

Mom: God's Divine Plan
Genesis 1, 2

May 13, 2007

- A. Mother's Day
 - 1. why do I celebrate this day?
 - 2. Scripture reading, Genesis 7:25
 - 3. Genesis is the book of _____
 - a. Gen 1:1—2:3 tells of
 - b. Gen 2:4 then moves to more details about
- B. The Entrance of Sin
 - 1. Genesis 3:12, 13 ... what was the first indication of the destruction of relationships?
 - 2. 1 Timothy 2:14, in the temptation, it was the woman ...
 - 3. Romans 5:12, 1 Corinthians 15:21-22, Genesis 2:16-17, 3:6; to whom does the Bible assign responsibility? ... why?
- C. "It is not good for man to be alone" (Genesis 2:18) – what do I learn here about myself as a person created by God?
- D. "I will make a helper suitable (or corresponding) to him" (Genesis 2:18)
 - 1. Mark 10:45, John 14:16, Isaiah 41:13 ... is being called 'helper' a demeaning term? ... why or why not?
 - 2. How do I treat my mother or other women in this respect?
- E. "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness" (Genesis 1:26)
 - 1. also, Genesis 1:27; who is being created in God's image?
 - 2. among other things, to be created in God's image means ...
 - 3. also Genesis 2:24: what did being formed from Adam's rib convey?
- F. "Then God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish ... the birds ... the cattle and over all the earth, ...' male and female He created them" (Genesis 1:26, 27 NAS)
 - 1. also Genesis 1:28, Psalm 8:4-6: what role did God have for them? (Who is the 'them'?)
- G. Did sin destroy God's plan?
 - 1. Galatians 3:28, Colossians 1:20 ...
 - 2. 2 Timothy 2:12, Revelation 20:6 ...
 - 3. Revelation 21:3, 22:1-5 ...

- A. today is Mother’s day
 - 1. not strictly a Christian celebration
 - a. but which the church, particularly in North America, has largely chosen to adopt for itself
 - b. because of the tremendous role that mothers play in both family and church life, and their pre-eminent contribution in the area of Christian education
 - c. so this morning, we too are going to pause in order to give honour to the mothers among us and those who bore us
 - 2. but, even as we do so, I am reminded that
 - a. for some this is a bittersweet celebration
 - b. some have not had the blessing of a positive and healthy relationship with their mother for a variety of reasons
 - c. some ladies have not known the joy of giving birth to a child; again, for a variety of reasons, such as Jesus gave in another connection concerning men (Matthew 19:12)
 - (A) some because they were born not to have children
 - (B) some who because of the circumstances of life, the disinclination to marry, the looking after an aged parent, and so on, have never married
 - (C) and some, who have remained single in order to serve the Lord as missionaries or otherwise
 - 3. so, today, while we honour and remember ‘Mom’
 - a. let us first of all honour God, our Creator
 - b. as we look at the primary object of creation, mankind
 - c. and, in particular at His creating woman
 - 4. let us read Genesis 2:7–25; but first note that this takes place before sin enters mankind; before the fall
 - 5. let us look at their overall context in this chapter and book
 - a. Genesis is the book of beginnings

- (A) the beginning of the universe
 - (B) the beginning of the human race
 - (C) the beginning of mankind fallen on account of sin
 - (D) the beginning of the Israelite nation
- b. Chapter 1:1 through 2:3 is the account of the beginning of the universe, and is an overview of all creation: sky, earth, sun, moon, stars, plants, animals, mankind
- c. Then, as my Bible and Hebrew professor expressed it
- (A) having given the 'newspaper headlines' in chapter 1
 - (B) now the story moves to the more interesting details
 - (C) relationship between Creator God & man His creation
 - (D) entrance of sin which destroyed that relationship
- d. let's digress for a moment and talk about sin

B. The Entrance of Sin

1. when sin entered the world
 - a. not only was man's fellowship with God interrupted
 - b. but also came the destruction of the relationships that God intends should exist among mankind, and particularly between man and woman, wife and husband
 - c. a word of advice to us all
 - (A) assigning blame is one of the primal destructive forces to relationships that resulted from sin
 - (B) when God confronted Adam and Eve with their sin
 - (C) Adam blames both God and Eve: *"The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate"* (Genesis 3:12, NAS)
 - (D) Eve blames the snake, *"The serpent deceived me, and I ate"* (Genesis 3:13, NAS)
 - (E) *"People who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones"* ... none of us is in a position where we can blame others without harming our relationship with them
2. so, who was to blame? ... I know that some of you husbands and wives want to have this handy the next time your are in an argument! ... the Bible's answer is very interesting:
 - a. 1 Timothy 2:14 informs us: *"And it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman being quite*

deceived, fell into transgression." (NAS)

- b. then Romans 5:12 says: "Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned—" (NAS)
- c. we just read in Genesis 2:16–17 that the commandment concerning the tree was given to the man before the creation of woman
- d. finally, Genesis 3:6 tells us of that first sin, "When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate." (NAS)
- e. conclusion: though it was Eve who first transgressed, being deceived, it was Adam who is held responsible ...
 - (A) responsibility from the implicit authority given Adam to see that God's commandment was obeyed
 - (B) responsibility because Adam was present when Eve was deceived and did not stop her from transgressing
 - (C) responsibility because Adam was not deceived, but rather disobeyed deliberately; rebelling against God

3. why this digression?

- a. because this and other Bible passages have been used
 - (A) to affirm man's inborn headship and the justification of wife abuse and maltreatment of women – sadly, in some instances, by those professing to be Christians
 - (B) to relegate certain roles by gender ... and, by the way, as we read that passage from Proverbs 31, did you note that many of the enterprises undertaken by the 'excellent wife' overstep the bounds often thought by some Christians to be the appropriate roles for women?
- b. because the entrance of sin has changed things
 - (A) man and woman divested of their God-given honour
 - (B) women treated as property, disparaged, abused
 - (C) rabbinic thanksgiving prayer for being born a man
- c. and this can only be overcome by the grace of God as enacted by the Son on the cross with the work of the Holy Spirit who indwells those who are saved
- d. so let's look at some of the intimation in these verses of God's divine plan for women, for Moms

C. "It is not good for man to be alone" (2:18)

1. It is not good?
 - a. Six times in Genesis 1, after the creation that filled each day, there comes a summary conclusion to the effect that "God saw that it was good" ... in fact, after the creation of man, God looked upon all that He had made, 'and behold, it was very good.'
 - b. so how could God, in the very midst of this very good work, look upon what he had done and say 'it is not good'?
 - c. this was not some new discovery by God
 - (A) not some second thought, a new idea, such as we have
 - (B) it is God expressing that He was not yet done
 - (C) He had not yet made woman!
2. mankind was made to have relationships
 - a. the foremost relationship was to be with God
 - b. but, on a human level, God intended the most meaningful, deepest relationship was be between a man and a woman
 - c. but sin spoiled this as we have seen
 - d. I am constantly amused and amazed at the difference in the way men and women so often think. A Peanuts cartoon expresses this bewilderment between the sexes. Peppermint Patti is walking down the street, thinking to herself: ^{-(2)}}
 - (A) That Chuck. He's something else...
 - (B) I don't even know why I think about him...
 - (C) Chuck doesn't seem to understand a girl's emotions...
 - (D) In fact, Chuck doesn't seem to understand girls at all...
 - (E) Chuck's hard to talk to 'cause he doesn't understand life
 - (F) He doesn't understand laughing and crying...
 - (G) He doesn't understand love, and silly talk, and touching hands, and things like that...
 - (H) He plays a lot of baseball, but I doubt if he even understands baseball..."
 - (I) Then Patti knocks on Charlie Brown's door and says, "I don't think you understand anything, Chuck!"
 - (J) As she is walking away, Charlie Brown says to himself: "I don't even understand what it is I don't

understand."

- e. Men and women, as a generalization, think differently
 - (A) that cartoon expressed this truth
 - (B) Maureen and I operate differently if we are trying to remember a year or an age
 - (1) I will try to think of an event, or, what car we had
 - (2) Maureen will relate it to one of our children or some other person, what age they were and so on
 - (C) women often think in terms of relationships
 - (D) God gave Eve to Adam because he needed these

3. there are three basic views on the gender question

- a. the egalitarian – that men and women are completely equal – which may be understood in many ways: in law, in capability, in equivalence
- b. the hierarchical – that all creation is in obedience to one higher: animals to mankind, women to men, man to God
- c. the complementarian – that man and woman fill up what is lacking in the other, together fulfilling each other
- d. there are arguments for each of these, but the Bible and this passage support most strongly the last view

D. "I will make a helper suitable (or corresponding) to him" (2: 18)

- 1. Living, as we do, in a world which has been cursed by sin
 - a. we are apt to respond by thinking, 'what a demeaning role for women!' on the one hand, or, perhaps those with the male ego, 'well, woman is meant to be my slave'
 - b. this may be why some women of the world reject the Biblical view of what women should be
 - c. but let's ask the question: is being a helper demeaning?
- 2. countless women have not deemed this to be the case
 - a. of course there leap to mind those who have served as nurses, those who have served as missionaries
 - b. but, as this is Mother's day

- c. just stop and consider the many things Mom does every day to help her husband, to help her children
 - (A) I think it was Calvin (of Calvin & Hobbes) who presented his mother with an itemized list of the chores he had completed with a price tag assigned to each
 - (B) She returned a similar list of items, but much longer, and, at the very end the note: 'no charge, done for love'
 - (C) in the final frame Calvin says to Hobbes, his tiger, 'just like mom to ruin a perfectly good idea with a moral'

3. let's take the question further: is being a helper demeaning?

- a. consider Jesus' words about Himself, "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." (Mark 10:45 NAS)
- b. or what Jesus said of the Holy Spirit, "And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever;" (John 14:16 NAS)
- c. and many times in the LORD himself is referred to as the Helper or as giving help and in Isaiah 41:13 He says, "For I am the LORD your God, who upholds your right hand, Who says to you, 'Do not fear, I will help you.'" (NAS)
- d. no, to be a helper is not demeaning; quite the contrary; it is, in fact, part of the next truth, where God says

E. "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness" (1:26)

- 1. this thought continues in the next verse, 1:27, "And God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them." (NAS)
 - a. the word used for 'man' in these verses is "adam" which is also the personal name for the first man, Adam
 - b. but 'adam' is used to talk about both men and women
 - c. and might often be better translated, 'mankind'
 - d. but it is not the male alone who is made in God's image
 - e. because woman was created in God's image, a spiritual being, reflecting qualities which God designed in us so that we might be like Himself
 - f. sometime, leaf through a few hymn books and note how many and how great are the hymns that women

have written: Fanny Crosby and Frances Havergal are just two

g. how many of us have been taught our first lessons on Jesus Christ by a mother, grandmother or godly lady teacher

2. so, we have read, 'The LORD God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man' (2:22)

a. but make no mistake about it

b. this was indeed a creative act of God

c. but it was also different from every other creature He made

d. for with the animals, God spoke and said let it be

e. and even with man, He made him from the dust

f. but with woman, God's starting material was Adam – so you see, woman is man, but with something extra!

g. so that Adam could give that joyous cry

(A) "This is now bone of my bones, And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man." (Genesis 2:23 NAS)

(B) now this works in English: woman from man

(C) in Hebrew: Ishshah (woman) from Ish (man)

(D) and in whatever language Adam spoke – some claim it was Hebrew but that ignores some linguistic facts as well as that the Bible itself says that the language of the whole earth was confused (Genesis 11:9)

h. it has been commented how appropriate it was that Eve be formed from Adam's rib

(A) not the foot, lest one tread upon the other

(B) not the head, lest one rule over the other

(C) but the rib, that they should walk side by side

F. "Then God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish ... the birds ... the cattle and over all the earth, ...' male and female He created them" (Genesis 1:26, 27 NAS)

– notice that 'them': Adam and Eve, together

1. God created mankind – men and women – with an authority and a responsibility: namely, to rule over His creation

- a. so here is an aspect supporting the egalitarian view
- b. mankind's role is expressed in Psalm 8: "What is man, that Thou dost take thought of him? And the son of man, that Thou dost care for him? Yet Thou hast made him a little lower than God, And dost crown him with glory and majesty! Thou dost make him to rule over the works of Thy hands; Thou hast put all things under his feet," (vv 4-6 NAS)

2. then Genesis 1:28 goes on, "And God blessed them; and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule...'" (Genesis 1:28 NAS)

- a. so we find that woman, alongside man, had not only a place in ruling God's creation
- b. but also in perpetuating that creation through their part in that marvellous creative act known as child-birth
- c. so that between man and wife there could be intimacy that was without shame
- d. and just as woman was taken out of man in the form of a rib, so also in marriage, in a mystical fashion which is past our understanding, these two can become united, one flesh

G. But sin entered

1. and with the sin, the curse

- a. thorns and thistles now ruled God's creation
- b. toiling replaced ruling
- c. pain became a multiplied part of child-birth
- d. men would dominate women
- e. yet that is not the end of the story

2. Christ came as the second Adam, to restore peace

- a. in Christ, some of the aspects of the curse were ameliorated so that husbands are instructed to love their wives even as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it
 - (A) you can see the loving care God put into creating Eve
 - (B) children, love your Mom and honour her
 - (C) husbands, love your wife and honour her
- b. Christ is preparing us a place in heaven, Revelation 22:2, tells of the tree of life overspans the river,

yielding fruit every month, with leaves for the healing of the peoples

- (A) that tree of life which Adam and Eve were prevented from eating because of their sin
- (B) will be available to all of God's elect children
- (C) for there will no longer be any curse (Rev 22: 3)
- (D) in that day, Moms, God's Divine Plan will be finished, fully accomplishing what He began in Genesis 1 and 2

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Various English versions of the Holy Bible are used in this sermon. Some (for example, the AV, ASV, and NAS) seek to be strictly translations, while others (and especially PHIL) contain paraphrasing which involves a certain amount of subjective interpretation. Nevertheless, there is little material difference in meaning among these. Some prove slightly clearer on some verses than others. Looking at more than one version sometimes sheds additional light on any particular verse. Explanatory additions to the Bible text are shown in [square brackets]. The versions are identified as:

ASV	American Standard Version of 1901
AV	Authorized (King James) Version
NAS	New American Standard version © 1975 The Lockman Foundation
NIV	New International Version © 1984 by the International Bible Society
NKJV	New King James Version © 1979 Thomas Nelson Inc., Publishers
NLT	1996 New Living Translation © 1996 by Tyndale Charitable Trust
PHIL	New Testament Translation © 1972 by J. B. Phillips
RSV	Revised Standard Version © 1946, 1952 by the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A.
WEY	The New Testament in Modern Speech © 1902, 1912 R. F. Weymouth

Further sermons and illustrations may be found at the web-site, www.holwick.com. Materials in this sermon from Rev. David Holwick's database are identified by “Kerux” followed by a sermon or illustration number.

2. “I Don't Understand” by Charles Schultz, Kerux illustrations #30210