



God's Design for Marriage

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Created in God's image

God created man in his own image,
in the image of God he created him;
male and female he created them.

And God blessed them. And God said
to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and
fill the earth and subdue it and have
dominion over the fish of the sea and
over the birds of the heavens and over
every living thing that moves on the
earth." (Genesis 1:27-28)

Needed: a suitable helper

The Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature... The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it... Then the Lord God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.” ... 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. (Genesis 2:7-20)

Flesh of my flesh

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. And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. 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.” (Genesis 2:21-23)

One flesh

Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed. (Genesis 2:24-25)

Sexual union, not just partnership

- One flesh is essential to marriage; sex is not forbidden fruit.
- Having babies is a divine mandate, not a dirty necessity.
- A wife's body belongs to her husband and a husband's body belongs to his wife. They should give their bodies to each other regularly and satisfy each other's desires. (1 Corinthians 7:3-5)
- Song of Songs celebrates sensuality.

Union between humans, not human with animal

- No animal was suitable as a spouse for Adam. None imaged God as Adam did. None had a body and mind to match Adam's. None could produce offspring with him to fill and rule the earth. The man needed a fellow human.
- Sexual contact between humans and animals (bestiality) perverts God's design and is cursed in Scripture. (Leviticus 18:23, Deuteronomy 27:21)

Union of man and woman, not same-sex union

- Jesus said, “At the beginning the Creator made them male and female.” (Matt 19:4)
- You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination. (Lev 18:22)
- Women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men. (Romans 1:26-27)

One man and one woman, not many partners

- Jesus, echoing Genesis, did not say that *many* become one flesh but that "the *two* will become one flesh." (Mark 10:8)
- No polygamy, marrying various spouses

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- Jesus, echoing Genesis, did not say that many become one flesh but that "the *two* will become one flesh." (Mark 10:8)
- **No polygamy:** marrying various spouses
- **No promiscuity:** Do you not know that he who is joined to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, "The two will become one flesh." (1 Cor 6:16)
- God designed sex for one man and one woman to become one in body and one in spirit through marriage. (Malachi 2:15)

A lifelong union, not a disposable relationship

- Jesus says, “What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate... Because of your hardness of heart Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. And I say to you: whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery.” (Matthew 19:6-9)
- A wife must not separate from her husband. But if she does, she must remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband. And a husband must not divorce his wife. (1 Cor 7:10-11)

What marriage is—and isn't

- Sexual union, not just partnership
- Union of humans, not human with animal
- Man and woman, not same-sex union
- One man and one woman, not many partners: no polygamy or promiscuity
- A lifelong union, not a disposable relationship: no divorce

Interdependence

- She shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. (Genesis 2:23).
- The man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living.
(Genesis 3:20)
- In the Lord woman is not independent of man nor man of woman; for as woman was made from man, so man is now born of woman. And all things are from God.
(1 Corinthians 11:11-12)

Equality of Christian husband and wife

- Equally created in God's image
- Equally saved and adopted in Christ
- Equally indwelt by the Holy Spirit
- Equal in character, capability, and calling to serve God and influence others
- Equally royal and destined to reign
- Equally united to each other

Husband as leader

- Adam was formed first, then Eve. (1 Tim 2:13)
- Man did not come from woman, but woman from man; neither was man created for woman, but woman for man. (1 Cor 11:7-9).

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- They should ask their own husbands at home. (1 Corinthians 14:35)
- Adam named Eve. Naming is an act of authority. Many women take their husband's last name, honoring him as head.

Male and female imaging God

- God the Father and Christ are united and equal, with the Father leading and Christ responding.
- Likewise, husband and wife are to be united and equal, with the husband leading and the wife responding.
- "The head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God." (1 Corinthians 11:3)
- "God created man in his own image... male and female he created them" (Gen 1:27).

Marriage pictures Christ and his church

The husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. (Ephesians 5:23)

“Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. (Eph 5:31-32)

Adam's Bride and Christ's Bride

- Adam's bride was taken from his side. She was flesh of his flesh.
- Christ's bride, the church, received its being from Jesus' side, pierced on a cross for his people. The church is flesh of his flesh.
- Adam got a bride by being put to sleep and then being raised up again.
- Christ got his bride, the church, by entering the sleep of death and rising again.

Husband Pictures Christ

The husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior... Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her. (Ephesians 5:25)

The way a husband relates to his wife pictures how Christ relates to his church. The picture may be true or it may be false; but either way, a husband can't help picturing Christ.

Wife pictures church's submission to Christ

Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord... Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. (Eph 5:22,24)

A wife's response to her husband pictures the church's response to Christ. The picture may be lovely or it may be ugly, but either way, a wife can't help sending a message about the church's response to Christ.

Healthy headship

- It is my **Father** who glorifies me. (John 8:54)
- **Christ** loved the church and gave himself up for her so that he might present the church to himself in splendor. (Eph 5:25,27)
- Husbands should love their wives as **their own bodies**. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body. (Eph 5:28-30)

Ultimate romance

- Set me as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your arm, for love is strong as death... Its flashes are flashes of fire, the very flame of the Lord. (Song of Songs 8:6)
- This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church. (Eph 5:32)
- As a bridegroom rejoices over his bride, so will your God rejoice over you. (Isaiah 62:5).
- The wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. (Rev 19:7).