics about this...
 - But here in chapter 2, we are provided with more detail.
 - So this is a fuller description of what God did on the sixth day when He made man, male and female.

- Verse 18 obviously picks up at the time on that sixth day when God has already formed Adam out of the dust of the ground,
 - and has already created all the animals, but has not yet created the woman.
- As we begin our evaluation of this passage,
 - I want you to see a rather striking thing that is noted about man...

I. It is noted that man (Adam) is incomplete if alone!

A. God Himself declares it very directly and succinctly with the words in verse 18,

- **“It is not good that man should be alone.”**

1. It is very clear that by *alone*, the LORD means without any *human* companionship.
 - For Adam was not at all alone in the sense that...
 - he had a beautiful garden that was full of wonderful things for him to do and to explore...
 - he was surrounded by all sorts of animals and interesting creatures that were all friendly toward him and were capable of providing some level of companionship...
 - And most of all, he had communion with God, for man’s fellowship with God had not been severed by the fall.
2. It is very clear that what is lacking is human companionship because the Lord declares that He will make a helper comparable to Adam.
 - And then the LORD presents “every beast of the field and every bird of the air” to see what Adam will call them...
 - And he names them—the idea is that he names them with intelligence and understanding,
 - recognizing and discerning their characteristics and their nature.
 - But the conclusion is given in verse 20 that not one of them was found to be a helper comparable to him.
 - Adam saw that the beasts and the birds had companions comparable to them, but he did not have a companion like that.
 - The Lord produced in Adam a yearning for the companion that He was about to provide for him.
 - Adam saw that it was not good for him to be alone.

B. We all know that this is true—that it is not good for man to be alone!

1. Even if the LORD had made meals for Adam every day, wonderfully prepared meals dropped from heaven on a beautifully set table...
 - and had provided him with a palace that was full of precious things that had been crafted, interesting things, games and collections and things of beauty...
 - And there was already indeed the garden and interesting work to do in the garden...and there were all the animals...
 - And if the LORD had come to man with all of these things and had said,
 - “Adam, is this not enough for you? Indeed, am I not enough for you?”

- Do you know what the proper answer would have been?
 - “No Lord, it is not enough.
 - I need someone like me.”
 - That would be the right answer because that is what God said.
2. And you know that this is true!
- What enjoyment could Adam have if there were no other people—
 - If he had no other human to share his garden and his palace and his work and his God with—
 - No one to walk with and talk with and plan with and show things to...
 - To have all these wonderful things and to not be able to show them to another person.
 - He would be miserable!
- C. And I ask you, if Adam had remained alone, how could he have fulfilled his calling?
1. God called him to be fruitful and multiply—to fill the earth and subdue it.
 - God wanted Adam to fill the earth with people like himself that would be His worshippers and that would manage and enjoy the bounty of the earth.
 - But if there were no other people, it would be impossible for Adam to do this!
 2. Without any other people, it would also be impossible for Adam to shine as God’s image!
 - We have seen that God created Adam in His own image—
 - not in his physical appearance because God is a spirit and does not have a body like we do—
 - But he was to be a reflection of God’s nature in knowledge, righteousness and holiness...
 - And one of the principle ways he was to shine as God’s image was by loving and serving his neighbour—other people!
 - In fact, that is the primary way we live is God’s image—by loving each other and doing good for each other!
 - God made us with the ability to do this!
 - This is where our principle beauty lies as His image...
 - For all eternity, God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit have perfectly loved one another, delighting in each other, pleasing each other, admiring each other, serving each other...
 - And God created us to do the same...
 - But if there were no other human beings, how could we do this?
 - Even our worship of God largely consists in telling one another about God—in magnifying His name together—in taking delight in Him one with another!
 - But what if your worship was always alone—with just you!

TRANS> So you see that it was not good—not good at all—for man to be alone!

- Adam by himself was incomplete!
- We all need to see that—because that is what God reveals to us here...
 - But don't suppose this to mean that everyone must be married to be complete.
 - I am not saying that—
 - Even Jesus did not take a wife—nor did Paul.
 - But they were definitely not alone—they were community people—they interacted richly with others...
 - But if Adam had not had Eve, he would have been solitary—one man, all alone in the world forever—
 - The point is that we humans were not made to be alone—we are meant to be with others in the world and to interact with them.
 - And so we all need to see that it is not good for mankind to be alone...
 - It prepares us to see the goodness of God which is the second thing I want to look at this morning...

II. We see God's goodness here in our text in completing Adam (man) so marvellously—so that he is not alone!

A. The thing that is highlighted is that the woman God makes for him is one flesh with him.

- This is shown in several ways...
 1. First, it is shown in that she is described as a *helper comparable* to him.
 - a. This is mentioned twice—
 - First, when God says in verse 18 that He will make a *helper comparable* to Adam because it is not good for him to be alone...
 - And secondly, when in verse 20 it says that among the animals none were found that were a *helper comparable* to him, so God made the woman...
 - b. What does it mean to be a *helper comparable*?
 - The word in the original that is translated *comparable* is an interesting word that means *according to the opposite of him*.
 - It carries the idea of being opposite in the sense of corresponding to him—completing him in bringing to him what is lacking.
 - She is, in this way, like the other piece of a two piece jigsaw puzzle that completes the puzzle.
 - And that she is a *helper*—that also speaks of her adding to him what is needed.
 - This word is frequently used of God who comes to help us in our need—often it is used in the phrase, “He is our help and shield.”
 - We are lacking protection, so He provides it...
 - In Psalm 121, we ask from whence our help comes and then answer, “My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth.”

- The kind of help that the woman provides is the help of a subordinate—
 - For as Paul says in 1 Timothy 2:13, she is to be submissive because Adam was formed first, then Eve...
 - We may also note in our text that she is presented to Adam and that he then names her, which shows that he has authority in the relationship.
 - This authority of the man over his wife is clear throughout the Bible—
 - for example, in Ephesians 5 which we read earlier where the woman is commanded to submit to her husband and where he is described as her head.
 - But this does not mean that she does not add to the relationship what Adam lacked and could not provide.
 - Nor does it make her inferior in essence any more that it makes the Son of God inferior in essence to always submit to the Father...
 - A king will have many counsellors around him to advise who are superior to him in knowledge and wisdom,
 - but it is still his task to rule over them.
 - A king cannot be complete without his helpers—his expert in warfare, in city planning, in the administration of the palace, in finance, etc...
 - just as Adam could not be complete without a helper that is comparable to him.
- c. Now it is clear that the animals were not helpers that were comparable to Adam...
- They were not enough like him to be his opposite—his completer.
 - For something to be opposite, it must be like the thing it is opposite to.
 - For example, the opposite of man is woman, not dog...because a dog is not enough like a man to be his opposite.
 - The dog is not *comparable* to him, but something altogether different.
 - Woman is comparable because she too is a human—they are of the same flesh...

TRANS> So the first way our passage highlights that the woman is of the same substance as the man is in describing her as *a helper comparable to him*.

2. That they are the same flesh is brought out even more in our text when we see how the woman was created.
 - God actually performed an operation on Adam—He put him to sleep and then He removed one of his ribs and closed up the place...
 - And then with the rib he made a woman!
 - He carefully fashioned her from Adam's rib!

- But why did He do this? Why did He not simply create her of the dust of the ground when He created the man?
 - It was to emphasize the fact she is made from him—of the same substance—of the same flesh.
3. This being of one substance is driven home for us even more in a third way... when we see Adam's response when the woman is presented to him!
- a. Here you have that exciting moment that we call in our weddings, "the presentation of the bride."
 - When the music rises and the bride appears at the back of the church, prepared for her groom!
 - When it says that God brought her to Adam, that is what is conveyed—He presented her to him...
 - But this was all the more exciting for Adam because he had never seen a woman before—he had never even seen another human being!
 - He was alone and now God had made a woman and brings her to present her to him!
 - I cannot escape thinking that the LORD Himself must have been very excited as He made this presentation.
 - It is inconceivable how marvellous it must have been for Adam!
 - b. And you see that what he immediately declares when he sees her...
 - He speaks poetry and *her likeness to him* is the theme of his poem...
 - **Gen 2:23: 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."**
 - There have been many that have passed before him, but now there is someone like him—someone he can share his life with!
 - She is of his bone and of his flesh!
 - She is not another kind of creature, but is made of his very own substance.
 - c. The truth is, we are all of one flesh and one substance...
 - The entire human race of Adam's substance.
 - We are not individual creations, but we all come forth from Adam.
 - Children are not new flesh, as such, but they are divided off from their parents.
 - There is not one person who is from any other flesh than that of Adam.
- B. That we are all one flesh had tremendous implications for us!
- It is emphasized for a reason!
1. It is to show us that God gave us others that are like us!
- We should be so thankful about this!
 - We have already spoken about how dreadful it would have been if Adam had been left alone—with nobody that was like him...

- But by creating the woman of his flesh,
 - and by creating her and Adam so that they could reproduce children that were of their flesh,
 - He made it possible that there should be other people in the world!
2. And when we see that we are all of one flesh, it is to show us that we ought to cherish one another...
- Is that not what Paul the Apostle says in Ephesians 5:29?
 - Turn there and look at what it says...
 - You can see that he is telling husbands how they ought to love their wives as their own bodies...and then he gives the principle in verse 29:
 - **Eph 5:29: For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church!**
3. Do you see—the whole human race is one flesh!
- There is a special sense in which a husband and wife are one flesh and we are going to look more at that in just a moment...
 - but it is also true that you are the same flesh with every other human being.
 - No one is excluded—from the drunk on the street to the rich man in his big house to the grumpy old woman...
 - They are all bone of our bones and flesh of our flesh and they are all to be loved by us.
 - This oneness in which we were created is the foundation for the second great commandment that we are to love our neighbour as ourselves.
 - For we are the same flesh—and no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it.
 - That is why you are to look out not only for your own interests, but also for the interests of others!
 - That is why you are to do unto others as you would have them do unto you!
 - They are bone of your bones and flesh of your flesh—and no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it...
 - You are to have this same care for every human being!
 - God made us *of* each other that we might be *for* each other!
 - That is the implication here!

TRANS> And now I want you to see thirdly what I told you we would look at in a moment...

III. That being one flesh reaches its highest expression in marriage!

A. The bond of one flesh that is made in marriage between a man and woman is greater than *merely* being made of the same substance...

1. There is added to it the *joining together* of man and wife in holy matrimony.
 - *Joining together* is the language that is used to describe their oneness in verse 24—where,

- after Adam has declared that the woman is bone of his bones and flesh of flesh,
- the comment is made by Moses:
 - **Gen 2:24: Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.**
- This *joining together* is obviously something additional to the unity that a man and woman already have of being made of one and the same flesh...
 - It is a joining that occurs between two that are of one flesh that causes them to become one flesh in a deeper sense than they are merely from creation.
 - They go from being of the same substance to having an even greater unity and oneness!

2. In what does this additional unity consist?

- Well, there are two things...
 - First, it consists of the bond that God instituted which we call marriage...
 - In Mark 10:7-9, Jesus describes it as God's joining them together... where He says,
 - **“Therefore, what God has joined together, let not man separate.”**
 - They are bound to each other by the covenant of marriage which is established by the exchange of vows.
 - By covenant, they are joined together before God and the bond that is thus made is inviolable.
 - Second, it brings them into the intimacy of the marriage bed.
 - This intimacy is reserved only for marriage, and the uncovering of nakedness in any other context makes you a pervert and an adulterer...and you will be judged by God accordingly.
 - Intimacy outside of marriage is something that is not even to be named among God's people—it is inconsistent with our walk.
 - Those men or women who indulge open the way for God to curse their household—they bring harm to their own flesh.
 - But marital intimacy is one of the greatest blessings that God has given to us as human beings...
 - By it, a man and a woman are joined with each other in a way that no one else can be joined.
 - They are brought together in a closeness that God blesses, tying them sweetly to one another...
 - And in many cases it is through this union that they are also blessed with children.

TRANS> So there is in marriage the additional unity of the binding covenant and of sexual intimacy.

3. Marriage is therefore the closest bond of any relationship on earth.
 - When the LORD says that they leave father and mother to enter into it, it shows that marriage is a deeper fuller bond even than the bond of parent and child.
 - This is of course a relative statement—it is not that a man and a woman repudiate and renounce their relationship with their parents,
 - but rather that their marriage takes precedent over their ties with their parents or with anybody else.
 - It is, we might say, the ultimate one flesh relationship.
- B. Because it is a deeper bond, it serves as a paradigm for what one flesh relationships ought to be.
1. It is in marriage that God intended the beauty of human oneness to shine forth most brilliantly.
 - a. The man was appointed as the head of the home...
 - And as such, he was to be as God the Father is to the Trinity—
 - He was to cherish his wife and his children.
 - He was to delight in her and to give to her.
 - He was to share all good things with her.
 - He was, as Paul says in Ephesians 5, to love her as his own flesh,
 - to give his life for her...
 - He was to lead her to the Lord—to, as Moses said, command his household in the way of the LORD that they might be blessed.
 - To take them by the hand each day and lead them to the throne of God to call upon Him...
 - To take them and feed them each day in the pastures of God's word...
 - To take them each day and lead them in the praises of God...
 - To beautifully nurture them and enrich them!
 - b. And the woman was appointed to respond to her husband...
 - To delight in him and obey him as God the Son and God the Spirit delight in God the Father.
 - To do him good and not evil each day...as one that he can safely trust in.
 - To have the law of kindness on her tongue and to care for the children.
 - To cheerfully submit to him as to the Lord...
 - In short, she was to bask in being one with him and in following him and helping him.
 - c. It was here in marriage that all the fullness and beauty of human unity was to begin and to be modeled.
 - How good He was to give us such a relationship!
 - It was all His idea that there should be male and female in the first place!
 - It was all His idea that there should be sex and that there should be such a thing as a marriage covenant.

- We can't even begin to imagine the sheer joy and delight that would have been found in this relationship if there had been no fall.
 - This is what God designed marriage to be and this is what is still *ought* to be!
 - The place where the beauty of human oneness is to be brought to its fullest expression!
2. And therefore how very sad it is when marriage becomes a place of disunity.
- Calvin describes this so well that I am going to quote him here...
 - He says, "It is very rare that households govern themselves in peace and harmony. The husbands and wives are more likely to be like cats and dogs. Although they do not all live with the same intensity, very few follow the pattern which God established."
 - How many husbands there are that bring a curse rather than a blessing on their homes!
 - They go about as predators, lusting after other women as if there is no wrong in it...supposing that there will be no consequences even as God prepares a curse for their homes...
 - You see them impatient and railing against their wives and treating them with contempt...grumbling against them and being harsh...
 - You see them neglecting to provide for them in material things...
 - You see them neglecting their spiritual nurture and failing to lead them to God's throne of grace each day and to the house of God each Sunday.
 - You see their wives lonely and uncared for...insecure and looking for love and security...
 - And how many wives there are that refuse to respect their husbands...
 - refuse to follow their lead and submit to them as their head...
 - Instead they are either nattering and sullen...
 - or they are sickeningly sweet even while they do their own thing and neglect to love and care for their husbands...
 - continuing in their own way with no regard for the men they married or for their wishes.
3. We have no one to blame for the deplorable state of marriage than ourselves.
- God created it to be lovely, but it is we who brought sin into the world by the fall...
 - And it is we who continue to add more sin by our own doing.
 - Oddly enough, instead of humbling ourselves and turning to Christ when we see disharmony in our world and even in our homes,
 - we become embittered against God even while He calls us to come to Him for salvation...
 - Instead of embracing His offer, we harden ourselves and blame Him for our wickedness.
 - It is truly a deplorable state of affairs...

- But if we will come to Him, confessing our sins, and looking to Him for salvation,
 - He will not only pardon us, but He will also bring life to us from above so that we can begin to live a new life...
 - So that we can begin to love our neighbour and to love our spouse.
- C. In fact, there is now in Jesus Christ an even higher expression of the beautiful unity that God appointed for the human race...
1. It too is described as a marriage relationship...
 - It is the relationship that Christ has with His church—with those He came to save!
 - He has established with His people the same double bond that we saw makes a marriage...
 - First, by His incarnation, He has become bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh—the unity that we have with all people...
 - And secondly, He has established a covenant bond with us as our husband, committing Himself to us even though we are sinners...
 - loving us and giving Himself for us—as Ephesians 5:25 says...
 - that He might sanctify and cleanse us with the washing of water by the word that He might present us to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that we should be holy and without blemish!
 2. You would think that the Lord Jesus might look at us and say,
 - “Oh!! is that my bride??? her???”
 - and turn away from us in disgust...
 - But He doesn't!
 - Instead He comes to redeem us and to pardon us!
 - To Him it is just an opportunity for more love and more giving and more grace to be seen—
 - for Him to show all the more His great love to us.
 - In Him we see what it really means to love your neighbour!
 - In Him we see the giving and the serving that we ought to have toward the whole human race and especially toward our spouse!
 - We see it not in paradise, but right here in the broken sinful world where crosses must be endured and ingratitude tolerated to love.
 - In Jesus we see the amazing beauty and depth of this patient sacrificial love...
 - And this is what God calls all of us to exhibit in our world and especially in our homes as those who have been redeemed by Jesus.
 - And He not only calls us to do it, but He gives us more and more grace that we might be able to do it more and more!

- Oh my brothers and sisters,
 - How grand it is to have Christ as your husband!
 - His call goes out to all of you who have ears to hear...
 - He calls you to enter into His house and to be a part of His bride.
 - It is in this house that you will find love and unity as God designed it to be at the beginning.
 - Will any of you be so foolish as to refuse Him?
 - At creation, before we were fallen, God brought Eve to complete Adam, and she was just right to do so...
 - but now that we are fallen, He has sent His Son from Heaven, and He has become bone of our bones and flesh of our flesh...
 - And now it is only in Him that Adam—mankind—can be complete.
 - It is not enough just that He has come in our flesh—we must be brought into covenant bonds with Him—
 - On our part, that means that we must answer His call to come and follow Him as our Master and to trust in His saving work on the cross for our pardon.
 - Without Him, we will never be complete—we will never be able to get out of the corruption and sin into which we have fallen.
 - But in Him, we have all the fullness of God's blessing—we are brought into His beautiful house to live with Him forever.
 - There is no other way for Adam to be complete.
 - In the garden, he must have Eve and now he must have Christ.