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“Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh” (Genesis 2:24).

The Origin of the Home

Lesson Subject: God is the creator and preserver of the home.

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What is the very foundation of human society? The home!

There are four basic institutions in human society: the home, the school, the state, and the church. Of the four, the home was the first instituted and is the most basic. As goes the homes of a society, so go the churches, the schools, and the nation itself.

It is not enough that we have homes and live together in family units. We must have homes that are pleasing to God. We must have Christian homes to survive personally and nationally in peace. This study goes back to the beginning of the human race. The comments which follow will cover the Bible account of the creation of the first man and woman, and the institution of the first home as God brought them together. The biblical account is recorded in Genesis 1:26 — 2:25. The central truth to see is, "God is the creator and preserver of the home. "

I. PERSONS OF THE HOME (Genesis 1:26-29)

A. They are designed by God himself (Genesis 1:26, 27; 2:7, 21, 22). Human beings are not the result of chemical or biological accident. *"God created man in his own image. . . male and female created he them"* (Genesis 1:27). The man came from the dust of the ground (Genesis 2:7) and the woman came from the side of man (Genesis 2:21, 22), both formed by the creative hand of God. God personally created the first man and the first woman.

B. They are designed male and female (Genesis 1:27). The male was

created before the female. The female was created from the male. They were designed physically, spiritually, and psychologically to match one another. God brought them together and blessed their union. There is no Bible basis for two persons of the same sex (whether male or female) cohabiting with one another. Such is an abomination and strictly forbidden on the pain of death in the Bible.

C. They are designed in the image of God (Genesis 1:27). Both the man and the woman are in the image and likeness of God. That means that each is a threefold person (spirit, soul, and body) as God is threefold (Father, Son, Spirit). They have the power of moral discernment between good and evil. They are immortal beings who exist forever. Every person you meet is of infinite value, for he is made in the image and likeness of God. And every person is spiritually equal to every other person.

D. They are designed with the capacity and for the purpose of reproduction (Genesis 1:28). There is no sin in the begetting of children. God made human beings with the sex urge, and made them capable of satisfying that desire in a holy relationship called marriage. God will make nothing that is sinful.

E. They are designed to have dominion over the earth (Genesis 1:28, 29). Both the man and the woman have been given dominion "*over the fish, . . . the fowl. . . the cattle, and over all the earth*" (Genesis 1:26). Domesticating animals, farming the soil, mining ore from the earth, etc., are expressions of that dominion.

God made the man and the woman for the purpose of establishing the home, the foundation of human society.

II. HEAD OF THE HOME (Genesis 2:7, 15-17)

A. Man was created by the personal ministry of God (Genesis 2:7). "*The LORD God formed man.*" One can see the graphic picture of God gathering the dust of the ground and designing it in the shape of a human body. Then He breathed His own breath (Spirit of life) into that body, and man became a living soul. "*It is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves*" (Psalm 100:3).

B. Man was created distinct from the animals (Genesis 2:7). God created fish and fowl by saying, "*Let the waters bring forth*" (Genesis 1:20, 21). He created the birds and animals by saying, "*Let the earth bring forth*" (Genesis 1:24). But He created the man and the woman by a personal ministry, not by His spoken word. The human is distinct from the animal in

view of his creation.

C. Man was created for productive labor (Genesis 2: 15). He was placed in the beautiful Garden of Eden *"to dress it and to keep it"* (Genesis 2:15). Such activity would involve both his body and his mind as he planned and performed his duties. God designed man to work. No one can be truly happy without some kind of productive labor.

D. Man was created with the power and responsibility of moral choice (Genesis 2:15, 16). God caused every tree which is good for food and beautiful to the sight to grow in Eden. But He caused a *"tree of the knowledge of good and evil"* to grow there also (Genesis 2:17). The man could eat of every tree there, except the one. It was withheld from the man as an act of mercy, *"for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die"* (Genesis 2:17). Man had the choice to eat or not, believe and obey God or not. He had the power of choice and was responsible for his choice.

E. Man was created to be head over the home. No mention is made of man's headship over the woman until after the fall into sin. Then God said to the woman, *"Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee"* (Genesis 3:16). God knew the position in which He would place man as head of the woman, and made him capable of filling it. All through the Bible the headship of man in the home is emphasized (Ephesians 5:22-33; I Corinthians 11:3; I Timothy 2:11-15). To change that order is to disobey God.

III. HEART OF THE HOME (Genesis 2:18-24)

A. The woman was made for the man (Genesis 2:18). God said, *"It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him."* Everything in creation was *"very good"* (Genesis 1:31) except the fact that man had no one who matched his nature. He needed a *"help meet"* — one to answer back, one to match his nature, one to be his companion. All the animals of the earth came before Adam and he named them, but not one matched him. Humans are distinct from animals in their origin and in their nature. The man needed a woman, one who shared his own nature in the image and likeness of God. So God made the woman to answer that great need in the man for companionship.

B. The woman was made from the man (Genesis 2:21, 22). God caused Adam to sleep, took a rib from his body, made the woman, awoke Adam and brought the woman to him. The account suggests (1) man and woman are one in nature, (2) man and woman are equal before God, (3) man

and woman belong together since they had a common origin, (4) the man is to treasure the woman as a part of himself.

God explained to Adam what had happened, how the woman had come to be. Adam exclaimed, *"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). Adam had named all the animals, and he named the woman also in his excitement in finding one to be his companion.

C. The woman was made to be with the man (Genesis 2:24). God explained that the attraction between male and female was His design, saying *"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh "* Humans are not like animals which pass from one partner to another. They are to *"leave"* parents and *"cleave"* to a partner. Union as one is at the heart of the marriage relationship. *"So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church. . . let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband"* (Ephesians 5:28, 29, 33).

God made the man to be the head of the home and established that position in His divine wisdom. He made the woman to be the heart of the home and to bless each member with her tenderness and loving care. Blessed is the home with that kind of husband-wife spirit.

IV. PERMANENCE OF THE HOME (Genesis 2:23, 24)

The great enemy of the home today is the custom of divorce. It is the curse of home life in America. In colonial days we had 1 divorce in 1500 marriages. By 1812 it was 1 in 500. Today it is 1 in 2.4; almost 50 percent of the marriages today end in divorce. God never intended it to be so. Marriage is to be a commitment for life.

A. Separation is to mark a permanent marriage: *"A man (shall) leave his father and mother."* The marriage commitment excludes parents, other lovers, and other marriage partners. It is a one-to-one commitment for life. Parents must take care to leave their children alone when they are married. The supreme commitment of a married person is to his marriage partner.

B. Attraction is to mark a permanent marriage: *"cleave unto his wife."* That means the two are to be "glued together" so as to be "permanently bound." To break a marriage relationship should be as serious

as amputating a leg or an arm of the physical body. He who leaves his marriage partner is bringing great injury to himself. He is trading one kind of problem for another.

C. Union is to mark a permanent marriage: *"They shall be one flesh."* Think of your physical body. The arm is of the same *"flesh"* as the leg. The head is of the same flesh as the heart. They are not separate because they are different organs. They form one body. So the union of *"one flesh"* is established in the physical union of the man and woman in marriage. To say they *"shall be"* means they shall continue to be one each with the other: they shall become and remain one flesh. That is why marriage is so sacred and divorce is so serious. It involves the union as *"one flesh"* before God.

V. PURITY OF THE HOME (Genesis 2:25)

Why did God see fit to report that the original pair were unclothed without embarrassment? *"They were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed."*

God may have been revealing to us the absolute and total innocence of the humans before they sinned by eating the forbidden fruit. Or, God may have been showing us the sanctity of human love in the marriage relationship.

The husband and wife may be *"both naked. . . and. . . not ashamed"* even today in the marriage relationship. There is nothing base or sinful about such an appearance when it is in the marriage relation. It is when it is taken outside the God-ordained sphere that it becomes a sinful rebellion against God.

Read the book called The Song of Solomon. It is a song written for marriage feasts and is a praise of human love. The frank language sounds strange in our American culture, but it is the recognition in Holy Scripture of the sanctity and purity of human love.

Hebrews 13:4 teaches that marriage is honorable for all people and in all of its relationships as long as the marriage bed is kept sacred. God will judge the immoral, but He honors the intimate aspects of marriage as He ordained it. We can have no higher view of the purity of marriage than that.

Have you grasped the central truth of this lesson? "God is the creator and preserver of the home." It means that when you have an honorable home life, you are pleasing God. If you do not have a proper home life, you are not pleasing God. As an act of worship and as a spiritual sacrifice, commit your life to having a proper home, whatever it costs you personally.

QUESTIONS

1. Why is the home the foundation of society?
2. Why is the man the head of the home?
3. How is the woman the heart of the home?
4. In what way are humans distinct from the animals?
5. What does Genesis 2:24 mean to you personally?
6. How is Ephesians 5:28-33 related to this study?
7. In what sense are a husband and wife "one flesh"?
8. How is the Song of Solomon related to this study?
9. What does Hebrews 13:4 teach about marriage?
10. What can you do to make your home more like God designed it?