

XXI. God's Blueprint in Biblical Perspective
Foundations From Genesis

“A Theology of Marriage Part 2 – The Fall”

Genesis 2

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I will get to Genesis 2 by way of Ephesians 5 in this study. This whole series is built out of my heart, being led by the Spirit of God, for you to get excited about the book of Genesis for it's the most despised book in the world. I do believe out of all the books of the Bible this is the one that is most assaulted and attacked by the world of unbelief. It is not readily defended in the world of belief as well, but yet this book is so rich. Everything about the life of Christ that we need to know is found right here in the book of Genesis. In this book we have creation, the fall, and the promise of redemption unfolding to the glory of God. It's a glorious book to enjoy and one to use in discipleship.

I like to handle with topical exposition those things which I think are crucial and are to be built into your life. I believe these foundations in the book of Genesis – the sanctities of creation, life, God, man made in the image of God, man (male and female), gender and sexuality – are so crucial. Now, we come to this matter of the sanctity of marriage which we started in the last study as we looked at the theology of marriage from the creation. In this study we look at the issues of marriage from the fall. In the next study we'll look at the theology of marriage in terms of redemption – what does the Gospel do to reclaim marriage as a blessing for God's people, a blessing to the world of common grace, and a glorious statement of the majesty of our God. In this study we have to look at the problem and in the next study we'll look at the solution.

In this study I want to look at what sin has done to mar marriage. The curse of sin has distorted everything. It distorts our minds when we are born dead in our sins. It distorts the institutions that God has ordained. It distorts thinking, living, emotions and everything as man in rebellion against God begins the sophisticated journey to imbecility, professing to be wise we become fools. We see that in our culture of insanity, absurdity and lethality. Praise God for this possible ruling that is returning some amount of sanity and clarity concerning the sanctity of life, but I don't look for the ultimate deliverance through juris prudence or even legislation for it's the work of the Gospel in the hearts of men. I am grateful when God's grace allows the common grace of honoring the sanctity of life. You will see some of the most insane, distorted and absurd responses to this ruling toward the sanctity of life, if it is brought forth. We also live in a culture of immorality and all of it is rooted in profitability – people make money off of sin.

Wherever the Gospel goes and it begins to produce sanity in place of insanity, clarity in place of absurdity, life in place of lethality and then sexual morality in the context of marriage in the place of sexual immorality, promiscuity and perversion, then you will see the evil empire strike back because sin as become a money making venture. Money is being made in the killing of the unborn, the LGBTQ+ agenda, as you see big businesses weighing in to promote absurdity and insanity. We have seen this all throughout history.

We see this in Ephesus and we're about to see this in Scripture as Paul's letter started at the mother church and went out to the others in Asia Minor. The main mark of someone who has been won to Christ is they love to worship God in spirit and truth and idolatry will begin to fall by the wayside. Idolatry becomes unpopular and gets undercut. There were a lot of people

making money off of idolatry as they created the images of Diana, Artemis and others. They began losing money when the Gospel came in so they got up a riot to attack and persecute the church. I say all that to say this; I believe as you see the devolution and you see it move into a death spiral one of the great witnesses is the sobriety, integrity and the intentionality of believers living a Christian life. When those in our number face challenges we quickly come in with redemptive exhortation, restoration and reconciliation. When marriages and families disintegrate and the church comes in and does its work of discipleship the stability of the institution of creation is established and that's why I will move from the study of marriage to the study of family then to parenting. Those things become bulwarks of a testimony for Christ.

I do not believe the way we live for Christ preaches the Gospel. I believe it attracts to the Gospel and brings affirmation to the Gospel but you can't preach the Gospel without words. Certainly, live the Gospel, be saturated by the Gospel and driven by it, be empowered with the power of the Gospel, make your lives Gospel statements but preach/proclaim the Gospel by using words for they are necessary. Romans 10:17 says *[17] So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.* Yes, the lives of believers are imperfect and uneven but the importance of seeing the intentionality of men or women attempting to order their lives for their Savior because of His work to save them is a testimony for Him and this anticipates where I'm going to show what it means to be a Christian husband and Christian wife as a father and mother in parenting as we should be seeing this in the church of Jesus Christ. We are imperfect and uneven but we can be intentional and continual in pursuits and perseverance.

As we look at Ephesians 5, I would like for you to try and put yourself in Paul's position. Paul ministers to a church in Ephesus as this church is in a culture center that is absolutely engulfed in paganism and idolatry and all the consequences of the darkness that this paganism brings. It is also covered up with the sophistication of worldly philosophies. How do you disciple them? You want to make sure their personal lives are where they ought to be. When I pastored in Charlotte, the first expositional preaching I did was on the book of Ephesians and even though it only has six chapters, it took me five years to preach through it. I don't say that with pride at all for I really should have completed that much faster than that. Ephesians is such a glorious book.

Theologians will tell you when you study Ephesians that you will find the indicatives and then the imperatives. The first half of the book are the indicatives which are statements of facts of who you are in Christ because of what Christ did for you in His life, death and resurrection. The key phrase to look for in Ephesians 1-3 is 'in Christ' or 'Christ in you' or 'in the beloved' those various ways Paul talks about being in union with Christ. We are in Christ and Christ is in us and that's the shorthand of the Gospel. Ephesians 1:3-14 starts off with a doxology that is one sentence with 228 words. Then Paul builds on it as He talks about Christ in His people and in His church and the blessings that are ours in Him. Then he begins to unfold those blessings in those first three chapters of Ephesians.

Paul then starts out Ephesians 4:1 by saying, *[1] I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called.* This is where Paul moves to the imperatives in the last half of the book of Ephesians, but he doesn't tell you what to do for Christ with commands until he tells you what Christ has done for you in His glorious completed work of redemption, lest we think what we do, adds to what He does. What He did is what gives us the foundation, reason, and motivation to do what we do for Him, not for our salvation so then we get these glorious imperatives of the worthy walk.

Ephesians 4 talks about putting off the old man and putting on the new. Paul looks at our personal life. Ephesians 4:28-29 says [28] *Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need.* [29] *Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.* These are Gospel applications we apply to our lives. After he goes through the personal dynamics Paul then turns to the marriage, the family and spiritual warfare which is the Christian life – Ephesians 6:10-20. Then Paul gives the benediction.

Paul sums up our life together in Christ as God's people this way; Ephesians 5:21 says [21] *submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.* Our life is to be a worship statement. Our life is to be lived with reverence for Christ. One of the things in our life is submitting to one another, but that does not mean we are to give commandments to bind people's consciences. It does mean that we are coming alongside of each other – we are submitting to one another in the reverence of Christ. Where is one of the greatest places for us to see the submission we have to Christ and one another lived out? It is in marriage, so what does it mean to submit to one another in the fear of the Lord with reverence to Christ in a marriage?

Ephesians 5:22-33 says [22] *Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.* [23] *For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior.* [24] *Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands.*

[25] *Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her,* [26] *that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word,* [27] *so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.* [28] *In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.* [29] *For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church,* [30] *because we are members of his body.* [31] *“Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.”* [32] *This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.* [33] *However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.*

This is what we call a catholic epistle for it is written for the church universal and it's called Ephesians because it was first delivered to the church at Ephesus which was the mother church of all the churches in Asia Minor. When Paul is pastorally discipling people, equipping the saints with the ministry of the Word to do the work of ministry, here Paul deals with the theology of marriage and he goes right to Genesis 2:24 which is what he quotes in Ephesians 5:31. Do you think Paul thought the book of Genesis was myth or history? He thought it was history and knew it was inspired and inerrant for he lays Genesis 2:24 as the foundation.

In Mark 10 people come to trip up Jesus on the subject of divorce and Jesus corrects them about marriage as He gives them the right understanding about divorce. Jesus says to them in Mark 10:5-9, [5] *And Jesus said to them, “Because of your hardness of heart he wrote you this commandment.* [6] *But from the beginning of creation, ‘God made them male and female.’* [7] *‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife,’* [8] *and the two shall become one flesh.’ So they are no longer two but one flesh.* [9] *What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.”*

Paul tells husbands and wives both to do two things in this Ephesians 5 text. One, he tells wives to submit to their husbands in everything, meaning that the wife is the completer of her

husband not just in this area or that area or this day or that day, but the wife is his completer period. The wife is to come alongside of their husband in everything and follow the pattern of their husband to not be alone but to be a suitable helper to do the mandate, to live to the glory of God in everything so your submission is in everything. Yes, there are limitations which I will cover in the next study. The second thing the wife is to do is to honor and respect their husband. Proverbs 12:4 says *[4] An excellent wife is the crown of her husband, but she who brings shame is like rotteness (cancer) in his bones.* A wife is to honor and respect her husband with words and actions.

Here are the two things the husband is to do. One, he is to be a servant leader to his wife. You are the head of the wife so that means you lead her the way Christ led His bride which is servant leadership. The husband's symbol is a towel – a foot washer. Secondly, the husband is to love his wife the way Christ loves His bride and that's a sacrificial love. In a sense, isn't the husband to submit to his wife? Yes, and he does that by sacrificially loving her and by servant leadership. Then the wife is to be an example of submission in her relationship to her husband.

What is God's pattern for marriage? It is not two families coming together which we covered in the last study. In order for a marriage to succeed they leave to cleave to one another making a new family and their parents now become their extended family. They are one in Christ and that's their priority. If you don't leave you end up with one plus one equals six and if you don't cleave you get one plus one equals two, for cleave is the two becoming one. That is the way God set it up in creation.

Now we have a problem for creation didn't last long without the problem of sin. Sin has come and that's why Paul in Ephesians 5 moves to two exhortations. He challenges women in the area of submission, honor and respect. He challenges men in the area of sacrificial love (there is no bigger commitment) and servant leadership. The reasons for these challenges to men and women is because of sin. Now let's look in Genesis 3. Genesis 2 gives us the marriage and Genesis 3 gives us sin and sin has an impact in every area of life, including the area of the impact of a marriage because of what happens in the heart of the man and woman.

What is marriage? It is a monogamous, heterosexual, conjugal, covenantal relationship between a man and woman who have left their fathers and mothers and cleave together in the Lord. What does sin do? Satan will always attack God's people by attacking God's Word – its authority, inerrancy and sufficiency.

Genesis 3:1-13 says *[1] Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made.*

He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?" [2] And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, [3] but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'" (God didn't say anything about touching so she is misquoting Scripture and sure would have been nice if Adam would have stepped up here.) *[4] But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. [5] For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." [6] So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, (she now reverses the ministry of the husband to the wife for she now provides for him by giving him the fruit and he is silent on her actions and words) and she also gave some to her husband **who was with her**, and he ate. [7] Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked.*

And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths. (Up until then there sexuality was shameless and sacred and now it becomes shameful)

[8] And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. [9] But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?" [10] And he said, "I heard the sound of You in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself." (three things have just entered the world – guilt, shame and fear) [11] He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" [12] The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate." [13] Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

Not only do we see the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh and the boastful pride of life here which are the Satanic traps and draws to sin as he is deceptively at work and assaulting the Word of God, but you also see what we do instead of confessing sins – we cover up sin. They first tried to cover up with loin cloths and that didn't work because when the Lord came Adam said he was naked but he actually had loin cloths on. So, you see what we use to cover up sin never works but he still felt naked and ashamed and now he was fearful. Then they tried to hide in the trees – how many trees are we hiding behind? Perhaps it's materialism, consumerism, man made religion, etc. but they don't work either. Thirdly, they hide behind victimhood and we're living in a culture that has made victimhood an unbelievable industry – I'm not responsible, blaming others and blaming God for the situation they are in. My grandfather used to say 'you either fess up or cover up.' That's what we do with sin but our initial response is to cover up. Adam and Eve both cover up.

Genesis 3:14-19 says *[14] The LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field; on your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. (Here the spiritual warfare between Satan and God in the area of humanity is established) [15] I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring (seed) and her offspring (seed); he shall bruise your head (the seed of the woman who is Christ), and you shall bruise his heel." (There will be the passion of the Messiah and the suffering of the bruised heal but the lethal blow will be given against Satan by the Messiah so here is the first promise of the Gospel through a virgin birth because women don't have seed but it will cost the Messiah.)*

[16] To the woman He said, "I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be contrary to your husband, but he shall rule over you."

[17] And to Adam He said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife (Adam's primary sin – he didn't listen to the voice of the Lord, there was no spiritual leadership in his home) and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; (here pain is introduced into this world) [18] thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. [19] By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return." (Your death will be a reversal of your creation.)

I want to point out that for the woman instead of the joy of reproduction, there will be the agony of reproduction (Genesis 3:16). I don't think this just applies to the physical aspect of labor pains but also of the whole reality of child bearing, unless God changes one's heart – it is

seen as something to be avoided and not something to be embraced, even as we see it in our society today. I'm not dealing with the issues of contraception right now but it's just that children will not be seen as a blessing and the bringing forth of them as a blessing unless God works in the heart. The instinct will be the bothersome of it and the agony of it.

The other part of Genesis 3:16 is the issue we have to face in marriage - *Your desire shall be contrary to your husband, but he shall rule over you.* We will deal with this in the next study when we look at redemption and the Gospel and why the Gospel reverses this. How does the woman see the man after sin? The Hebrew word for desire in this verse is not the meaning you think it is. This word is only used three times – once in Song of Solomon, once in Genesis 3:16 and once in Genesis 4.

Genesis 4:1-7 says [1] *Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, saying, "I have gotten a man with the help of the LORD."* [2] *And again, she bore his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, and Cain a worker of the ground.* [3] *In the course of time Cain brought to the LORD an offering of the fruit of the ground, [4] and Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat portions (brought the tithe and offering). And the LORD had regard for Abel and his offering, [5] but for Cain and his offering he had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his face fell (a spiritual depression of anger).* [6] *The LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? [7] If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, **sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is contrary to you, but you must rule over it.**"*

Sin is crouching at the door – sounds like a lion. The predator on your life is sin and it's crouching at the door. This predator wants the prey and you are the prey – its desire is for you, but you must rule over it. The reality is he can't rule over it and that's why God sends His Son who will defeat it. Sin is there to attack and assault you. The word rule here is better translated in the New American Standard when it says 'you must *master* it.' Genesis 4:7b I think would be better stated this way; Its desire is for you... because it's a predatorial statement and not a longing of affection statement. But you must rule or master over it... In other words, the woman by the sin curse has an inbred desire to control, master her husband – not complete but compete, not compliment but conquer. That is the Eve principle that a woman is born with.

That is why Paul addresses a Christian marriage for in a Christian marriage the woman is to submit and come alongside, complete not compete, honor and respect not rule and conquer. In other words you can't understand the calling and the focus of a Gospel driven Christian marriage unless you understand what it is eradicating because of the fall and what God's original design of marriage is to be.

Going back to Genesis 3:16 which says [16] *To the woman He said, "I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be contrary to your husband, but **he shall rule over you.**"* The word rule here could be translated in its noun form tyrant, therefore in its verb form it could be translated tyrannize. What does the man do with the faculties built into him in creation? The difference is biologically and instinctively for because of sin man (the husband) will intimidate or tyrannize his wife and they will do this one of two ways – ignore them and lead them into the winds of the world, instead of protect them or intimidate them. The statistics are rising in both of these categories in our world today of sinful abuse and sinful abandonment. What is God's remedy? It is the Christian man as a Christian husband for he doesn't tyrannize or ignore or intimidate. He shepherds in servant leadership. He washes her feet. He washes her with the water of the Word. He lays down his life for her. He loves her as Christ loves the church.

So, here we see how the fall as impacted God's design of marriage in distortion and destruction, but God's remedy is Jesus who not only changes our lives to make us men and women of God but changes our hearts and lives so that as men of God we love our wives sacrificially. We combat the effects of sin intentionally by servant leadership and sacrificial love. A woman combats that Eve principle that is built in because of sin to saying 'no' to competing, conquering and being conquered and comes alongside with the dignity of the Lord as to the Lord to honor her husband with her trust in the Lord alone. That is what He calls us to do and this is what I will build on in the next study as we move from the theology of marriage in creation, dealing with the fall and its impact to how God reverses it in redemption. Let's pray.

Prayer:

Father, thank You for the moments we could be together in Your Word and the joy of fellowship together in Christ. Lord, thank You for the clarity of Your Word and for the way the pieces fit together through Christ in His redeeming work. I pray Lord that You would establish Godly men and women as they enter into singleness, marriages and their marriages will be patterned from Your Word to reflect the glorious marriage of Christ and His bride – His church, for I pray this in Jesus' Name, Amen.