



THE PILLARS OF MARRIAGE

MEN OF THE WORD | GRACE COMMUNITY CHURCH

PILLAR 1 – COMPLETION: IT IS NOT GOOD FOR MAN TO BE ALONE

The Bible makes it clear that marriage is a good thing. It is a source of joy. Marriage and family are an expression of the love, care and grace of our Creator for a creation that is underserving, increasingly unappreciative, and oblivious to the great gift that has been given to us.

- **Proverbs 5:18** – “... rejoice in the wife of your youth.”
- **Proverbs 12:4** – “An excellent wife is the crown of her husband...”
- **Proverbs 18:22** – “He who finds a wife finds a good thing and obtains favor from the LORD.”

WHO CREATED US?

Genesis 1:1 – “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”

This question, “Who created us?” is fundamentally important. The “theory of evolution” is a weak and silly attempt to cut a Creator out of the process of the initiation of life on this planet. It takes as much faith to believe evolution (a theory created by man) as it does to believe the Genesis 1 creation account. If there is a Creator, we are bound to submit to the rules, purposes, and roles established by Him. Evolution replaces God as Creator with nobody so that humans can assume the role of establishing the purposes and process of life and morality. Sinful man has long disregarded, then rejected, and now hates the idea of creation and all its implications. This is necessary as a predicate for lifestyles that reject the created order.

WHY A MAN?

Genesis lays out the creation of vegetation (plants, trees, etc.) and living creatures in the water (fish), on the land (animals), and in the air (birds). In the details the purpose and design of the creator becomes clear. To understand why man was created, the context of the rest of the creation process is important (day 3 – vegetation, Genesis 1:11–12; day 5 – fish and birds, Genesis 1:20–22; day 6 – animals in Genesis 1:24–25).

There was a pattern:

- **Intent:** God created them according to His precise design and purpose.
- **Reproduction:** “seeds,” “...after their kind...”, “...be fruitful and multiply...”
- **Perfection:** “It was good” – it could be no other way. God is good (1 Timothy 4:4).

It was all amazingly structured, ordered, and designed to reproduce and replenish. The supply of vegetation and living creatures in the sea, in the air, and on the earth were designed to automatically reproduce. Why? It was for us!

- **Genesis 1:26–31** – “Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’²⁷ God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.²⁸ God blessed them; and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’²⁹ Then God said, ‘Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of all the earth, and every tree which has fruit yielding seed; it shall be food for you;’³⁰ and to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the sky and to everything that moves on the earth which has life, I have given every green plant for food’; and it was so.³¹ God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good.

Why are you and I here? Why man? God’s creation of man is of profound import. Man was created in God’s image – *imago dei*. Humans consist of two sexes—male and female—both in God’s image. God blessed both male and female and, in the form of five commands, he explains why He created them:

1. Be fruitful – have babies!
2. Multiply – generational family
3. Fill the earth – no such thing as over-population.
4. Subdue the earth – dominion over God-created resources and beauty.
5. Rule over all other living things (v26 and v28) – They are here for us!

WHY A WOMAN?

Why did God create a woman? The most obvious reason is that the first three commands could not be accomplished by a male. The next reason is laid out clearly in Genesis 2. It is not good for man to be alone!

- **Genesis 2:18–23** – *“Then the Lord God said, ‘It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him.’¹⁹ Out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the sky, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called a living creature, that was its name.²⁰ The man gave names to all the cattle, and to the birds of the sky, and to every beast of the field, **but for Adam there was not found a helper suitable for him.**²¹ So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh at that place²² The Lord God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and 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, because she was taken out of Man.’”*

For a man, the only way to fully satisfy the Creator’s purpose and design for man is in marriage. For a woman, the only God-ordained context to fulfill the unique role and influence of a woman is in marriage. The creation of, and interaction between, man and woman (“*male and female He created them...*”) is established at creation entirely in the context of marriage and family. The man was alone—and that was not good. This was a perfect incompleteness. It was not a mistake or an oversight by the Creator. Genesis 2:19–20 show the process of Adam coming to the realization of his incompleteness which adds to the import (and joy) of verse 23.

WHY MARRIAGE?

Genesis 2:24 establishes the institution of marriage and highlights that the man and woman were created for marriage. Marriage is simply and clearly defined in Genesis 2 for all mankind—before sin entered the world.

- **Genesis 2:24–25** – *“For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.”*

Marriage as defined by God:

1. **Completion:** It is not good for man to be alone. God created a helper to complete him. Man was created to be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, subdue the earth, and rule over all living things. The woman was created to join in that mission as an equal to Adam (the image of God), as a helper, and as a member of the marriage union accomplishing together what could not be accomplished without her. All of this is the fulfillment of God’s creative design and purpose for our good and for His glory.
2. **Exclusivity:** Man leaves his family.
3. **Union:** *To be joined to his wife...* Starts a new family unit. The husband and wife are a complete family. He is to leave/sever/disassociate from his family unit to create a new family unit
4. **Physical:** *One flesh* – marital relations (exclusivity) and procreation – multiply and fill the earth
5. **Joyful:** There is joy, innocence, and peace in marriage knowing that the Creator/Designer made you for just this!

God designed and created men with a need and desire for marriage. Whether men can articulate it, or will articulate it, they need a helper. To create and accomplish Genesis 1:28 it takes two! It is not good to be alone. This is not a cultural construct. Adam’s loneliness as recorded in Genesis 2:20 was by perfect design.

Some thoughts and questions for married men to consider:

1. **Humility** – Remember you were incomplete by design. You needed a helper. In God’s perfect design, you still do. Have you acknowledged that? Have you told your wife that? Have you explained that to your children?

2. **Gratitude** – When did you last thank God for your wife? When did you last thank your wife? (Not just Valentines Day and your anniversary!) Does your gratitude extend beyond words to how you treat her? Does she know through your daily interactions with her that you are grateful to, and for, her? Your children should hear and see that also.
3. **Fidelity** – Keep your vows! Remember the promises you made to her when you were pursuing her and the day she walked down the aisle to complete you. Divorce is not an option. Stop thinking about how you get out of the marriage – exclude all of that from your thoughts and speech. Instead, everything is geared towards a lifelong oneness as God designed it. Remember what you came together to accomplish.
4. **Dependance** – Cling/cleave to your wife. Not just physically. There should be a mutual need for each other emotionally, intellectually, socially, and relationally. Remove any option to do otherwise. Go all in. No alternative. No option.

WHY SINGLENESS?

Singleness is defined in 1 Corinthians 7 simply as “unmarried.” This refers to those who were never married, those who are divorced, and those who are widowers. Singleness is not a curse. It is actually a great joy if it is for the right reasons. Jesus gave us three categories to describe those who go through adulthood as a single person.

- **Matthew 19:10–12** – *“The disciples said to Him, ‘If the relationship of the man with his wife is like this, it is better not to marry.’ But He said to them, ‘Not all men can accept this statement, but only those to whom it has been given. For there are **eunuchs who were born that way** from their mother’s womb; and there are **eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men**; and there are also **eunuchs who made themselves eunuchs** for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. He who is able to accept this, let him accept it.’”*

Eunuch = “one who abstains from marriage” (e.g., the Ethiopian eunuch of Acts 8).

1. *“Born that way”*
2. *“Made eunuchs by men”*
3. *“Made themselves eunuchs”*

Jesus puts everyone who is not married into three categories and then says, whichever one describes you, accept it! What does “for the sake of the kingdom of heaven” (Matt 19:12) mean?

- **1 Corinthians 7:32–35** – *“But I want you to be free from concern. One who is unmarried is **concerned about the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord**; but one who is married is concerned about the things of the world, how he may please his wife, and his interests are divided. The woman who is unmarried, and the virgin, is **concerned about the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and spirit**; but one who is married is concerned about the things of the world, how she may please her husband. This I say for your own benefit; not to put a restraint upon you, but to promote what is appropriate and to secure **undistracted devotion to the Lord**.”*

Singleness is a reflection of the providence of God. It can also be a reflection of disobedience.

Thoughts for single men:

1. Marriage is not for everyone (1 Corinthians 7:8, 25–27).
2. Singleness is a gift from God (1 Corinthians 7:7).
3. Singleness should be a means to enormous effectiveness—undistracted devotion to the Lord (1 Corinthians 7:35).
4. The providence of God is undefeated.
5. Marital status is not an indicator of maturity or happiness (1 Corinthians 7:40).

THOUGHTS FOR ALL MEN – MARRIED AND SINGLE

1. You were created, with rare exception, to be a husband and a father.

This has become a controversial statement – even in the modern church. As noted earlier, the entire context in the creation of man and woman was marriage and family and after the God of the universe declared that it was not good for a man to be alone.

Martin Luther, in “The Estate of Marriage” (1522) comments on the statement “*Male and female He created them*”:

"...after God had made man and woman he blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply" [Gen. 1:28]. From this passage we may be assured that man and woman should and must come together in order to multiply. Now [be fruitful and multiply] is just as inflexible as the first, and no more to be despised and made fun of than the other, since God gives it his blessing and does something over and above the act of creation. Hence, as it is not within my power not to be a man, so it is not my prerogative to be without a woman. Again, as it is not in your power not to be a woman, so it is not your prerogative to be without a man. For it is not a matter of free choice or decision but a natural and necessary thing, that whatever is a man must have a woman and whatever is a woman must have a man.

"Therefore, just as God does not command anyone to be a man or a woman but creates them the way they have to be, so he does not command them to multiply but creates them so that they have to multiply. And, wherever men try to resist this, it remains irresistible nonetheless and goes its way through fornication, adultery, and secret sins, for this is a matter of nature and not of choice."

2. Honor Marriage – Hebrews 13:4 – *"Marriage is to be held in honor among all."*

View marriage as God views marriage. Elevate, biblically define, embrace, appreciate, and be thankful for marriage.

- **Fathers** – talk to your sons and daughters about their mother. Praise her. Honor her. Express your thankfulness for her and for marriage. By doing that, you show your sons what matters when they are looking for a spouse someday. By watching your marriage relationship, do your children see the blessings, joys, and commitment of marriage?
- **Older men** – do you help younger men understand the role and place of marriage and family? Do you encourage, help, and teach God's view? Do you model it? It is so important that older men make themselves available to younger men who are wrestling through the issues of singleness and marriage. This is not just an area where "the elders" are to be the only resource.

3. Honor the High Value and Role of Women

This is an emphasis in our next session as we consider more deeply the rest of the statement that it was not good for man to be alone and then God created a "helper." There must be a recognition of the high value and role of women on this planet by the creator's design. They are fellow heirs of the grace of God. They were created in the image of God just like men were. Proverbs 31 speaks to the responsibility to see, recognize, and even praise the unique role and influence of a woman of character and skill. If you are married, honor your wife. Recognize her value, worth, and skill. She helps you. She endures your flawed and weak leadership. Be motivated to make that easier for her as you grow in your leadership and in your service to her and your family. Show a watching world what all this is supposed to look like! It should be attractive to your children and neighbors. Recognize, if you have not before, what a gift your wife is from a loving and kind God.

4. Be Content

Whatever your marital status, we have seen repeatedly in Matthew 19 and 1 Cor 7 that there is the call to be content. Maybe not complacent, but content. This is true of marital status. It is also true about family status. The Lord may bring a spouse, and not children. Be content.

- **1 Corinthians 7:17** – *"Only, as the Lord has assigned to each one (married or single), as God has called each, in this manner let him walk."*

A natural product of contentment is gratitude. Thank God for the wife of your youth. Thank God now for the wife He might bring you. Thank your wife for choosing you! Thank her for her help—past, present, and future.

FURTHER CONSIDERATION – QUESTIONS

1. How do you reconcile the statement that marriage is completion with the command to be complete in Christ (Col. 1:28)?
2. Read Matthew 19:1–12. What are the applications to your marriage? Or your singleness?
3. Read 1 Corinthians 7. What are the applications to your marriage? Or your singleness?
4. What are practical ways you can "honor marriage" in your daily life?

Audio, video, and handouts for this session: www.gracechurch.org/motw

Next meeting: October 15, "Evening of Prayer" (fellowship and refreshments on the patio begins at 6:15pm)