

Adam and His Bride

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[0 : 00] And we praise God, we thank God for that reading of His holy and inerrant Word. Friends, before we consider these words together, let's bow before our God in prayer.

Let's pray and ask God for help. Lord God, we do bow to You, we come to You. You are the Sovereign God.

You are Father, Son, Holy Spirit. You're the Creator. You are the Sustainer of Life. You are the Savior of Your people.

And You are the God who gives light. Lord, we know that Your Word is that light to our feet, this lamp for our path. So we ask, Lord, that You would illumine this portion of Scripture for us this evening.

That is our prayer, how we long to hear from Your voice. The world looks on and wonders at this means of grace.

[1 : 02] But Lord, we trust that what seems like foolishness to the world is Your wisdom, Your chosen means of building up Your church. So in our weakness and as sinners, we call to You.

And we ask, Lord, speak, speak to us as we bow before You as Your children. And we pray in Jesus' name and for His name's sake.

Amen. Amen. So this evening, what I want us to do, you'll have guessed already, is I want us to look at what is a famous portion of Scripture.

It's a section of the Bible that I'm sure many of you in here at Bon Accord have been familiar with since your earliest days. What's the portion of Scripture? It is this, the account of the creation of woman and what I suppose is also the very first marriage ceremony.

I want us to think about the creation of woman and then the very first marriage ceremony. But how on earth are we going to handle this this evening? After all, this account has so much to teach us as Christians, doesn't it?

[2 : 13] So much to teach us about contemporary moral and ethical issues, don't you agree? There's so much here about the roles of men and women, so much here about the nature of marriage as well.

How are we going to handle this tonight? Well, to answer that, I want you here just now, please, to consider how the New Testament views these words that we've read together in Genesis.

I want you just now to please think about how so often a line is drawn, isn't it, between Genesis 2. And it's a line drawn from here to Christ and to His church.

Would you consider that? First, consider the Apostle John. Am I right in thinking you're going through John's Gospel? You've certainly been in John's Gospel.

You know John's Gospel, don't you? Is it not fair, I suppose, in some ways to call John's Gospel the New Genesis? How does it start?

[3 : 21] In the beginning? And then, does John not talk about light shining into the darkness? And then, does John not parallel what you and I have just read together in chapter 3, when he speaks about Jesus, the last Adam, and he speaks about him as the bridegroom?

Do you see? Do you see? So, that's the Apostle John. But then, with me, consider the Apostle Paul. I think we all know that really famous portion of Scripture in Ephesians 5, do we?

Where the Apostle Paul compares marriage with Christ's love for his church. Do we know that portion of Scripture? We do, don't we? Can we remember where in Ephesians 5, where Paul roots his thought?

He roots it all here in Genesis 2. Indeed, actually, Paul quotes verse 24. Therefore, a man shall leave his father and mother. And what does he say?

He'll be united to his wife. And then, friends, Paul says this in Ephesians, of Genesis. He says, this mystery, Genesis 2, this is profound.

[4 : 36] And I am saying, it refers to Christ and the church. Isn't that when you stand back from that? Isn't that something? Isn't that amazing?

Paul is stating that when the author here, when Moses wrote these words in Genesis, ultimately, even then, they had Christ in view. So, I reckon we've got our answer.

Do you remember the question? How are we going to handle this this evening? Well, yes, we will seek to expound this. We'll seek to apply it. But in addition to that, I think this evening, you and I have to notice how Genesis 2 foreshadows Christ.

Yes, but tonight, as we think about going to the table, we see, hopefully, how Genesis 2 actually foreshadows something of Christ's redemptive work and also how it foreshadows something of Christ's love for you.

From Genesis 2, we see something of Christ's love for his bride, the church. So, the first thing, if you have a copy of Scripture, please, can I encourage you to have it open there in front of you from Genesis 2.18.

[5 : 50] First thing I want us to try to get our heads around is a joyous presentation. So, that's the first thing, a joyous presentation. Now, as we begin this section, what happens, I think, is that you and I encounter straight away a rather surprising phrase.

So, we encounter a rather surprising phrase. Because if we had a little bit longer this evening, and if you and I had read the previous chapter, Genesis 1, right now, you and I would have a certain repetition ringing in our ears.

Wouldn't we? If we had read Genesis 1, there would be repetition. What's the repetition in Genesis 1? We all know it. You know, God creates light, and he saw that it was good, and then he creates trees, and he saw that it was good, and he creates birds, and he saw that it was good.

You see, there's this repetition we would have ringing in our ears, and then what is this? If you look at verse 18, do you see it?

Suddenly, it's very different. The Lord said, for the first time, it is not good. Now, what is it that is not good? Do you notice?

[7 : 09] It's not good that man should be alone. So, we're seeing that though man is in his innocence, we have to remember that.

So, though man here, this is pre-fall, though that's the case, that because man is made in the image of a triune God, that man really is made for relationship.

Man is made for fellowship. Man is made for communion. Now, yes, God is going to address that.

He says it's not good for man to be alone, and he's going to address that.

He's going to create women, and we'll get to it, and we'll look at it. But actually, right now, I want you to wrestle here with the presentation of the woman that we've got in this chapter.

Because regardless of where we are from in the world, I think everyone in the room is familiar with that tradition that we've got in the West, where in a marriage ceremony, what happens?

[8 : 13] Usually, the father will give away the bride. We all know that tradition, don't we? So, when Catherine and I got married, I did not text her and say, I'll see you at the front of the church.

Nor did Catherine and myself arrive together in an Uber or a taxi. No, what happens? There's that beautiful moment, isn't there? In a wedding service, where the groom is usually waiting at the front of the service, and then the congregation stands.

It's lovely, isn't it? And the bride comes forward, usually, usually to be given away by her father.

Well, yeah, we really are seeing something of where that tradition comes from here.

Can we not say in Genesis 2 that in a sense, God the Father gives away the bride here? Did you notice that in verse 22? The language, very clear. It says that God brought her.

God the Father brought the bride to man. That's true, but really, what I want you to notice is the incredible joy that that presentation brings you.

[9 : 36] The joy is immense. See, I know that you are familiar with this portion of Scripture. I wonder how many times you've heard Genesis 2 preached.

I did think about that. You've read it a hundred thousand times, right? I know that. Have you ever noticed, and have you ever lingered on the strange delay that we've got here?

Have you ever noticed the delay? Just think about the order of events that we've just talked about. What have we said? So first, God says, it's not good for man to be alone. That's the first thing.

Then what happens? God says, okay, I will make a helper. But then my question for you tonight would be, well, does God do that straight away?

He says, it's not good for man to be alone. I will make a helper. Does he do it? Straight away. Do you notice that there is this really unusual delay as God at that moment has all of the animals file before Adam?

[10:40] Why? Why? Yes, so that these animals can be named. Yes, but it's more, it's in order to see if a suitable companion can be found amongst the animal kingdom.

Do you see what God's doing in the strange delay? Do you see what he's doing? He's surely intensifying Adam's sense of longing. Like intensifying Adam's sense of need as every animal files by and a giraffe comes by and Adam's like, no, this is just, this isn't going to cut it.

You know, there's not a good line to communication here. And another animal goes by and then can you not almost feel the sense of joy, yeah, but relief here when God finally does make Eve, make a bride and bring her to Adam.

Do you notice what Adam cries out in verse 23? I suppose, again, it depends what translation of the Bible you've got in front of you. But look at verse 23, look what he cries out. Some of them don't capture it, but in the original, do you know what Adam says at that point?

He says this, he says, at last, at last, here she is, at last, this bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh.

[12:01] He's so overjoyed that he finally has a companion like him, suitable for him.

What does Adam do? But really and truly, he bursts into song. Isn't it the most, beautiful presentation? But tonight, Bonacord, what are we going to do with this?

Now, as awkward as it might be, I think surely what we've got here is a challenge to the men in the room and in particular to those of us who are Christian husbands.

Guys, if that's you, you know exactly what we're like. So, you know that we can very, very quickly fall into bad habits in marriage, can't we?

We can so quickly begin to take our spouse for granted that to you see what you have in front of you tonight in God's Word, you have a reminder to you this evening from God of what God has done for you.

[13:15] In your marriage, God has brought your wife to you. In marriage, Christian friend, God has entrusted your spouse to you as a gift and your wife is to be treated in that light as something precious, something absolutely priceless.

But given what we said at the very start, should we not also consider at this moment our Lord and Savior? Because I know you are a biblically knowledgeable, biblically literate group of people, so I'm pretty sure all of us are aware of the, what will we call it, the ceremonial brackets that sit on either side of Scripture.

You know what I'm talking about, don't you? The ceremonial brackets Scripture that just as here the Bible begins with a marriage presentation. How does the Bible end?

With exactly the same thing, a marriage presentation. Revelation 19, listen carefully, Revelation 19, let us be glad and rejoice and give him glory for the marriage of the Lamb has come or Revelation 21, if you'd rather that.

John, what does he see? He sees the church, he sees the new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God and she is prepared, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband and I think sincerely that you and I would do well to consider the divine delight that that moment will bring, the divine delight that moment will bring.

[15:00] You can see it, I'm sure that there at that last moment is the Lord Jesus Christ. Who does he see before him? He sees what is it? Those the Father has given to him.

As he sees his church, there is joy in the heart of Jesus Christ. Why? Why? Because at long last, because of God's work of grace in his church, Christ at last beholds, he beholds a bride like him, a bride Christ-like, a bride perfected.

Friends, if we are going to live for Jesus' glory today in this society, we need to keep that coming day squarely in view. So we see a joyous presentation for the bride.

Second of all, we see an intimate bond, an intimate bond. So we've seen this desire for a suitable companion, this bride.

Here in the second point, what I want really to do is for you and I to consider the nature of this new relationship that we've got. So the nature of what is this new marriage relationship.

[16:11] So let me ask you to do me a favor. Would you look to verse 24 with me? What is the nature of this new relationship that God has created? Have a look at verse 24.

Let's just read it together, shall we? Verse 24. So it depends what you've got. Again, that is why a man leaves or a man will leave his father and mother.

We probably could recite this off by heart, could we? We know this. A man will leave his father and mother. What do you have in front of you? Does it say, and he will be united to? Is that what you've got there?

He will be united to his wife? That's great, that's perfect. I'm old school, I'm getting an old man, I like the old language, maybe you do as well. A man will leave his father and mother and the man will hold fast.

Isn't that great? he will hold fast to his wife? And then what's the next bit? And they will become one flesh. One flesh.

[17:15] Hold fast to her. He will become one flesh. Two things very briefly. First, I think we have to consider what we learn there about the deep bond of our earthly marriages.

What we learn about the deep bond of our earthly marriages. Can you see what I mean? That though our society today in Scotland is going to do everything it can to try and demean marriage, our society is going to do everything to try and convince us that marriage is nothing, to try and convince us even that we could try and redefine this, that though that's the case, we have to stick firmly to the fact that what we see in scripture is that marriage is the closest possible human relationship.

That though sometimes it's really, really difficult to do this, that actually we do have to move away emotionally from our mother and our father in order to pursue this new relationship.

That because woman here is made from, what, part of man, part of man goes for the creation of woman because of that, it is really only when a woman returns to man in marriage that man is made whole, fool, again, the rib comes back to him.

And you see a practical application for the church, don't you? We have to begin to truly value the marriage relationships in our church. church. We should be praying regularly for the Christian couples in our churches.

[19:03] But then the second aspect of this, I think we've got to consider what we learn, yes, about the deep bond of our managers, but also the deep bond that we're shown here between Christ and his people, Christ and his church.

See, I am not trying to be funny here. I am not trying to be flippant. I'm really not. But isn't it the case that in the creation of the world, before the creation of the world, that God had a blank sheet of paper in front of him?

I'm not trying to be flippant. You see what I mean? God is not bound by any external pressure, any external force, is he? So in the creation of the world, God could do absolutely anything, couldn't he? And what is it that God chooses to do? God chooses to find all of human society on this relationship, this covenant relationship between there's a man and there's a woman.

He could do anything. And he chooses to find it all in a relationship, one man, one woman. Why? Why? Partly is it not, right from the beginning here, to foreshadow and portray something of Christ's relationship with his church.

[20:20] And I think quite honestly, there is a sense this evening that you and I, right now, by Scripture, we are here being pointed ahead to what our lives will be like one day in glory.

I wonder if you noticed it in verse 25. Do you see it in verse 25? I love it. The man and the wife, they're both naked, but this bit, and they were not ashamed.

Doesn't that in a sense foreshadow what it will be like for the people of God that in the new heavens and the new earth, such will have been God's work of grace in our lives, what's going to happen?

We are going to walk with our spouse. We are going to walk with Christ in the new heavens and the earth, absent of the shame of our rebellion. We'll be able to walk with Christ.

There will be no sin. Aren't we pointed to our future here? But what we tend to forget, what I tend to forget, what we must not forget, is that you and I are part of the bride of Jesus Christ right now, here, tonight.

[21:30] We are part of the bride of Christ. So I want to ask you, if you're a Christian this evening, are you struggling spiritually? Is that how you would describe yourself as you come through the doors?

You know that we put on a facade sometimes when we come to church? Beneath that facade tonight, are you lacking assurance that God loves you?

As you come in here as a Christian, does Christ Jesus feel distant to you? Then if that sums you up, see from Genesis chapter 2 something of the deep bond that really does exist tonight.

Whether you feel like this or not, the deep bond that exists between you and Christ Jesus threatens just as with the first, so the last Adam, he is presently bound to you, his spouse.

We really do enjoy what theologians call union with Jesus Christ right now. So you are not near to Christ.

[22 : 42] You are not beside Christ. You are not with Christ. If you're born again this evening, you are tonight in Christ.

That's the biblical language. What does Paul the apostle say? We are already, right now, think of the language of Genesis 2, we are one, no, no, no, not flesh, one body with Christ.

Christ Jesus tonight, he really is our head. And maybe it is the future that worries you. And maybe it is tonight your death.

Then you must understand and focus on the fact that unlike our earthly marriages, not even that enemy, not even death, can separate you or can sever that intimate bond that you have with Jesus Christ.

Listen to the shorter catechism. In death, the souls of believers do immediately pass into glory in their bodies. Wait for it. In death, being still united to Christ.

[23 : 52] I'll say it again. In death, being still united to Christ, do rest in their graves until the resurrection. Friends, we ask, don't we, why is it that God forms marriage?

What is marriage all about? And there's loads of answers. Children, society, fine. But in this earthly covenant union, are we not pointed to that glorious covenant union that exists between Christ and his church?

What were those two words that I quoted? The old language. You see it? Friend, if you're a Christian, don't fear, don't fret, because Christ tonight always will hold fast.

He holds fast to you, his bride. And then the third thing, the last thing. So we've seen a joyous presentation, we've seen an intimate, intimate bond.

But then thirdly, lastly, a creative act, a creative act. So we have seen, I hope, something amazing status that the church has, where one body, one flesh with Christ himself.

[25 : 00] But as we close, and to try and consider how it is that people like me, or people like yourself, so surely we would say the worst of sinners, to consider how it is that we as sinners can have such a precious union with Jesus, what I want us to do is just to notice how the woman here is fashioned, how the woman is created.

So again, look, I need you with me. Can you look at verse 21? We're closing with all of this, but if you look at verse 21, you've read it a thousand times, but look at how the woman is created.

Can I give you just a moment to skim, read verse 21? What do you see? How is the woman created? Am I right in saying you see two stages almost?

So first there is this, do you see that there is a divinely ordered sleep? Do you notice that?

Do you notice that it is a very unusual sleep here? Like it doesn't say whilst Adam slept, God created Eve.

[26 : 17] It doesn't say that, does it? The idea is that God caused this deep sleep. So that's the first thing. But then what happens? If you look at it, is it not the case that God wounds Adam's side?

He wounds him. So the important thing I want you to grasp is the fact that to form Eve, God takes the substance, he doesn't use the ground, but to form Eve, he takes the substance out of Adam in order to form his bride, doesn't he?

Wounds the side, takes the substance out to form the bride. And what is it? It's a rib. That's an interesting word, biblically speaking, the rib.

So it's the same word, if you look through the Old Testament, it's the same word as Adam's side. So it's a word used in Noah's ark, of the side of Noah's ark.

Okay? And then the tabernacle, what's the tabernacle? The tabernacle is where God and man meet, isn't it? Same word, the rib of the tabernacle. No, when we're discussing it, it's the side of the tabernacle.

[27 : 27] Is everybody with me? Do we see that to fashion Eve, there's two things, there's this divinely ordered, deep, unusual sleep, and then there's the wounding of the side here.

What should we think about as we close? Well, yeah, I do think it's important that we notice what that tells us about the present dignity of women.

That's a contentious topic for our Sunday evening, isn't it? Given certain ideology in this country just now, certain rise of different religions that might have a difference of opinion, present dignity of women, but I think you know as well as I do that the parts of the body in Genesis, they are used symbolically.

We know that, don't we? If you think about Genesis 3.15, it's one thing for the man to have his heel struck, something altogether different for the serpent to have its head struck, isn't it?

The parts, the parts of the body are symbolic in Genesis. So what question do you ask of this? If you're anything like me, you ask, well, why the rib?

[28 : 50] Don't you? Why the side? Why is Eve not fashioned from the hair on Adam's head? I want to know that. Why not from his toenail?

Why is it the rib? Why is it the side? I think it is probably best summed up in that is a quote that you've probably heard a thousand times, but it's some of my favorite language in the English language.

You will forgive me if I quote it again. Why the side? Matthew Henry says, woman was created not from man's head to rule over him, and woman was created not from his feet to be trampled upon by him, but she was created out of his side to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected by him, and near his heart to be loved by him.

Isn't that it? Isn't it beautiful too that though women and men do have different roles, and we ought to embrace that, especially in the life of this church, what are we seeing here?

That part of the reason the side is used is to speak to the equality of women, the value, the dignity of women before almighty God. We're still wrestling, and we're asking, how is it possible, when we look at all of our sin, as you consider the sin of the last week and the last month, how is it possible that we have this glorious salvation, this glorious union with Jesus Christ?

[30 : 38] Well, I would ask you, can you remember the first reading this evening? John 19. Can you remember what happened? Christ is on the cross.

He drinks sour wine. What happens next? There at Calvary, Christ Jesus closes his eyes and sleeps the sleep of death, and then a Roman centurion, he goes to Jesus Christ and he pierces his sight.

And so, I ask you, do you see it? Listen, there in John's gospel, at the cross, the bride of the last Adam at Calvary, she is formed.

And how? As in Genesis, there at the cross, the groom's side is opened, that the substance to form his bride, what was it?

Blood for her forgiveness, water for her purification. There at Calvary, the groom's side, the last Adam's side is opened, that the substance to create the church, the substance to create the bride is brought forth.

[32 : 04] We see as we look at Golgotha, those two stages, we see this unusual, divinely ordained sleep, the sleep of death, and we also see the wounding of the last Adam's side.

Warren Gage puts it like this, he says, even before the fall, Genesis 2, God was foreshadowing the pattern of redemption.

He goes on to say this, in the wounding of Adam, in Genesis 2, we find a type of the redemptive provision God would make for our salvation, not just my salvation, for your salvation, a type, even in Genesis chapter 2.

What's happening? There at Golgotha, the side of God's ark of salvation, there the side of the tabernacle, the meeting place of God and man, there at Calvary, the side of the last Adam, it is opened, it is wounded, that the substance to create the church is brought out.

And so, if you're a Christian tonight, are you? If you're a Christian, surely you come to the table of the Lord, confident of this one thing, God must love you so much.

[33 : 25] He must love you so much because he has planned your salvation from the beginning of time. but if you are not a believer in this room, if you are not born again, do you tonight not want to be made right with God?

Do you not want to be forgiven? Do you not want to be reconciled? And do you not want to be there when it happens? You know what I'm talking about, don't you?

Do you not want to be there in that moment when the church is presented to a groom to the Lord Jesus Christ? Do you not long to be there when it happens?

If so, tonight, even now, rest in Jesus Christ. Repent of your sin. Put your faith in Jesus. And even tonight in this place, in Bonacord Free Church, come to know the almost indescribable love that Jesus Christ has for you, that he has for his bride.

Friends, let's bow and let's pray. Oh, Lord our God, we marvel at your great plan of salvation.

[34 : 49] We marvel that even in Genesis chapter 2, even before the fall, that you provide this type of your redemptive work that would come in Jesus Christ.

We thank you that in the first Adam, his side was wounded, that that substance be brought out. We thank you that we see the same at Golgotha, and we thank you that tonight your people know truly union with Jesus Christ.

And we pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.