



# New Covenant

Presbyterian Church

## Genesis 2:18-25 Small Group Questions

1. Who instituted marriage? What statements in the text highlight this for us? Why is it important that we acknowledge this fact?

The fact that the Lord put Adam to sleep in order to create a wife out of him and for him teaches us that God instituted marriage. The Lord brought Adam his bride. It was not man who devised the institution of marriage out of any sort of societal evolution. This also teaches us that we are to seek the Lord to bring us the godly wife that He gives His sons in this world. God brought Eve to Adam as a comparable helpmate for him. Here the words of Proverbs 18:22 and 19:14 ring true: “He who finds a wife finds a good thing, and obtains favor from the Lord” and “Houses and riches are an inheritance from fathers, but a prudent wife is from the Lord.”

This also shows that the Lord would sovereignly bring a bride to His Son, the last Adam. Jonathan Edwards famously put it this way: “The spouse of the Son of God, the Lamb’s wife...is that for which all of the universe was made. Heaven and earth were created that the Son of God might be complete in a spouse,”<sup>1</sup> and “God created the world for His Son, that He might prepare a spouse or bride for Him to bestow His love upon; so that the mutual joys between this bride and bridegroom are the end of the creation.”<sup>2</sup>

2. What does the creation of Eve from the rib and side of Adam teach us?

That God created her equal to the man, that man is incomplete without woman and that in marriage man and woman really are “bone of bone and flesh of flesh.”

**EQUALITY:** Thomas Goodwin suggested that Eve was taken out of the rib of Adam “to show the equality of the wife to the husband. She was not taken out of his foot, but out of his side, because she is to be a companion to him.” Matthew Henry made the famous similar observation when he wrote: “the woman was made of a rib out of the side of Adam; not made out of his head to rule over him, nor out of his feet to be trampled upon by him, but out of his side to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected, and near his heart to be beloved.”

**COMPLETION:** Man cannot fulfill himself or the creational ordinance of God to “be fruitful and multiply” without the woman.

**UNION:** Man and woman are united. Since woman comes from the man, the union of a husband and wife is a real and true union.

3. What does the creation of woman from man teach us about the man and the woman? Does it teach their exaltation or humility?

The creation of woman from man teaches both the exaltation and humility of man and woman for the following reasons:

Adam was created with exaltation in the marital relationship because he was made first and was given the charge to be provider and protector. Adam was created with humility because he needed Eve to fulfill him and God’s creational mandate to “be fruitful and multiply, fill the earth and subdue it.” Eve was created with exaltation because she alone could fulfill Adam and the creational mandates. She was made a suitable helpmate for him. This is beautiful harmony and equality. Eve was created with humility because she was created under the headship of her husband. In this way, God was reminding man and woman that though they were image bearers and exalted over all the other creation, they were nevertheless creatures who were needy and under the headship of God Himself. The Apostle Paul picks up on this in his teaching of 1 Cor. 11 and Ephesians 5.

4. What is the greatest purpose of God in the creation of woman from man and the institution of marriage? In what way is this shown in God taking a rib from Adam and making a woman out of it to be His bride? How does this teach us about Christ and the church?



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Marriage is a picture of the union of Christ and His Church. The New Testament often returns the language of the Genesis 2 account to show forth the union of Christ and His church. In fact, the structure of the Bible teaches us that all of the Scriptures are moving to the great wedding of the Lamb of God to His bride, the church. The Scriptures open with a wedding, Jesus began his earthly ministry at a wedding and the Bible closes with that vision of the church coming down out of heaven to the New Earth to be a bride for the Son of God. Jonathan Edwards, reflecting on the teaching of Ephesians 5:30-33, explained how the woman being taken from the rib of Adam showed the union of Christ and His church. He wrote:

God's making Eve of Adam's rib was to typify the near relation and strict union of husband and wife, and the respect that is due in persons of that relation from one to the other, as is manifest from the account given of it. Gen. 2:21-24, "And the Lord caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he [slept]: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh."<sup>5</sup>

Edwards then drew out a profound redemptive-historical observation about Christ and the Church from the details of the Lord putting Adam to sleep, taking the rib and making woman out of it and then presenting her to Him on the following day—the Sabbath Day—when He wrote:

Adam was first made on the later part of the sixth day, but was as it were imperfectly made, because without a companion. And when he had seen his want, probably on the night that followed that day, when he was in a deep sleep, Eve was made of his rib. And when he rose from his deep sleep in the morning, and the sun arose, and all things were renewed, he received his beauteous spouse that had been formed of him. She was brought and presented to him in perfect beauty and purity: which represents being of Christ by his death and his obtaining the church by his death, his dying to present it to himself, a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, his rising from the dead to receive the church that he had purchased. This was on the sabbath day, the day of this resurrection of Adam, and the first complete day of his life, and the first day of his complete life; his life the day before being incomplete because without his companion. So Christ's resurrection, when he rose from that death whereby he had purchased the church, was on the sabbath, the first day of the week, the first day of Christ's immortal life, and the day when he first received what he had purchased by his death, viz. the church actually redeemed, who is the fullness or completeness of him who fills all in all.<sup>6</sup>

Elsewhere Edwards set out to prove this when he wrote:

As Christ...rose from that death that he died, by which he purchased and obtained the church, being by that means created anew, so Adam rose from that deep sleep that he slept, which made way for her formation and by which he obtained her. As when Adam arose from his deep sleep, God brought the woman to him, whose being his deep sleep had made way for, and gave her to him; so when Christ rose from the dead, God brought the church to him. It was gathered and brought home to Christ in an extraordinary manner soon after his resurrection. As Adam rose and received his wife, "bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh" [Gen. 2:23], and when out of himself from near his heart, so Christ received his church that is "of his flesh, and of his bone" (Eph. 5:30), and as the product of his most dear dying love. As this day was a day wherein God was refreshed and rejoiced in beholding his works, and a day of rejoicing to Adam in that he then received his wife, and a day of rejoicing to Eve, being then first received into union with her companion, so the day of Christ's resurrection was a day of rejoicing to God the Father, to Christ, and also to the church, which was then begotten again to a living hope by his resurrection.<sup>7</sup>

Matthew Henry also made this observation when he noted: "Adam was a figure of him that was to come; for out of the side of Christ, the second Adam, his spouse the church was formed, when he slept the sleep, the deep sleep, of death upon the cross, in order to which his side was opened, and there came out blood and water, blood to purchase his church and water to purify it to himself."<sup>8</sup>