

**SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS**  
**Commentary by Michael Sigler**  
**September 8, 2013**

**God's Image: Male and Female**

Read Genesis 2:18-25

**Key verse: "Then the Lord God said, 'It's not good that the human is alone. I will make him a helper that is perfect for him'" (Genesis 2:18).**

Love, sex, marriage, community—Genesis 2 is foundational in all four of these areas of life.

*"Then the Lord God said, 'It's not good that the human is alone'" (v. 18).* In Genesis 1, God says of every part of His creation that "it is good." Only when it comes to the creation of humans does God say, for the first time, "it's not good." Specifically, God says "it's not good" that a human should live alone, in isolation.

Data collected from 148 studies, involving more than 300,000 people, conducted over three decades, shows just how true God's declaration is. These studies showed that people who have little or no social interactions are 50 percent more likely to die early than people who have healthy relationships with other people. Those who socialize regularly with family and friends live longer than people who lead isolated lives. (Source: "Being Lonely Can Kill You," *Telegraph.co.uk*)

Genesis 2 speaks of God's plan that we live in community and nurture human relationships. And this passage of Scripture speaks more particularly to God's plan for love, sex, and marriage.

*"So the Lord God put the human into a deep and heavy sleep, and took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh over it. With the rib taken from the human, the Lord God fashioned a woman and brought her to the human being. The human said, 'This one finally is bone from my bones and flesh from my flesh. She will be called a woman because from a man she was taken'" (vv. 21-23).*

Matthew Henry said of this verse: "The woman was made of a rib of the side of Adam. Not made out of his head to rule over him nor his feet to be trampled by him. But out of his side to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected and near to his heart to be loved of him." God created man and woman with the intention that we live together as equals, treating one another with love, respect, and dignity.

***“This is the reason that a man leaves his father and mother and embraces his wife, and they become one flesh” (v. 24). This “one flesh” principle of marriage, first established in Genesis, is the basis for the Bible’s teaching on marriage and sexuality throughout Scripture.***

***For example, Jesus referred to the “one flesh” principle in speaking about divorce: “But from the beginning of creation, ‘God made them male and female.’ For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate” (Mark 10:6-9).***

**Here Jesus goes back to the beginning of creation to show that God intends for marriage to be a permanent, monogamous relationship that bonds husband and wife as “one flesh.” This “one flesh” principle means that God intends marriage to be a lifelong pursuit of “oneness”—sexually, emotionally, and spiritually.**

**The Apostle Paul also refers back to the “one flesh” principle of Genesis 2 in his argument against sexual immorality: *“Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Should I therefore take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! Do you not know that whoever is united to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For it is said, ‘The two shall become one flesh.’ But anyone united to the Lord becomes one spirit with Him. Shun fornication! Every sin that a person commits is outside the body; but the fornicator sins against the body itself” (1 Corinthians 6:15-18).***

**In a sexual relationship, two bodies become one. Outside of the marriage covenant, this life-uniting act is committed without the life-uniting commitment of marriage. Therefore, the Bible consistently teaches that sexual relations outside of marriage are not God’s will.**

**Not every believer is called to married life. Both Jesus and Paul were unmarried. In singleness, God offers grace to live celibate lives that are nourished by healthy relationships in the family and in the Body of Christ. For those called to marriage, God offers grace to grow in oneness and fidelity for a lifetime. And when people fall short of God’s will—celibacy in singleness or faithfulness in marriage—God’s grace is offered to find forgiveness, healing, and strength to begin again.**

**Thanks be to God.**

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