

“The Gift of Marriage” (Genesis 2:18–25)

September 11, 2001 is a day that Americans will never forget. No doubt you remember where you were when terrorists attacked our country and we lost over 400 community servants and almost 3,000 civilians. This was a devastating day! Ten years later we still grieve for those who lost precious loved ones. The tragic events of 9/11 also led to wars that resulted in the subsequent deaths of more than 6,000 soldiers, 2,300 contractors, and hundreds of thousands of Afghans and Iraqis. We hurt for those who lost spouses, parents, and friends. In addition to the loss of life, the financial cost of 9/11 and its aftermath are now estimated to reach more than \$5 trillion.¹ The tragic attack on 9/11 has forever marked us as a nation. But what is the underlying, most permanent consequence of 9/11? To put it simply and bluntly: 9/11 has unraveled, even demolished, the security of our nation. People are anxious, paranoid, and even panicked. Things will never be the same again!

Yet, there is another attack having an even more devastating impact on our nation than 9/11. While we have been concerned about external attacks from antagonists, an internal attack has been going on right underneath our noses in our churches. The attack is on our marriages. It is a stealth attack that we rarely even recognize as dangerous. However, we ought to recognize the real threat that we possess to undermine our nation’s security and strength. The core of our nation’s strength is our marriages. Our nation, our church, and our families are only as strong as our marriages. Enough weak marriages add up to a weak nation, a weak church, and a weak family. But Gen 2:18–25 states that *God created your marriage for blessing and impact*. In these eight verses Moses provides two essential truths about marriage.

1. Marriage is God’s idea (2:18–20). God intended your marriage to fulfill God’s kingdom agenda and your need for companionship. Now, if you’re in a bad marriage it’s not because God had a bad idea. Marriage is His ideal. It’s the partners in a marriage who turn it from an ideal into an ordeal. In 2:18 Moses writes: **“Then the LORD God [Yahweh] said,² ‘It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him.’”** Before we consider this verse, it is important to note the word “not” (*lo*) as in, “It is not good for the man to be alone.” Seven times in chapter 1 God described His creation as “good” (1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31), but now He abruptly and definitively says, “It is not good.”³ This expression always amuses me because when my oldest son, Joshua, was a child, whenever we would ask him how he was doing, he would respond with a gruff, “Not good!” Similarly, I can almost hear God saying, “Not good! It is not good for the man to be alone.” Interestingly, there is no indication that Adam himself was dissatisfied with his circumstances. He is likely oblivious of his need. It is God who determines that it is not good for man to be alone.⁴

Think about it: Here’s a sinless man, in perfect fellowship with God, in a perfect environment. What more could he want? Isn’t that enough? Not according to God! God’s evaluation was that the man needed a human companion to correspond to him. Sometimes pious people say that if you’re lonely, there must be something wrong with your spiritual life. But God acknowledges our need not only for fellowship with Him, but also with a life partner. This is not to say that every person needs to be married. God has called some to remain single (1 Cor 7:7–9). Nor is it to say that marriage will meet all our needs for companionship. Married people need friends of the same sex. But it is to say that a main reason God designed marriage was to meet the human need for companionship. God was aware of your need for a spouse before you even thought of it. If you are single, God knows and cares about your desire to marry. Regardless of how desperate you’ve been and how hard you’ve prayed and searched, God cares about your future spouse even more than you do. Your job is to wait upon Him to perform His will in His time and in His way.

After God makes His evaluation (“It is not good for the man to be alone,” Gen 2:18a), He proposes a solution (“I will make him a helper suitable for him,” 2:18b).⁵ Yet, when God says He will create “a helper,” many people picture someone who sweeps the floor, makes the beds, prepares the meals, and in general does the housework while the husband sits in his easy chair channel-surfing with the remote control. This is not what the word means!⁶ The term “helper” (*ezer*) does not mean a “slave.”⁷ It is not a demeaning term since Scripture often uses it to describe God Himself, as He helps those in distress and in need of military assistance.⁸ The term “helper” means one who helps in the sense of aid or support.⁹

So how does Eve serve as Adam’s helper? First and foremost, Eve “helps” Adam in the bearing of children and the fulfillment of the blessing: “Be fruitful and increase” (1:28).¹⁰ Secondly, Eve helps Adam to support God’s work of caring for creation. Thirdly, Eve helps Adam fulfill his specific calling. As the spiritual head, Adam will guide them in focusing on various tasks, and Eve will partner with him to accomplish it.¹¹ She will supply what is lacking in Adam. To put it bluntly: what he lacks, she accomplishes.¹² The reason is simple: God created Eve to do what Adam cannot do by himself. Likewise, your wife should make it possible for you to do what you could never do alone.¹³ She is the complement who completes you.¹⁴

Husband, your wife is your helper. And let’s face it . . . we need help. Not just with laundry and cooking but in every arena of life (e.g., investments, purchases, family decisions, etc.). Your wife can help you physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. This is all by God’s design! Hence, you are wise to include her in every area of your life. Any husband who doesn’t consult his wife is a foolish man. I run everything by my wife. She is discerning and wise. She is spiritually mature. Furthermore, she enables me to do what I have been called to do. I am far better with Lori than without her.¹⁵ I have achieved nothing apart from my “helper.”

Have you ever asked the Lord, “Lord, what do You want my marriage to accomplish for You?” Almost every organization, company, or church has a mission statement or statement of purpose. Why can’t a marriage? Today, if you’re married, it would be a great thing for you to talk to your spouse about your mission as a couple. God brought you together as husband and wife to multiply His kingdom impact. How is your marriage advancing His cause? Have individuals come to faith in Christ as a result of your marriage? Do you have any couples whom you have mentored as a couple? Have you transferred the truth of God’s Word to the next generation? If so, how? Who is better off spiritually because of you and your spouse? *God created your marriage for blessing and impact.*

There is one final observation worth noting in 2:18: Adam’s wife is to be “suitable for him.”¹⁶ The Hebrew word for “suitable” (*neged*) literally means “that which is opposite, that which corresponds.”¹⁷ The word suggests something that completes a polarity, as the North Pole is “suitable” to the South Pole. One without the other is incomplete. The picture is that the woman is the missing part of the man. Just as a jigsaw puzzle is incomplete if half the pieces are missing, so a man is incomplete without his wife. God designed it so that the man needs the woman and the woman needs the man. God intended your mate to complement you, not to duplicate you. Differences can strengthen us rather than divide us.¹⁸ That’s why one of the most uninformed statements a spouse can make is: “We are incompatible.” Of course you are! God created you that way! Incompatibility is one of the purposes of marriages! If you were the same, one of you would be unnecessary! The reason you need each other is because you were so different. So celebrate your differences and recognize that God has appointed conflicts and burdens for lessons in spiritual growth.¹⁹ He is far more concerned with your holiness than your happiness.²⁰ Remember, *God created your marriage for blessing and impact.*

After a profound and meaningful verse, Moses pens some seemingly peculiar words in 2:19–20: **“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. 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.”** After God created the animals He brought them to Adam and invited him to name them. To name the animals well, Adam had to give them descriptive names. That required him to observe and ponder: What is the essence of this beast? What is a fitting name for it? The verses describing the process are repetitive. God brought the animals to Adam “to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called a living creature, that was its name. The man gave names . . .” The repetitious language implies that this task took time. As Adam gave each animal a name he thereby demonstrated that he was in control of them, that he was the master. In so doing he began to fulfill God’s earlier command to “rule over” them (1:28; cf. 1:26).²¹

But why is this strange exercise of naming the animals included here? Was God preparing Adam for a degree in zoology? No! But God did have a lesson to teach Adam. As Adam is naming the animals, he notices that when the gorilla comes by there’s another gorilla on his arm, laughing at his jokes and smiling pretty. When Adam names the bull and the cow, he notices that old bull looking cross-eyed at the cow. For the zebra, there was a she-zebra. Every creature had a suitable partner—except Adam. He didn’t see anyone who could fulfill his need for a helper. The gorilla didn’t do anything for him. He knew the zebra had nothing he needed. Adam knew he needed a suitable partner, and he knew he wouldn’t find such a creature in the animal kingdom.²² When Adam finished naming the animals he wondered: “Where’s my counterpart?” God asked Adam to name all the animals so that he would see his aloneness as loneliness. Work and animals would never fulfill Adam. He needed more, and now he knew it.²³

Husband, your wife is not a nice addition to your life. She’s not an adornment on your arm when you go out, someone to make you look and feel good. She is your “helper”—your complement. You must communicate how much you need your wife. I am not asking you to bring her flowers or take her to a movie (although that would be nice too); I’m talking about verbalizing your need. Your wife must know that you can’t make it by yourself. She needs to hear how desperately you need her in your life.

This zoology account also implies that God may choose to make us wait to get married until we appreciate His gift of a spouse. Similarly, God uses absence with those who are married to instill appreciation for our spouse (e.g., military deployment, business trips). There is something significant about delayed gratification in both of these cases. Patience has an amazing way of forging character. *God created your marriage for blessing and impact.*

[Not only is marriage God’s idea, but we shall also see that . . .]

2. Marriage is God’s provision (2:21–25). God provides marriage to help meet our need for intimacy and transparency. In 2:21–22 Moses writes: **“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 place. The LORD God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man.”** Gen 2:21 describes the first case of controlled anesthesia in history.²⁴ God evidently put Adam to sleep to assure him that his own works had no part in his receiving the gift. At least two other places in the book of Genesis when God initiated a new relationship for someone, He first put that person to sleep (cf. 15:12; 28:11).²⁵ What a great reminder that God can accomplish His best work when we are asleep. God loves to make it clear that His work is totally a gift of grace. We cannot boast; rather, we must glory in Him!

When the text mentions one of Adam's "ribs" (*tsela*), the word is general, meaning "from his side."²⁶ It is likely that God took a rib plus some flesh, which is why Adam says "bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh" (2:23). The point is: Eve is literally fashioned from Adam. She comes from the essence of who he is.²⁷ The text says: God "fashioned" woman from one of man's ribs. The verb "fashioned" (*banah*) is literally "built."²⁸ It pictures God as a sculptor, carefully and deliberately shaping the woman into a creature who would meet Adam's need. Since she was built by God, we can safely say that she was "well-built!" Thus, when we say that a woman is "well-built" we are being thoroughly biblical. This brings new meaning to the expressions "prime rib" or "my better half!"²⁹ I can envision God bringing Eve to Adam while he was still asleep. Perhaps Adam woke up and wondered what the funny feeling in his side was. Maybe he was counting his ribs when God said, "Adam, you forgot to name one creature." As Adam looked up there was Eve, not in a wedding dress, but naked!

The glorious sight of Eve leads Adam to exclaim: **"This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman,³⁰ because she was taken out of Man"** (2:23).³¹ These are the *first* recorded words of the *first* man. They were not quite as mild as the various English versions indicate. The phrase, "This is now" (*happa'am*) is literally, "This is it!" or "At last!"³² In this expression there is a mixture of relief and ecstasy. Perhaps Adam even said, "YAHOO!" "Oh baby!" or "Where have you been all my life?" He may have even said, "Whoaaaa! Mannnnnn!" which is where we get the word wo-man. Adam must have been beside himself! (Pardon the pun.)

Does your wife know that you find her physically attractive? Do you tell her so on a daily basis? If not, something is terribly wrong. We live in a sex-crazed culture that is completely obsessed with external beauty and airbrushed models. With the rise of Internet pornography, your wife may feel even more inferior and inadequate. It is your job to assure her that she is the most beautiful woman in the world to you. If you don't feel physically attracted to your wife, pray that the Lord would give you a renewed passion for her. This is a prayer that God loves to answer. He longs for you to "Rejoice in the wife of your youth" (Prov 5:18). Remember, if you don't speak the words that your wife needs to hear, someone else will! Let your wife know today how beautiful she is to you. Lavish her with praise about her outer and inner beauty.

Verses 24–25 provide Moses' commentary on the first marriage. They are intended to provide foundational wisdom for marriage long after the fall of man into sin.³³ In 2:24 Moses explains: **"For this reason a man shall leave³⁴ his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh."** "For this reason" means: "Because of the way God designed marriage from the start, because the woman is bone of man's bone and flesh of his flesh, these things hold true." Marriage involves leaving and cleaving. We are to leave our parents emotionally, physically and financially in order to form a new family with our mate. Normally, leaving is a one-time event, but "cleaving" (which means "to glue oneself" to another person) is the work of a lifetime.

First, the man is to leave his father and mother. Interestingly, neither before Moses nor after Moses was it ever the custom for a man to leave his father and mother when he took a wife. It just was not done. In fact, the custom was for a man to marry and remain in his father's household, as did Jacob's sons who remained with him though they founded their own families and fortunes. Rather, custom called for the wife to join the family of her husband. So Moses' declaration, "Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother" must be understood *relatively* and as a prescription for the loyalty and intimacy that a man must give his wife—he must "leave" his family. The union with his wife should be so profound that he "leaves" his family even though he remains with them. His first obligation and loyalties are to his wife.³⁵ This is precisely where many couples fail. Consequently, their young marriage gets off on a bad foot.

If you are presently contemplating marriage, you are not ready to be married until you understand that from the moment you say, “I do,” your husband or wife is to be more important to you than your own family. Practically speaking, this means that when there is conflict in your marriage you can’t just pick up the phone and call Dad or Mom.³⁶ Similarly, if you are a parent and your child calls you, please refuse to get involved in his or her relational challenges. Encourage your child to work things out with his or her spouse. Point your child to God’s Word, his or her local church, and a marriage mentor. If you do find yourself in the middle of your child’s marital conflict, please make sure that you always give biblical counsel. Beware of ever putting your child’s happiness over Scripture by saying, “You don’t need to deal with this. Just get a divorce.” Even the best of parents can fall prey to unbiblical counsel when their own children are involved.

Secondly, the man is to cleave (or “be joined,” “unite”) with his wife. This is the husband’s responsibility! Naturally, most husbands are all too happy to offer physical cleaving. But what your wife needs is emotional cleaving. Cleaving is a union with a whole person, body and soul. Husband, your spiritual success will depend upon your ability to nurture your marriage. This implies that faithfulness, permanence, and loyalty is ultimately the responsibility of the man.³⁷

If you are committed to cleaving to your spouse, allow me to make three suggestions:

- ***Ask your spouse’s forgiveness for your failure to cleave.*** If you have failed to cleave to your husband or wife, ask your spouse’s forgiveness today. Renew your commitment to stick like glue to your spouse physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually.
- ***Limit contact with the opposite sex.*** Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, chat rooms, and e-mail provide too much access with the opposite sex. It is all too easy to find yourself involved in an emotional affair that may even become physical. Don’t allow yourself to even travel down that road. It will lead to spousal jealousy and possibly even adultery.
- ***Spend concentrated time together as a couple.*** Find ways that you and your spouse can be together without your kids.³⁸ This means frequent date nights and vacations. But it also means that you prioritize communicating with your spouse as much as possible on a daily basis. Your relationship is built in the mundane and the grind of life. Look for opportunities throughout your day to talk on the phone, speak in person, and even communicate through social media.

Chapter 2 ends on a high point: “**And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed**” (2:25).³⁹ The climax of creation is this: the man and his wife were both naked. This word means more than physical nakedness. It also refers to the psychological oneness and transparency that existed in their relationship. Psychologically they were not ashamed; they hid nothing from each other. It means Adam and Eve were transparent. The naked condition of Adam and Eve does not just describe their unclothed, physical appearance. They were at ease with one another without any fear of exploitation for evil. Transparency should increase with trust, commitment, and friendship. It involves communicating what you know, think, feel, and are with your spouse, but openly and vulnerably.⁴⁰

Is your spouse your best friend? Is he or she the person you share your total being with? That’s important because the reason God created marriage was so that you and I could experience the Trinity. What is the Trinity? Three coequal persons who are one. What is marriage? Three persons who become one—a man, a woman, and the Lord. That’s marriage. It’s a picture of a higher unity, a symbol on earth standing for the reality in heaven. The marriage relationship is the closest we’ll get in this life to the oneness and unity of the Trinity.⁴¹

On July 17, 1993, I married Lori Griffin. This was the best decision of my life apart from believing in Christ as my Savior. Our wedding ceremony was amazing from start to finish. But the highlight of the ceremony occurred after the exchange of our vows. Lori was handed a microphone, she looked me in the eyes, and sang “I will go there with you” by Steven Curtis Chapman. I will never forget this experience as long as I live. I had no idea that she was going to sing a song. As she sang, I cried like a leaking fire hydrant. I couldn’t hold back the flow and the volume of the tears. By singing the song, Lori declared that wherever I wanted to go she would follow, whatever I decided to do, she would support me. It was irrelevant how our lives might change, she was committed to being my soul mate.

The Church of Jesus Christ desperately needs husbands and wives who will say, “I will go there with you.” “For better, for worse/for richer, for poorer/in sickness or in health/to love and to cherish as long as both shall live.” *God created your marriage for blessing and impact.* He yearns to use your marriage to give your family, your church, and your nation the stability and security it needs. Don’t allow yourself to have a small vision for your marriage. Your relationship with your husband or wife can and will change eternity, for the better or for worse.

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Scripture References

Genesis 2:18–25

Proverbs 18:22

Matt 19:1–12

1 Corinthians 11:2–16

1 Timothy 2:11–15

Ephesians 5:21–33

Colossians 3:18–4:1

Study Questions

1. Why are so many Christian marriages breaking up in our day? How can the church offer compassion to those who have suffered divorce and yet hold a tight line against divorce? For the married: How can my spouse and I offer assistance to couples who may be in crisis? For the single: How can I support the marriages in my church?
2. As a husband, how has my wife served as my “helper?” (Gen 2:18)? How does she complement me? Do we form a “dynamic duo?” Why or why not? What would my life be like without my wife? How frequently do I share with her how much she means to me? Have I been guilty of taking for granted my wife’s commitment to serve as my helper?
3. Is it possible for a Christian couple to be irreconcilably incompatible? How does the concept of marriage as a covenant help answer this question? How can my spouse and I work through our differences? Who can help us? Will we take the necessary steps to ensure that our marriage goes the distance?
4. When I first married my spouse did I follow the biblical command to “leave” and “cleave” (Gen 2:24)? Am I presently cleaving to my spouse? Is he/she the only person for me physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually? Why or why not? What can I do to ensure that my marriage possesses true relational glue? How can I work toward preventive maintenance instead of crisis management?
5. What is the biggest hindrance to developing intimacy in my marriage (Gen 2:24-25)? When did I first notice this particular hindrance? What have I done to correct this problem? What single step can I take this week to cultivate a marriage that is transparent and vulnerable? Who will I ask for prayer support and accountability?

Notes

¹ Merrill Goozner, "Cost of 9/11 and its aftermath: \$5 trillion," in *MSN Money* www.money.msn.com/investing/latest.aspx?post=d332081f-f177-4710-a3be-acd0d7ab9787>1=33002; accessed 8 September 2011.

² Context is always important when we study the Bible. Gen 1 gives us a complete narration of creation; Gen 2 retells the story in order to fill in the details concerning the creation of humankind and the establishment of marriage. The first chapter portrays God as powerful, using the name *Elohim*, the God of creation; while, the second chapter pictures God as personal, using the name *Yahweh*, the covenant-keeping God who intimately cares for His creatures. Hughes eloquently writes: "As with everything else thus far in Genesis, all of it is from God. Divine initiative is at the root of everything, as we see in the God-initiated verbs: 'The Lord God *said*' (v. 18), 'the Lord God *formed*' (v. 19), 'the Lord God *caused*' (v. 21), and 'the Lord God... *made*' (v. 22, emphasis added throughout). In each case the Lord God, *Yahweh-Elohim*, the Creator, the covenant-making God, takes the initiative to shape man and woman and their relationship. Everything here is directly from him." R. Kent Hughes, *Genesis: Beginning and Blessing*. Preaching the Word (Wheaton: Crossway, 2004), Electronic ed.

³ The Hebrew particle *lo* ("not") is placed at the head of the clause. Waltke writes, "The phrase *lo tob* is highly emphatic . . . The usual way of expressing a less than ideal situation is *en tob*, 'it is lacking in goodness.'" Bruce K. Waltke with Cathi J. Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), 88 n. 30.

⁴ See Prov 18:22: "He who finds a wife finds a good thing and obtains favor from the LORD."

⁵ God already is Adam's Helper (but a superior Helper). The animals are also Adam's helpers (but inferior helpers). This helper, then, must be one who will be equal to him.

⁶ Doriani aptly comments: "Chronic problems in the gender debate would be resolved if we better understood God's character and ways. In God's world, the Almighty is a helper, and the Lord of all is a servant of all (Matt. 20:25-28). In God's world, subordination does not signify inferiority." Dan Doriani, *Women and Ministry: What the Bible Teaches* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2003), 58.

⁷ *Ezer* is a word that Moses obviously liked, for in Exod 18:4 we are told that this was the name he gave to one of his sons.

⁸ Waltke, *Genesis*, 88 notes: "The word *helper*, used for God sixteen of the nineteen times it appears in the Old Testament, signifies the woman's essential contribution, not inadequacy." It is also worth noting that John used the same word (the Greek equivalent, *parakletos*) to describe the Holy Spirit who would help believers, following the Lord's ascension (John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7).

⁹ E.g., Deut 33:7; Josh 1:14; Pss 33:20; 115:9-11; 146:5; Isa 30:5; Dan 11:34; Hos 13:9. Kenneth A. Matthews, *Genesis 1-11*. New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1996), 214.

¹⁰ Sailhamer writes, ". . . in light of the importance of the blessing ('Be fruitful and increase') in the creation of the man and the woman in 1:28, it appears most likely that the 'help' envisioned is tied to the bearing of children. Further support for such an interpretation comes from the narrative of the next chapter. Not only does the woman's judgment relate specifically to her role in bearing children (3:16), but also in the promise of the 'offspring' (*zera* ' lit., 'seed,' 3:15) there is an apparent wordplay on the woman's role as a 'helper' (*'ezer kenegdo*)." John H. Sailhamer, "Genesis," in *Expositors Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990), 46.

¹¹ Thomas Finley, "The Ministry of Women in the Old Testament," in *Women and Men in Ministry: A Complementary Perspective*. Eds. Robert L. Saucy and Judith K. Tenelshof (Chicago: Moody, 2001), 56.

¹² Matthews, *Genesis 1-11*, 214.

¹³ Matthews, *Genesis 1-11*, 214. The NET Bible has "indispensable companion."

¹⁴ See CHSB: "I will make a helper as his complement."

¹⁵ When the time came for a strategic decision during Jesus' ministry, He made an interesting choice. He gathered seventy workers, like regional representatives, and sent them to various towns to prepare people for His visits (see Luke 10:1). He could have sent each disciple separately and reached more towns. Instead, He chose to send thirty-five teams of two. An efficiency expert might criticize that decision for duplicating effort and cutting productivity in half, but Jesus knew that some ministries are performed best by two not one. When two people work together, one can protect the other. One can encourage the other. Two can split the work, offset each other's weaknesses, and draw on each other's strengths. Companionship makes two more effective, not less, than one.

¹⁶ See the NLT: "I will make a helper who is just right for him."

¹⁷ See HALOT s.v. *neged* 1: See the NET: “who corresponds to him.” See also Gordon Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*. Word Biblical Commentary (Waco: Word, 1987), 68.

¹⁸ Robert Jeffress, *Guilt Free Living* (Wheaton: Tyndale, 1995), 120.

¹⁹ “Marriage teaches you loyalty, forbearance, self-restraint, meekness, and a great many other things you wouldn’t need if you were single.” Preaching Today Citation: Jimmy Townsend, *Marriage Partnership*, Vol. 5, no. 1.

²⁰ I strongly recommend Gary Thomas, *Sacred Marriage* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000).

²¹ Ronald F. Youngblood, *The Book of Genesis: An Introductory Commentary*, Second Edition (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991), 39.

²² Tony Evans, *Time to Get Serious* (Wheaton: Crossway, 1995), 68.

²³ Doriani, *Women and Ministry*, 57.

²⁴ Youngblood, *The Book of Genesis*, 39.

²⁵ See also Sailhamer, “Genesis,” 46.

²⁶ Everywhere else *tsela* appears in the OT it is translated “side.” The NET study notes state: “The Hebrew text reads, ‘and he took one from his sides,’ which could be rendered ‘part of his sides.’ That idea may fit better the explanation by the man that the woman is his flesh and bone.”

²⁷ I like what Matthew Henry (1662–1714) said: “. . . the woman was made of a rib out of the side of Adam; not made out of his head to rule over him, nor out of his feet to be trampled upon by him, but out of his side to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected, and near his heart to be beloved.” Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible* (London: Marshall Brother, n.d.), 7.

²⁸ HALOT s.v. *banah* 3: “to develop buildings.” Cf. 1 Kgs 15:22; 16:24.

²⁹ It has been said, “God created man and said, ‘I can do better than that,’ and then created the woman.”

³⁰ The word “woman” (*ishah*) sounds similar to the Hebrew word translated “man” (*ish*). This similarity reflects the close union between the two.

³¹ Baylis aptly remarks: “The first preserved words of human history are not the primeval grunt of a narrow-browed Neanderthal but poetry.” Albert H. Baylis, *From Creation to the Cross* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 42. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 70 points out that the five short lines of this poem employ the standard techniques of Hebrew poetry: “parallelism (lines 2-3; 4-5), assonance and word play (woman/man); chiasmus (ABC/C’B’A’) and verbal repetition.”

³² Various English versions include in their translation the phrase “at last” (NET, ESV, CHSB, NRSV, NLT).

³³ This is evident by the way Jesus makes use of Gen 2:24 (see Matt 19:5). Hence, it doesn’t seem that the main point would only relate to the pre-Fall situation, namely, the perfection of their bodies.

³⁴ The verb translated “leave” (*azab*) normally means “to abandon, to forsake, to leave behind, to discard,” when used with human subject and object (see Josh 22:3; 1 Sam 30:13; Ps 27:10; Prov 2:17; Isa 54:6; 60:15; 62:4; Jer 49:11).

³⁵ Hughes, *Genesis*, Electronic ed. Waltke, *Genesis*, 90 suggests that Moses was probably correcting cultures that gave parental bonds priority over marital bonds.

³⁶ Obviously in the case of physical abuse, it may be necessary to call a parent.

³⁷ Michael Eaton, *Genesis 1–11*. Preaching Through The Bible (Kent: Sovereign World, 1997), 60.

³⁸ Eaton, *Genesis 1–11*, 60–61 remarks: “There is no mention of children in Genesis 2. The marriage is a complete marriage whether there are children or not! This is why it is a mistake to end a marriage because there are no children (as happens in many parts of the world). This means that contraception and birth control are perfectly acceptable for the Christian. A sexual relation is not simply for the purpose of having children. The marriage is complete even without children, and the ‘one flesh’ relationship has significance other than its purpose to secure the birth of children.”

³⁹ Sailhamer, “Genesis,” 49 points out: “This is a hinge (janus) verse. It looks backward into chapter 2 and forward into chapter 3. The similarity of the Hebrew words for naked (*'arom*) and ‘crafty’ (3:1, *'arum*) points to a word play. This word for nakedness means unclothed whereas the one in 3:7 (*'erom*) and elsewhere describes those under God’s judgment (cf. Deut. 28:48; Ezek. 16:39; 23:29).”

⁴⁰ Thomas L. Constable, *Notes on Genesis* www.soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/genesis.pdf, 2004), 43; accessed 10 September 2011.

⁴¹ Evans, *Time to Get Serious*, 71.