

Remember God's Purposes! Gen 2:18-25

Before we get going, I want to take a minute to update you on our capital campaign and build-out that's coming up (**giving chart**)

You can see on the envelope in your bulletin, that our Phase 2 Completion Gift is coming up March 2-3, and we're close

\$2.25M was given last year at this time with the Sacrificial Gift, leaving \$1.25M needed to get started on Phase 2

And just to refresh your memory (**schematic**), Phase 2 is the portion shown in blue on this lay-out – situated on the north end of our building

And a closer view (**schematic**) shows 2 stories of classrooms at the front, a gym in the middle, and 2 stories of offices at the back

And speaking of the gym, Jeremy Hickman, our Campus Pastor in West Davenport . . .

Told us that their access to a gym last week was a “game changer” in their Student Ministries; Allowing for dynamics and interactions they've never had

And we anticipate the same here

And just to give you a better view, take a look at this 3D rendering (**video**)

(**Giving chart**) That's what we're looking to give toward and start construction on this Spring; So if you haven't already . . .

Would you be praying and considering what God would have you give?

Many of you continue to give regularly, which is awesome – and now we're hoping to *finish* the goal with a lump sum, and break ground

• That said, let's turn to Gen 2:18-25 (**title slide**)

I came to the conclusion the other day that I'm an 80's *rocker* at heart; I love the music And I think that's one of the reasons I so resonate with a contemporary style of worship

• I'm also pretty sure it's one of the reasons I choose “**All Out Of Love**” as the title for our marriage series the next 6 weeks

It's an 80's song that comes from a band named . . .? That's right – Air Supply

And just to make sure you're well cultured and living in the past like I am, take a look at this **video** (Air Supply – “All Out of Love”)

I have to admit – I own their Greatest Hits album

• And while it's a nice love song and blast from the past, unfortunately it describes far too many *marriages* today – they're all out of love; Maybe even yours (**Intro**)

You've lost that lovin' feeling, you've lost perspective, you're tired, and you want more You want a *real* husband; You want a *good* wife; You want to be happy again

And a few of you don't even care anymore; You're so out of love, you could care less

If that's you, I want you to know there's *hope*; There's hope that you can get back to where u started from, and do marriage – *all out of love*; In the *best* sense of the phrase Not out of duty; Not out of drudgery; Not out of obligation; But out of *love*; Filled with feelings of affection, and hope, and trust; You can get back to that

• But in order to do so, you have get back to the basics; You have to regain perspective Just like a sports team that's on a losing streak; What do they do? They get back to the basics

- So whether you're all *out* of love in marriage, or just wanting to extend more of it, or wanting to make the most of it when you *do* get married . . .

It starts by remembering what it's all about; By remembering God's *purposes*

So follow along with me as I read Gen 2:18-25

[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. [22] And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. [23] 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.” [24] Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. [25] And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

If you're familiar with Genesis, this is the final act of creation where God institutes what the Bible later refers to as *marriage* – the exclusive union of a man/woman for life Not a man and a man by the way; Or a *woman* and a woman; But a *man* and a woman That's marriage

And God intends for it to fulfill certain purposes; 4 of which are found right here in Gen 2 Purposes, that if you *remember* them, will go a long way toward a marriage that's all – out of love

The first of which is . . .

Purpose #1 – To satisfy your desire for companionship (v18a)

V18 says – *It is not good that man should be alone*; And every time I read that, I think, “A-men; I hate being away from Becky;” It's not good; Why

B/c we are *hard*-wired for companionship – all of us; Men and women alike

So much so, that *up* to that point in creation, God had looked on everything he created, and *saw that it was good*; But when he created Adam he said – *It is not good* Not referring to Adam, but to his *loneliness*

- Having been created in God's image, Adam had a built-in desire for companionship; B/c there's companionship within the godhead – between Father, Son, and Holy Spirit So made in the *image* of God, Adam had the same affinity

And as his offspring, we're no different; We too have an aversion for loneliness and desire companionship

Why do you think there are so many bars, and clubs, and social organizations?

And why do you think solitary confinement is such an extreme form of punishment?

B/c the desire for companionship isn't being met

We *need* each other, because God designed us that way

- Now, that doesn't mean that if you're single or divorced you have to suffer through loneliness until your wedding day – not at all
Your desire for companionship can and should be satisfied through healthy *friendships* – especially friendships in the body of Christ, the church
But for those who *are* married, God has given you an even *greater* opportunity to satisfy that desire; One you shouldn't take for granted

So even if you're all out of love, remember God's provision to satisfy your desire for companionship, and his purpose for *you* – to satisfy your *spouse's*

2nd, remember God's purpose . . .

Purpose #2 – To meet your need for partnership (v18b)

18b – *I will make him a helper fit for him*; A helper; Why a helper?

B/c Adam needed *help* to fulfill the responsibilities God had given him

Responsibilities of subduing the earth; And filling it; And multiplying (Gen 1:28)

The animals were helpful and useful to a point

But he needed someone to take *ownership* with him – someone who could *share* the responsibilities; To accomplish *together* what he couldn't do alone

So God created a partner – Eve

And when you put this together with 1 Pet 3:7 which says that wives are the weaker vessel and husbands should live with them in an understanding way . . .

It's apparent that we need *each other*

- Husbands, you *need* your wife's help and partnership to successfully fulfill your calling and responsibilities – just like Adam needed Eve to fulfill his
(And every wife in here is thinking – “Preach it Pastor, preach it!”)
You need her help; You need her help to share burdens, and accomplish tasks, and make decisions, and deal with life

If you don't, you're either living in denial, or you're not doing all that God has called you to do; You're not the father, leader, provider, or servant that God *wants* you to be

If you were, you'd be *asking* for her help

That's the implication of this text – Adam *needed* help

- And wives, you do too
Most often in the form of support and encouragement from your husband, to flourish in your giftedness and flower in your roles
And help you handle the ups and downs of life
As the weaker vessel, you need your husband's help and partnership
If you don't, you *too* are living in denial or abdicating your responsibilities
- So if God has wired you for marriage, and I believe that he has for most people – then you need help, *both* of you; To accomplish *together*, what you can't do separately
That's what partnership is all about; And the sooner you admit it, the better off you'll be

Admit your need for partnership; And remember God's purpose in marriage, to supply it

3rd, remember God's purpose . . .

Purpose #3 – To gratify your longing for relationship (v18b-23)

18b – *I will make a helper fit for him*; Someone suitable for Adam; Someone like him;

Someone comparable to him

God was higher than he was, and the animals were lower than he was, leaving *him* in no man's land

And the implication is that while Adam was naming the animals, he was actually *looking* for someone like himself; There was a longing

B/c it says in v20b that when he finished – *There was not found a helper fit for him*

- Have you ever wondered why God had him looking in the first place? He obviously *knew* none of the animals would suffice
I think it was his way of increasing Adam's desire and anticipation for Eve
Or, on a lighter note, his way of stretching the patience Adam would need, when Eve did show up; And went shopping for clothes with her

Whatever the reason for the naming part, someone suitable wasn't found

So God stepped in with a pretty amazing solution, and made *Eve* from Adam's rib (22)

Someone who was both *like* him, and *opposite* him; That's what *fit* for means in

Hebrew – “according to the opposite of” or “like-opposite”

Like him b/c she was part of his flesh and blood, with the ability to think, the capacity for emotions, and the responsibility to subdue the earth – just like him

But she was *opposite* him in terms of her physical fit and emotional chemistry

Something another man or animal, could *never* be; She was a fit

- And then comes the big presentation when God brought her to him – a sort of walking down the aisle by her heavenly Father
And it's Adam's response in v23 that indicates even *more* of his longing – *This at last* [he says] *is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh*
IOW my search for *relationship* is over – finally, here's someone who's my equal in the sense of being spiritually alive and created in God's image, just like me

- You see, God not only wired us to desire *companionship* and need *partnership*, but to long for *relationship* – a connection with someone
That's the difference between companionship, partnership, and relationship
Companionship can be satisfied by a person's *presence*; And partnership by a person's *help*; But relationship can only be satisfied with a fit, a connection

And when Adam saw Eve, he felt it; Just like *you* did when you first met *your* spouse

And like I did when I met Becky – she made me feel like no other person ever had; And

I didn't know the half of it; We were made for each other

And so are you; Don't give up on that; *Cultivate* your relationship; *Cultivate* your friendship; *Cultivate* your connection; Work at it

B/c it's a gift of God to gratify your longing, and one of his *purposes* for you, in marriage

4th, remember God's purpose . . .

Purpose #4 – To fulfill your yearning for intimacy (v24-25)

I'm not going to spend a long time here, b/c we're going to talk more about this in the weeks to come; But he says in v24 . . .

Therefore (i.e. because a husband and wife are suitable for one another, because they're a fit, b/c they're like and opposite at the same time) . . . *they shall become one flesh*

They shall be knit together heart and soul, through a physical and sexual union

A union that's the pinnacle of their bond, and the complete satisfaction of their yearning

That's God's design, for marriage; And marriage alone

There's no mention of anything else as a legitimate, God-sanctioned expression of our sexuality, anywhere else in the Bible

- But here's the thing – one-flesh intimacy doesn't just happen; Sex doesn't automatically lead to the intimacy we were created to yearn for
Certainly that's true *outside* of marriage; But it's also true *inside* of marriage
Outside of marriage, sex clouds your judgment (Rom 1:21-22), hardens your heart (Heb 3:13), and subjects you to God's wrath (Heb 13:4; 1 Thess 4:6)
Definitely not leading to the fullness of intimacy that God intends

And *inside* of marriage, it requires that you make each other the sole focus of your desires
That you focus all your sexual energy and passion on your *spouse*, and your spouse alone; Not on someone else's spouse; Not on someone else's body . . .
Not on someone imaginary; Not on pornography; But on one another

Then and only then will sex be more than just physical gratification

Then and only then will you begin to fulfill your yearning for intimacy; Not to mention your spouse's; It's one of God's purposes

And then last, remember God's purpose in marriage . . .

Purpose #5 – To magnify the relationship between Christ and the church (Eph 5:32)

Found in Eph 5, this wasn't on *Moses'* radar screen when he recorded the creation account – but it was obviously on God's, knowing the end from the beginning

And it's too significant to leave out when talking about God's purposes in marriage

So in **Eph 5:31-32**, the Apostle Paul is talking about the relationship between husbands and wives, and he comes to this conclusion

Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife [he's quoting Gen 2:24], *and the two shall become one flesh. This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.*

I'm saying, Paul says, that this marriage thing is a picture of Christ's relationship with

us – his people, the church; Which means, your marriage is not just about you

And not just about your spouse

There's more to it than warm "fuzzies," and 2 people trying to meet one another's needs

Did you realize that? You represent; Whether you want to or not

Your marriage is intended to be a mirror image of Christ's relationship with the church, and the church's relationship with Christ*****

- Which means, husbands – to the extent you love your wife, you show or display the love of *Christ* for the church

And wives – to the extent you submit to and respect your husband, you display the submission and respect of the *church*, for Christ (Eph 5:24)

And to the extent that we fail in this – we shame the name of Jesus, we portray something unintended, and we miss an opportunity to encourage those around us

It would be like adding a mustache to the Mona Lisa, and acting like it was intended

Not only would it diminish the impact of the painting itself, but it would offend the painter, and rob the viewers of the joy and blessing they would otherwise have

And the same is true when we make a mess of our marriages

- So whether you're all *out* of love, or just wanting more . . .

Remember that one of God's purposes in marriage, is to magnify the relationship between his Son, and his people (**Summary**)

And whatever you do, don't lose hope; Air Supply aside – you can have a marriage *all*, out of *love*; Filled and fueled in the best sense of the phrase

Where God uses *you*, to accomplish his purposes in one another, for his glory

Pray – Lord, help us in our marriages; Remind us of your purposes; Find us appreciating your provision for companionship; Accepting our need for partnership; Cultivating our relationship; Protecting our intimacy; And reflecting your love for us; Help us God – for your glory and our joy, we want better marriages

And as we give now, use our tithes and offerings to further your work in this respect

Close – Love & Respect; WinterJam; Giving weekend March 2-3; Visitor Bags