

The Two Becoming One

SGC Marriage Seminar

Session 1: The Two Becoming One

“There is a mysterious experience of becoming one that is unique to biblical marriage. A husband and wife who stand before God in the covenant of marriage as sinners saved by grace possess the potential for a depth of intimacy that no other relationship can touch. It is an intimacy that clearly involves the physical, but much more as well—an intimacy of heart and mind, of spirit and vision, of faith and hope. No marriage in this fallen world is all it could be. Yet all Christian marriages have this extraordinary potential.”

-- Gary Ricucci, Love that Lasts, 116

Introduction

2 Becoming 1

1. Marriage is 2 becoming 1—not like the dye in my shirt (1 with no effort), but like the oil and vinegar that unite in salad dressing (1 only with effort).
2. Gary Ricucci quote above
3. World wants happy marriages and is filled with advice to get it.
4. We need the one authoritative counsel:

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,¹⁷ that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work. (2 Tim. 3:16-17)—marriage is a “good work” that requires us to be “righteous,” “competent” as husbands and wives.

B. The Course

1. Session 1 – The Two Becoming One
2. Session 2 – Love in the Face of Sin, Weakness, and Uniqueness
3. Session 3 – Who’s in Charge Here?
4. Session 4 – The Gift of Romance (Rated PG)

II. The Two are One in the Image of God (Genesis 1:24-31)

- Scripture does not begin with the differences between men and women, but with their common ground.
- A. Both are made by God (v. 26). *Your Source is God.*
 - B. Both are made in the image of God (v. 26). *Your worth comes from God.*
 - Image = similarity + distinction (e.g., picture of Anne)

- C. Both are given a mandate by God (v. 28). *Your purpose is defined by God.*
- D. Both are “very good” because of God (v. 31). *Your value is defined by God.*
- E. Application
 - 1. Your spouse is hand-crafted by God himself.
For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. ¹⁴ I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well. (Ps. 139:13-14)
 - 2. Your spouse is owned by Another, not you.
*Know that the LORD, he is God!
 It is he who made us, and we are his;
 we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. (Ps. 100:3)*

III. The Two are Two as Male and Female (Genesis 2:4-20)

- Our differences are given by God as well. Sin corrupts those differences, but it does not create them.
- A. We are “male and female” by God himself (1:27).
- B. Man is made first, then woman from that man (2:7, 22).
I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet. ¹³ For Adam was formed first, then Eve; ¹⁴ and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. (1 Tim. 2:12-14)

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 (Matthew Henry).
- C. Man is given the task; woman is created as his helpmate (2:8, 15, 18).
 - 1. A man’s vocation will always be a central concern to him, and it should be.
 - 2. A woman’s vocation will always relate to her husband. It will always include being his “helpmate,” even if it includes more than this.
 - Being a helpmate is nowhere seen as demeaning, for God himself is our helpmate:
*Behold, God is my helper; the Lord is the upholder of my life.
 (God is our “helper...the upholder of my life”). (Ps. 54:4)*

- D. The man has a responsibility to teach the Word of God to his wife (2:16-17).
- E. Man (Adam) names woman (Eve), a symbol of authority in the ancient world, as it is today (2:23; 3:20).¹
- F. What we see illustrated in Genesis 1-2 is what we call 'Complementarianism,' something we will develop in session 3.
 - 1. *We do not affirm what is called Egalitarianism*
 - a. The only differences are biological, no more.
 - b. God's redemption has undone whatever lingering differences there were (e.g., Gal 3:28).
 - 2. *We affirm what is called Complementarianism*
 - a. There are God-designed differences between men and women that include biology and physiology, but which go beyond these.
 - b. These do not indicate superiority and inferiority, but simply distinctions.
 - c. Men and women are to serve in different "roles" in the family and the church.
 - d. Thus, apostles, elders, and deacons are to be male, and the husband is the head of the wife.
 - e. These are understood biblically, not chauvinistically.
 - f. Thus, men are called to lead, love, protect, shepherd, and care for their wives for the goals of her growth, happiness, and blessing in Christ.
 - g. Women are called to submit, respect, love, and labor for their husbands that they might flourish in their various callings.²
- G. Application
 - 1. Husbands, are you confident about being the head of your home?
 - 2. Husbands, are you godly as the head of your home? (Not a tyrant, not an absentee)
 - 3. Wives, are you confident about being a "helpmate" to your husband?
 - 4. Wives, are you godly as his helpmate? (Not a nag, not a doormat)

IV. The Two Become One in Marriage (Genesis 2:20-25)

- Now the two made in the image of God and made as male and female come together as husband and wife.

¹ Mary Kassian, *Women, Creation, and the Fall*, 18-19; Wenham, "Genesis," *New Bible Commentary*, 63.

² 1 Corinthians 11:3, "But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a wife is her husband, and the head of Christ is God"; Ephesians 5:22-23, "Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. ²³ For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior." In a later session we'll develop this more.

A. The two are one in being perfect complements.

“a helper fit for him...bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh” (Gen. 2:20-23)

“After we have surveyed, as far as possible, all the other creatures in the world, eventually God presents us with one who is special, one who strikes a deeper chord in us than anyone else was able to do. Although the person may be very unlike us in many important ways, still there is something inside us which recognizes the other as being bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, akin to us on a level far deeper than personality. This is a blood tie, an affinity of the heart in every sense. It is as if we discover an actual kinship with the one we love, which the marriage ceremony serves only to make official. To be married is to have found in a total stranger a near and long-lost relative, a true blood relative even closer to us than father or mother.”³

1. What we see physically with Adam and Eve we are to experience in our marriage.
2. There was no other “helper fit” except for Eve.
3. Eve was made from a part of him, his rib in fact.
4. There is uniqueness in man being made for woman, but there is also a uniqueness that extends to each couple.
5. In Christian marriage you and your spouse are to experience a profound completeness.
6. We cannot be all that God wants us to be without our spouse.

B. The two are one in their Marriage

“...leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife” (2:24).

1. “Leave his father and his mother”

First, a married man is to leave his father and his mother. The expectation which the covenant community must accept as normative is that a new marriage will sever what is otherwise the strongest human bond, for it is the father and the mother whose very bodies give a man his wife. This requirement elevates the marital union above all other personal loyalties, under God. If, in marrying, a man withdraws his primary allegiance from his parents and redirects it to his wife so that they enter into a ‘one flesh’ existence, how much more does this distinguish marriage from all other relationships as well! Marriage is so profound a union that not only may one put one’s wife ahead of all others, one must do so.⁴

2. “Hold fast”

³ Mike Mason, *The Mystery of Marriage*, 26

⁴ Ray Ortlund, Jr., *God’s Unfaithful Wife*, 21-23.

- a. We “hold fast” to the LORD and push aside all false gods: “You shall fear the LORD your God. You shall serve him and hold fast to him, and by his name you shall swear” (Deut. 10:20)
- b. Ruth “held fast” to Naomi: “Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her” (Ruth 1:14), famously saying, “Where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God my God” (1:16).
- c. Eleazar “held fast” to his sword with his cramped hand: “he rose and struck down the Philistines until his hand was weary, and his hand clung to the sword” (2 Sam. 23:9-10).
- d. Verb is active, intentional, physical, tangible.
- e. Appropriate for the challenges of marriage.
- f. Fatigue, children, jobs, financial worries, extended family, time, and of course sin all work against our unity.
- g. Only by “holding fast” do we preserve it.

C. The two are one in their in being “one flesh.”

“...one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed” (2:25)

1. God made us with bodies

- a. Flesh, bodies, and nakedness are God’s idea, and they are solidly pre-fall—before sin.
- b. God is not ashamed of making humans in a bodily way, any more than he is ashamed to fill a universe with unfathomable cosmic wonders that dazzle even professional astronomers.
- c. Even sexuality, the most physical of actions, is to be without shame.
- d. Yet, this being “naked” means even more.

2. Naked means being open

- a. “Not ashamed”
- b. “Shame” often relates to guilt, punishment, fear of being mistreated: “Let me not be put to shame; let not my enemies exult over me” (v. 2).
- c. Thus, “not ashamed” (Gen. 2:25) means no guilt, no punishment, no fear of judgment.
- d. It expresses an openness, a vulnerability, a transparency, a willingness to be completely open with your spouse.
- e. Sexuality is the ultimate expression of this, but it is not at all the only one.
- f. When I express my hurt to my spouse, or my fears, or my dreams, I am also being “naked and...not ashamed.”
- g. There is to be no hiding in a marriage.
- h. There is to be self-control and careful speech and disciplined thoughts, but no hiding.
- i. It is only sin that causes us to hide.

D. Application: Evaluate how well you...

1. ...Are you holding fast?
2. ...Are you “naked and not ashamed”?

V. The Two Refuse to be One at the Fall (Gen. 3:1-17)

- The first effects of sin are to bring division to the first husband and wife. The most important tragic element is our separation from God, but this is first seen at the level of human relationship.
 - A. They begin to hide from each other (3:7)
 - B. They begin to blame each other (3:12)
 - C. They fight for leadership in the marriage (3:16).
 - D. Application: Where are you...
 1. Hiding?
 2. Blame-shifting?
 3. Fighting for leadership?

VI. The Two can be One Again...in Christ (Gen. 3:15; Gal. 3:28)

The gospel promised:

I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel." (Gen. 3:15)

The gospel leads to unity:

I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called,² with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love,³ eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.⁴ There is one body and one Spirit--just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call--⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism,⁶ one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. (Eph. 4:1-6)

- A. Application
 1. In a world of temptation, you can “hold fast” to your spouse.
 2. In a relationship between two sinners, you can be “naked and not ashamed.”
 3. In a culture where half of all marriages end in divorce—whether Christian or not—you can be “one till death do us part.”

VII. Conclusion – For individual prayer, for a date night:

- Take some time in the morning or in the middle of the day to prayerfully consider this, and then grab some time over coffee or on a date to discuss it.
- A. Application from Genesis 1:26-31
1. Your spouse is hand-crafted by God himself.
For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. ¹⁴ I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well. (Ps. 139:13-14)
 2. Your spouse is owned by Another, not you.
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- B. Application from Genesis 2:4-20:
1. Husbands, are you confident about being the head of your home?
 2. Husbands, are you godly as the head of your home? (Not a tyrant, not an absentee)
 3. Wives, are you confident about being a “helpmate” to your husband?
 4. Wives, are you godly as his helpmate? (Not a nag, not a doormat)
- C. Application from Genesis 2:20-25: Evaluate how well you...
1. ...Are you holding fast?
 2. ...Are you “naked and not ashamed”?
- D. Application from 3:1-17: Where are you...
1. Hiding?
 2. Blame-shifting?
 3. Fighting for leadership?