

Genesis 2: 18-25 - It was Not God

Intro

When I was a kid, I used to catch the train home from school with friends. But sometimes they all left without me! Sometimes I would get home, but the key above the back door that I needed to get into my house was not there. There's nothing like being locked out of your own house to make you feel alone. Have you ever felt alone? It's not good...

Not Good

In chapter 1 of Genesis we see just how good God's creation is... 7 times God looks at his creation and sees that it is GOOD (SLIDE)... one of those times he looks and saw that it was (SLIDE) VERY GOOD... But lets read Chapter 2 vs. 18

*¹⁸ The Lord God said, "It is **not good** for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."*

For the first time something is described as NOT GOOD...

It is (SLIDE) **not good** for the man to be alone...

And at this point we need to understand that as much as this is talking about the man himself, in this narrative, the man is it... he is representative of all of humanity...

It is not good for HUMANITY to be alone.

We are made for relationships...

We flourish when relationship is at the centre...

I was talking to someone just the other day and they were describing a night they had out when they ran into a whole bunch of people and reconnected... and it was a delight to them...

This is because we are made for relationships...

It is wired into us... we are relational beings... and one of the implications of this... is that when there's a barrier to relationship... that's almost always because something is wrong...

We shy away from relationships because we fear judgment or feel undervalued...

Or we feel ashamed or fake. Or because we've been deeply hurt by someone... or we've been made to feel on the outer... Or we shy away from community because of clinical anxiety or depression... Or because even though we love people we find relationships draining. Or people find relationships hard because of a language barrier or a racial barrier... or a social barrier...

But one of the best things about Christianity is it's ready to overcome these barriers...

Because where hurt or wrong doing is the barrier for relationship... the gospel of Jesus calls us to acknowledge our wrongs... and seek forgiveness... on the one hand... and on the other hand... if you've received the forgiveness of God, then we are open to extending forgiveness to others...

Now this is hard... and can take time, but where it's possible it's a beautiful reflection of the Gospel at work in our lives.

And where there are other barriers, whether physical, social, cultural, illness, age, disability or any other barrier... the Gospel of Jesus inspires us to love people despite these barriers...

With the kind of other person centredness that Jesus expressed.

Our church is a wonderful community... but I know for a fact... that there are people that are on the margins of our community...

It's true of any church... that there are people who feel on the outer... who have been hurt, or forgotten, or left out.

You probably know those people... or you might be one of those people...

What can we do to go out to the margins and bring them in... because it's not good for us to be alone...

The Remedy

And so it's not good for the man to be alone...

So what is the remedy?

And so in the 2nd part of verse 18 we see the remedy. God says... *I will make a **helper** suitable for him...*

Helper

Helper? Helper?

One dictionary defines helper as: (SLIDE) *a relatively unskilled worker who assists a skilled worker...*

So... is this part of Genesis saying that the remedy for the man's aloneness is that God makes him a *relatively unskilled worker*? And the eventual helper is going to be woman... so what is this verse saying about women?

Listen to Amy Orr-Ewing. She is the Director of the Oxford Centre for Christian Apologetics. And was recently brought out by the Centre for Public Christianity to deliver the Richard Johnson Lecture.

PLAY AUDIO 18:54 – 19:53 (full audio available [here](#))

Psalms 121... *I lift up my eyes to the hills-- where does my help come from? My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth.*

Now... if this word is mostly used to describe God in relation to humanity... then we've got a problem if we think of it as *relatively unskilled worker*...or describing someone as somehow inferior... because it would mean that we'd have to see GOD as inferior to HUMANITY!!!

There is nothing inferior about this word... AT ALL...

One commentary I read said this... "Advocates of male superiority... will have to find support somewhere other than Genesis 2."

Suitable

And so God will make for the man someone who is **suitable** for the man... or right for the man... or fit for the man... or matching the man... or as eminent as the man... Literally **like-opposite** the man

But what does this suitability look like?

Not Quite Right

Well in verses 19 and 20 there's a parade of Animals... God brings them to the man... he names them... showing his authority over them...

But for Adam ^[a] no suitable helper was found.

The animals... are not suitable...

Why? Because... they are not **Like-opposite** him

First they're not like him... as each one comes by it's clear that as amazing as they are as God's creation, they are not like the man – they are not equal to the man... they are not of the same species... and so they are not suitable...

But neither are they opposite him... they don't compliment him... they aren't a good match for him...

They are not suitable... Adam needs someone who is suitable...

Bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh

So in verse 21 it says

²¹ So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs ^[b] and then closed up the place with flesh. ²² Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib ^[c] he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

And then I just love the man's response!!!

*"This is now bone of my bones
and flesh of my flesh;
she shall be called 'woman,'
for she was taken out of man."*

Have you ever walked into a room and had someone respond in poetry?

The man is OVERJOYED at the appearance of the woman! He's ecstatic....

It's lovely and it's actually quite romantic and it affirms the SUITABILITY of the woman and the man for each other...

Bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh means... something like "Blood relations"

They are the closest kind of family... they FEEL affinity for one another...

But it's also a reference to the woman being made from the rib of the man...

She is LIKE him... she is made of the same stuff as him... they share DNA they are of the same substance...

This is a much better partnership than the man and the animals...

Sometimes you hear of a widow who talks about their dog as their constant companion – and some of you will experienced the closeness you can have with pets... but it pales in significance to the companionship of that widows loving HUSBAND...

But she is opposite him... though they are of the same substance... and therefore equal... they are not the same...

The man and the woman complement each other...

There is a both EQUALITY... and diversity

There is complementarity.... They are suitable for one another...

She is no relatively unskilled worker... when he was on his own... working in the garden... it was not good...

And yet... now that god has made them male and female... in his image... it is VERY GOOD...

God has made humanity male and female... there is inbuilt diversity in humanity... this is reflective of God himself... diversity in the trinity...

Total equality of value... and glorious complementarity...

And God says that this is very good...

Which is why (as it says in verse 24) a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife and they become one flesh...

The oneness... and the unity... of marriage... and the closeness and the complementarity... at every level, emotional, sexual, spiritual, physical...

is a profound and wonderful demonstration of God's very good design...

when we hear of someone getting engaged... We squeak with joy...

Part of that is because Hollywood and our culture have told us to prize the romance of a wedding...

But part of that is because we feel how right it is... how reflective it is of God's goodness in creating humanity... in its diversity...

But even though we squeak with joy...

Sometimes we wish it were us..

Marriage is a wonderful expression of the goodness of the created order... maybe even the best picture of the complementarity and equality of the sexes... (when a marriage is good)...

And the passage seems to say... because... of the goodness of God's creation... marriage is also a really good thing...

But what does that mean for people who aren't married?

(Widowed, Experience gender dysphoria, Divorced, Gay, Single)

Are people who are not married somehow less expressive of God's good design?

NO. How do I know?

1) Because Jesus was single... and so was Paul (he was probably a widower). And I know that Jesus was as fully expressive of humanity as any human before or since...

And so we know then that the male femaleness of humanity is about more than just individuals pairing off... but is expressed in humanity at a much broader level... As well as between individuals who are not married

2) Because even for married people marriage is not the end game...

I will not be married to Susie forever...

In fact our marriage and every marriage points to something far greater... It says in Ephesians 5 that marriage points to the relationship of Christ and the church...

In fact it points to a time where marriages won't exist anymore... rather, we all be gathered around the throne... as single people singing praises to Jesus...

We will in effect be married to Jesus...

Which is the one marriage that we truly can't do without!!!

Just as marriage wonderfully represents the goodness of the male female diversity of God's creation... so singleness points us to the future of humanity... it points us to heaven.

WE need to do a better job of honouring singleness in our churches... because in the end... that's all of our future... and it will be a glorious future...

A future where in fact... we will never be alone... a future where our hope in Christ, will find it's fulfillment in deep relationships... where the barriers to relationships, like sin, and hurt and pain and illness, and language and race and culture have all melted away... as we all as one look to Christ seated on the throne.

Before the fall

As a final thing... it's worth also just noticing verse 25... the man and the woman were naked and felt no shame...

This is such a wonderful picture of the security and vulnerability that can be experienced in relationships...

But it's also pointing us forward to chapter 3, where as a result of their disobedience to god... the man and the woman realized they were naked... and they hid...

And because of sin... all our relationships are touched and tainted in such a way that leaves way for hurt and pain and suspicion and estrangement and abuse...

And this makes us all long all the more for our future with Christ where all the sin and hurt in our relationships will be finally undone, where our sin and the sin of those who hurt us will be dealt with...

Where we will find perfect peace and contentment in Christ.

Conclusion

It's not good for humanity to be alone...

We are in diversity... male and female... created for relationship

We can find that in each other... we can find that in friendship... we can find that in marriage...

But ultimately... we can know that in Christ, and in the community that is gathered around his throne in heaven... that we long for ... and that the church is a picture of ... in him... we will never be alone...