

Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage Sermon Series
"God's Perspective and Procedure for Marriage" (Genesis 2:18-25)
Pastor Robert Brandhagen

I. Our Problem is Seen from God's Perspective (2:18a)

¹⁸**The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone.**

Walter Brueggemann—In this "sharp secularization of the human creature" found in Genesis 2:18-25, God is not man's helper, though elsewhere in Scripture God is indeed man's helper (Psalm 121:1; Isaiah 41:10). Here however, the help man needs must come from "earthlings." "That the helper must be creature not creator shows to what extent creation is left to its own resources and expected to honor its vocation, explore its freedom, and respect the prohibition." The story in Gen 2:18-25 moves along systematically: being alone is not helpful, God will not be the needed helper, nor will animals provide the help the man needs.

Walter Brueggemann—"None of the known elements will suffice. There must be a newness. The good news of the episode is that the well-being of the man requires a fresh creative act of God. The emergence of woman is as stunning and unpredicted as the previous surprising emergence of the man. The woman is also God's free creation. Now the two creatures of surprise belong together. The place of the garden is for this covenanted human community of solidarity, trust, and well-being. They are *one!* That is, in covenant (2:24). The garden exists as a context for the human community."

Aloneness—that then, is our problem as seen from God's perspective. How can this problem be solved?

II. God's Solution to Our Problem is Seen in God's Procedure (2:18b-25)

I will make a helper suitable for him." ¹⁹**Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds in the sky. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name.** ²⁰**So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds in the sky and all the wild animals. But for Adam no suitable helper was found.** ²¹**So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and then closed up the place with flesh.** ²²**Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib x he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.** ²³**The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man."** ²⁴**That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh.**

Derek Kidner—" . . . the order is 'leaving' before 'cleaving;' marriage, nothing less, before (sexual relations). So this question . . . was settled from the beginning."

²⁵**Adam and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.**

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John Walton—Gen 2:25 is the link between chapter 2 and 3. Human nakedness is set in contrast to the serpent's craftiness. Their nakedness indicates a certain naivete. It is the "before" picture that must be seen next to the "after" picture of Gen 3:7.

Gen 3:7—"Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves."

Sermon-in-a-Sentence: Marriage is God's plan to solve the loneliness of man.

Big Question: Will you affirm and embrace Gods' will and way in marriage: the suitable helper as remedy to loneliness, the mandate to leave and cleave, and the pairing of the opposite sexes?

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