

**Introduction:** To understand where we are, we need to know where we came from and where we are going. \*\*\* Last week we saw that The Covenant God created people to be three part beings with body, soul and spirit. But, the spirit died due to disobedience to God's one condition. The human spirit can only come back to life through the forgiveness available IN Jesus, The Savior. In addition, the man was created to be the estate manager of God's creation. \*\*\* This week we will review what we saw last week, but with two more fundamental truths about God and His creation, especially people. The first is God said one thing was not good after the man was created, namely that he was alone. And, none of the other creatures God made were appropriate to the man. So, God built a woman from his rib to be his equal but separate and distinct. The second new truth is related to the first. Successful management of God's creation takes united teamwork that celebrates differences in people as a gift from God to do His will in His creation. Then people will be His true representatives in His physical creation. \*\*\* As we look at both the Torah and the Gospel, we will see that the relationship between the man and the woman at creation is both reflected and fulfilled in the relationship between Jesus Christ and His Bride, The Church. The Church is one IN Him, with everyone equal at the foot of His Cross. Yet The Church is very diverse with each member having a task to do in the unity of God's Spirit. \*\*\* Now, let's look at our texts.

### **I. We are to creatively serve God in humility, managing His Creation in obedient faith.**

A. The first task of people is to cultivate creation with The Covenant God in humble obedient faith. (*Genesis 2:4-17*)

1. Yahweh-Elohim formed man from the dust of the ground as a potter, then He breathed into him the spirit of life, and he became a living soul. (*Verses 4-7*)

**Dust, breath, soul:** The first humans were three part beings with a living spirit given by God.

2. Yahweh-Elohim provided every tree good for food in the garden and two trees in the middle of it. (*Verses 8-9*)

**Garden and trees:** Food trees were everywhere, but the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil were in the middle.

3. The river from the garden split into four rivers, and there was gold, ore and stones. (*Verses 10-14*)

**Four rivers:** The first river 'surrounded' a land named 'circle'; 'bursting forth' encompassed the whole of 'black'; 'rapid' flowed east of 'step'; and, the final river was 'fruitful'.

**Gold and stones:** The land named 'circle' had good gold, a precious ore used in perfume and medicine, and a stone used in jewelry. (Provision for: commerce, pleasant delight, health, and artistic beauty.)

4. The man was told to serve and keep the garden, and to eat of any tree but one, because when he ate from it he would certainly die (that is the spirit Yahweh-Elohim breathed into him). (*Verses 15-17*)

**Estate managers:** People were given the responsibility and privilege to manage on God's behalf the 'very good' creation He made. We should think of ourselves as God's estate managers.

**Creativity:** As beings in the image of The Creator, God expected people to manage creatively.

B. Now God's people are to follow Jesus, having left their old ways to be 'fishers of men'. (*Mark 1:16-20*)

1. Walking by the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon (hearing) and his brother Andrew (manly) casting a net because they were fishermen; and, Jesus said, 'Come behind Me and I will make you to become fishermen of men'. (*Verses 16-17*)

**Jesus sees:** First, Jesus saw them and knew who they were.

**Jesus calls:** Then He called them to come behind (follow) Him.

**His Word:** He stated His will for them as a promise, 'I will make you to become fishermen of men'. To care for God's final creation, our fellow human beings, by bringing them to Jesus is the greatest act of creation care. And, since Jesus says He will bring it about in those who will come after Him, it is also a gift of His grace.

*Sharing creation care is a gift IN Jesus.*

2. At once they forsook the nets, and they followed Him. (*Verse 18*)

**Immediate obedience:** God is looking for people who are willing to obey His call without delay.

3. Going on a little, He saw James (Jacob – supplanter) and his brother John (Yahweh is gracious), of Zebedee (my gift), also mending nets in the boat, and He immediately called them. (*Verses 19-20a*)

**Many are called:** There are now twice as many called by Jesus.

4. And, having left their father in the ship with the hired servants, they went behind Him. (*Verses 20b-c*)

**Working together:** There are now four fishermen following Jesus as a team; and, they will be trained by Him to bring people to reconciliation IN Him.

**Higher service care IN Jesus:** Again, this work of creation care is the highest calling any human being can have. And, only those who are IN Jesus by humble, dependent, obedient faith are able to fulfill it.

*We are created to work side-by-side to care for Creation*

### **II. We are to work side-by-side, in Jesus' community, as equals who are distinct.**

A. Yahweh-Elohim made an equal, separate helper so Adam was not alone. (*Genesis 2:18-24*)

1. Yahweh-Elohim said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make a helper equal and adequate to him'. (*Verse 18*)

**Not alone:** God never intended people to be alone. One of the landmark books of 1970 was written by a Brandeis sociology professor, Philip Slater, *The Pursuit of Loneliness*. In it he presented reasons why an over-emphasis on individualism was leading to a harmful loneliness in America. This shows that even academics can discover God's truth in everyday life.

2. The creatures God had formed were brought before the man to be named by him; and, there was not found a helper equal and adequate to him. (*Verses 19-20*)  
**Animals:** Yahweh-Elohim brought all the beasts of the field and birds of the heavens to the man.  
**Not appropriate:** Out of all these, not even one was suitable (equal and adequate) to him.
3. And then, He caused a deep sleep on the man, and took one of his ribs and built it into a woman, and then brought her to the man. (*Verses 21-22*)  
**God's answer:** So He took part of the man and built this into a woman, like him – but different.
4. Then the man said, 'This is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh, to be called woman because out of man she was taken'. (*Verse 23*)  
**Adam's response:** Adam understands the similarity and difference of the helper Yahweh-Elohim has built for him. Matthew Henry comments on the significance of what God did: She was not taken from his head to 'top' him and she was not taken from his feet to be 'trampled' by him; rather, she was taken from his side to be his equal, from under his arm to be protected and from near his heart to be loved.  
**We need each other:** The two of them will build a family and set a pattern for The Church. Putting the chapter together, God wants us to be His creative estate managers, serving Him side-by-side as one, celebrating the distinct gifts He has given to each of us, recognizing we need each other.
5. Therefore, a man shall leave his father and mother and shall be joined (cleave) to his woman (wife), and they have become one flesh. (*Verse 24*)  
**Stick with:** The joining is to stick with permanently. The Creation truth is that men and women are complementary equals, made of the same stuff, not alike, but each needing the other as they work under God to care for His creation.

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6. The man and the woman were both naked and were in no way ashamed. (*Verse 25*)  
**Not ashamed:** Openness and honesty with one another should not be a cause for shame. Shame comes from sin and disobedience to God.
- B. Jesus affirmed the one flesh intention at creation. (*Mark 10:6-8*)  
**Context:** Jesus said God had Moses give words about divorce because the hearts of the people were hard. (*Verses 1-5*)
1. From the beginning of creation, He made them male and female. (*Verse 6*)  
**Jesus goes back to the beginning:** Jesus goes back to the very passage we have just considered.
  2. For this reason, a man will leave his father and mother and be closely joined to his woman. (*Verse 7*)  
**Joined with glue:** It will be as if they are bound together with glue.
  3. And the two shall be into one flesh, so they are no more being two but one. (*Verse 8*)  
**ONE flesh:** This is the deepest union possible between two people. It is the same as the union redeemed people have with God through Jesus.
- C. Marriage is a model of God's relationship with His people IN Christ. (*Various*)
1. God rejoices over His people as His bride. (*Isaiah 62:1-5*)  
**Restored relationship:** Isaiah is inspired to prophesy that the people who had been removed from the land in exile and had become desolate would be called by Yahweh 'My delight is in her'. And He will rejoice over them as a groom over his bride.
  2. Christ's bride must be a pure virgin. (*2 Corinthians 11:1-3*)  
**Do not be deceived from devotion to Him:** The church planting apostle was concerned that the disciples in Corinth might be deceived by the same cunning the serpent used on Eve; but in his Godly zeal for them, he is determined to present them to Christ as a pure virgin bride.
  3. Because The King loves His Church, She should respect Him. (*Ephesians 5:22-33*)  
**Let us surrender to His LOVE:** Paul clearly says the human marriage relationship is to reflect the relationship of Christ to His Church. He loves His Church sacrificially and gave everything for her. As a result, she should respect Him and be joined to Him in submission to do His will by His grace.

***Sharing creation care is a gift IN Jesus***

4. The end is better than the beginning. (*Revelation 22:16-17*)  
**Life is a gift of grace:** In The Bible's last chapter, Jesus sends His messenger to testify that He is the root (creator) and (human) offspring of David. The (Holy) Spirit and The Bride say to whoever is willing, 'Receive the Water of Life'. It is a free gift of grace that begins in this life as together we care for and keep God's good creation. This gift is for ALL people: men and women; every culture, vocation, race (God made one 'race' – the human race), young and old, married and single.

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**Conclusion:** In the beginning, before the first couple disobeyed God, they were to creatively manage God's creation as distinct equals working together. Now, those who have been redeemed from the effects of their disobedience IN Jesus The Savior are to follow Him, having left their old ways. And they are to bring others to redemption IN Him SO all may be a diverse unity serving The King of kings as He builds His Kingdom.

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