

What is God's Design for Marriage?

May 14, 2023 ▪ Ryan Wildauer ▪ Genesis 2:18-25

Marriage is...

...the complementary _____ of a man and a woman. (Genesis 2:18-25)

...a _____ relationship. (Malachi 2:13-14)

...an opportunity to _____ to love as Christ loved. (Ephesians 5:25-27)

Sin will always _____ God's good design. (Matthew 19:3-9)

How can we as believers advocate for a God-centered view of marriage?

1. Live in our own marriage unions in ways that reflect well God's good design.
2. Champion the beauty of God-centered marriages, but don't expect spiritually healthy choices from spiritually dead people.
3. With an abundance of humility and grace, encourage fellow believers to walk in repentance and obedience.

Genesis 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. (ESV)

Matthew 19:3–9

^[3] And Pharisees came up to him and tested him by asking, “Is it lawful to divorce one’s wife for any cause?”

^[4] He answered, “Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, ^[5] and said, ‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’? ^[6] So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.” ^[7] They said to him, “Why then did Moses command one to give a certificate of divorce and to send her away?” ^[8] He said to them, “Because of your hardness of heart Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. ^[9] And I say to you: whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery.” (ESV)

Personal Reflection or Group Discussion Questions

Open: What marriages have had a significant impact on your understanding of the ideal husband and wife relationship?

Read & Discuss: Genesis 2:18–25

1. In verse 19 we learn God made animals out of the ground, presumably both male and female. Why do you think God did not do the same with Eve?
2. From what you have read in Scripture and experienced in life, why might God have said it was not good for Adam to be alone (v. 18)? How does this meld with Paul’s encouragement to remain single in 1 Corinthians 7:8?
3. What are some ways people might misunderstand and thus misapply this term “helper” in verse 18? In what ways are a husband and wife meant to complement each other? If you’re married, how have you experienced this in your marriage?
4. What model does verse 24 provide for what it means to be a husband or to be a wife? What are some practical implications of the two becoming one flesh?

Read & Discuss: Matthew 19:3–9

5. How does Genesis 2 provide a foundation for answering the question Jesus is asked? What are some current debates about marriage that could be helped by looking back at God’s design in Genesis 2?
6. How does hard-heartedness cause us to incorrectly understand God’s good design for marriage? Besides divorce, what are some other ways hard-heartedness can damage marriage?
7. It can be easy to think of distortions of God’s design for marriage by looking at those who overtly reject God’s design. What ways could believers in covenant marriages distort God’s good design for marriage?

Apply: How can we pursue God-honoring marriages in our own lives, the lives of believers we are in community with, and people we are in relationship with who neither know nor follow God?

Pray: Pray that in Neighborhood Church we would honor marriage according to God’s design.