

## Were Adam and Eve the First Human Beings?

- All right, super excited. Hey, we are in a great book of the Bible called Genesis. We're in chapter two. Go ahead, if you have your Bible, and open it, and if you're like, "I don't know the Bible," just open it. You're hitting the nail. It's right there at the beginning. Super simple. And what we've learned so far is that, in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. So the book opens with this massive panoramic global shot of God speaking everything into existence and then preparing it for human life. And this week, the camera narrows in, and it's a close-up on Adam and Eve, our first parents. After Jesus, this would be the most well-known story in the Bible, in the history of the world. And so we're gonna meet our first parents. We're gonna look at the beginning of human life and history and sex and gender and marriage, and I'm gonna have a really good time. You may not. We'll see how this goes for both of us. Now, as we get into it, some would ask, were Adam and Eve real historical figures? Did they actually exist? Two free resources you can find at [realfaith.com](http://realfaith.com) in the store. There's a study guide and also the "Doctrine" book is a systematic theology. They're free. You get what you pay for, so lower your expectations, but go get those at Real Faith, in the store. I won't get into details. I'll leave it for you to investigate, but I'm just going to treat Adam and Eve like normal, regular human beings, just like us. Genesis 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 tells us that Adam, he was single, and that was not good, that he got married, that he and his wife sinned, that they had kids who were evil, and then they died. That's a normal human life, just like you are, so we're just going to assume that they were just normal human beings like you and I. And one of the things that's interesting is that genetic research is starting to show that the Bible is true. The point is this. Follow the truth, and you end up at God. And what they are finding through genetic studies is as they're mapping the genome, as they're looking at human genetics, they can trace human ancestry back to, shocking, one man and one woman. There was a book that is getting a bit of buzz right now in the academic world. It's called "The Genealogical Adam and Eve: The Surprising Science of Universal Ancestry," and what it says is, oh my goodness, if you go back far enough, we had one man, one woman, and that's where it all started. They will call them mitochondrial Adam and Eve. We will call them Adam and Eve, and so that's where we find ourselves. So what we're looking at is the man and the woman. First, we're gonna look at where God placed them, and then why God created them. So we're gonna look first and foremost at this issue in Genesis chapter two, that God created us to live physically and spiritually. I'm not gonna deal with all of the geography here. I'm just gonna get into two big issues, but just to set it up, this book is originally received by people who were in the wilderness. They were created and given the Promised Land. You'll hear the boundaries of it in a moment. They lived there for 1600 years, and then they relocated to Egypt. They lived there for 440 years. Now they're heading home, and they're wandering around the wilderness for a generation, and they've never seen this home that God has prepared for them, that we now call the nation of Israel. And so God is explaining to them what awaits them, to encourage them to continue on the journey, in the same way that Jesus tells us about heaven so we keep going until we get there. So here's what we read. "These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens. When no bush to the field was yet in the land and no small plants of the field had yet sprung up, for the Lord God had not caused it to rain on the land." It's

not going to rain until the days of Noah. You'll see that coming up. "And there was no man to work the ground, and a mist was going up from the land and was watering the whole face of the ground." It goes on to say, "Then the Lord God formed the man." Started with one guy named Adam, "From the dust of the ground," there's this physical body "Breathed into his nostrils the breath of life," there's his spiritual soul. "And the man became a living creature and the Lord God planted a garden in Eden in the east, and there he put the man he had formed. And out of the ground the Lord God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food." He's gonna provide an environment. "The tree of life was in the midst of the garden and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." That's the choice between life and death. "A river flowed out of Eden, waters the garden, and it divided and became four rivers. The first is the Pishon that flowed around the whole land of Havilah." He's giving them the geographical coordinates for where they are ultimately going to be once their journey is concluded. "There is gold and the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there." He's telling them there's riches. Just keep going. It's like telling us about heaven. Don't give up just yet. It's gonna be worth that when you get there. "The name of the second river is the Gihon. It is the one that flowed around the whole land of Cush. And the name of the third river is the Tigris," which we know about. "And the fourth is the Euphrates." So here God gives the boundaries for what is the Promised Land that they are venturing to, and he is encouraging them to continue. Now, what we see here is God forming us, and what it says is that, in the Bible, God is like a potter and we are like clay, and when a potter works with clay, the potter becomes intimately involved in the shaping and forming and intentional designing of the clay, and here in creation, God is the potter, and it's like human beings are the clay. Previously, God was less personally involved in creation. It says that he spoke things into existence. Here, it uses this analogy that he is literally handcrafting human life. And what it says is that you are one person in two parts. You have a physical body made from the dust of the earth and you have a spiritual soul made from the breath of God, and you need to know that to live a full human life and to enjoy your life, you need to tend to your body and your soul. So physically, healthy decisions, nutrition, exercise, hydration, just the stuff of taking care of your physical wellbeing, but in addition, there is the spiritual, because you are made with a soul, and God breathed into you the breath of life. And what happens is we tend to pay far more attention to our body than to our soul, and we have a far better plan for our physical health than our spiritual health. And so I just ask you, as we're on the beginning of a new year, do you have a plan for your body and your soul, for your seen and your unseen, for your physical and your spiritual? God made you one person in two parts. They affect one another and you need to care for both parts, and within this, one thing that we find in our culture is we pay a lot of attention to the body, and there is really no true understanding or healthy awareness of the soul. And so what we hear is in something called the... This would be the Bible for mental health disorders. It is called "The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders." For those who are clinicians, counselors, sociologists, and therapists, they would turn to this as their Bible to diagnose clinical human problems, mental, emotional difficulties and troubles, and what's interesting, the Bible mentions our soul here at the very beginning and moving forward hundreds of times. This "Diagnostic Manual for the Treatment of Mental Illness" mentions the soul zero times. The point is this. You can't really help someone unless you address the entire person. And let me say, you can have a perfectly architected life

for physical health, and still be a broken, unhealthy person, unless you also have a plan for your soul. And this is in fact true, that ultimately, prayer, scripture, worship, the presence of God, Sabbath day, certain things that God has given us are for the wellbeing of our soul, and that sometimes what we do is we only address that which we see. We don't address that which God sees. And sometimes there is inner healing. There is forgiveness. There is the presence and power of the Holy Spirit that helps to heal us from the inside out, and for some of you, your problems are not physical. They're spiritual. For some of you, it's not about living a healthier life. It's about praying in the Spirit and being filled with the Spirit, and literally understanding the demonic realm that is also invisible and spiritual and against you. And this is because God made us one person in two parts, and God made the world in a way that is corollary to the way that he made us. So the world we live in is a physical world, but it is connected to a spiritual world. The reality is comprised of two realms, and that ultimately, until we accept and acknowledge this unseen spiritual realm, we don't have room for things like our soul, God, angels, the ministry of the Holy Spirit, spiritual warfare, and the like, and all of that is coming up next week in Genesis 3. And ultimately, all of this creation of man to live physically and spiritually in the presence of God, by the power of God, happens in a garden in Eden. So Eden is a region. In the middle, there is a garden, and this garden is the connecting point between heaven and earth. This is where the unseen and the seen, the physical and the spiritual come together. And ultimately, this is where Adam is going to meet with God. You'll see that if you come back next week. In addition, there is an angel there. In addition, Satan shows up there. This is not just a geographic location. This is a spiritual realm that connects the seen and the unseen worlds. This place will continue to show up throughout Genesis. For example, there's a guy named Jacob, and a ladder opens up and the unseen realm comes into the seen realm. And the point is simply this, that there's a lot more going on in the world than you and I see, that there's a lot more to reality than you and I are consciously aware of, that in addition to being physical, you are spiritual, and in addition to the physical battles you face, there are spiritual battles that you face as well. And so that is where he made us, that is how he made us, and now we want to look at why God created us. Why are we here? And the first thing we read is this in Genesis chapter two. God created us to work and to worship. "The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. And the Lord commanded the man." He's got orders for him, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree in the garden." How many trees? Every one, but one exception. "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it, you shall surely die." So first God made us to work and to worship. This is before sin enters the world and work then becomes cursed, and so, as we rebel against God and his authority, everything under our authority rebels against us. This is why working a job is so exhausting, and the Bible then calls it toil, and today this would include the supply chain and nobody going to work, and your employees won't show up, and you can't even get something done. That's the world we live in, because of the curse and everything is fallen and broken. But originally, work was good, and work was given to us by God and we are intended to subdue the earth, to fill it, to exercise dominion. That's what we read previously in Genesis. What that means is we're to take all of the natural resources that God has provided us in creation and maximize and harness them through culture-making, business, entrepreneurialism, and development. We need to be good stewards of God's world, but God's

intention is not that we would just leave it, that we would instead harness it for all of its potential so that there could be human life and flourishing. And here Adam is like Jesus. Jesus was perfect while he walked on the earth. Still is today, but he spent the first 90% of his life working a job. God comes to the earth, and he goes to work. That means it's godly to go to work. And sometimes people are lazy and they think that they're godly. You can't be lazy and be godly. You can't not work and not be like your God. And here, Adam is like Jesus. He's without sin, and he's going to work. So whatever job you have, that is a job given to you by the Lord, and the goal is to work wholeheartedly under the Lord, because it is why God made you, in part, was to work and to achieve things. And let's just pray for our whole culture and country. Nobody's working! How many of you are business leaders or owners, and you can't get anybody to show up to work, and you start incentivizing them. I'll pay you a million dollars to cook the fries, and I'll pay for your college, and I'll rub your feet, and I'll, you know... And I'll hug your kids. And they're like, "Nope. I voted for a socialist. I don't need to get out of bed." So this is the brokenness in the world in which we live. And if you're offended, you're wrong. So the next point... The next point is that God made us to worship, and so God placed Adam in a garden just like a priest lives in a temple. This is the place where the priest would worship God. This is where Adam will worship God. And one of the ways that we worship God is by obeying him. God speaks and his word has authority, and if we obey his word, we are blessed, and if we disobey his word, then we are cursed. And so the most important thing we have is God's blessing on our life, and the only way we receive God's blessing is through obedience, because God has an architected plan, and as we've seen so far, God has architected our world, our body, our schedule, our diet. He's going to architect our marriage and our family, and when God has a divine design, if we operate within it, then things work and we are blessed. If we disobey it, then things do not work and we are cursed. And this issue of obeying God is crucial. And let me say that one of the reasons why we struggle to obey God is sometimes we don't really trust that he is in fact good, and that he has our best interests at heart. It is admittedly difficult to obey someone if you think that they're against you. If you're concerned that maybe they don't care about you, that they're using you, that they don't love you, that they're not seeking your best, why would you submit to them and obey them? And so behind the law of God is the heart of God, and once we know the heart of God, then we rightly understand the laws of God. The Bible says that God is a Father and he loves, and any good parent will give rules, commands, instructions for their child. And I want you to know that God is a red light. I call it a red light dad, not a green light dad. I'm a dad. I got five kids. And growing up, my kids would tell you, I say yes far more than I say no. In fact, I'm inclined to start with yes or green light, and I only say no if it's going to hurt the child. So here God tells Adam, it's like a father speaking to a child, to a son, and he says, "Okay, which trees can you eat of? Of all of them. That's green light. With one exception. Don't eat that tree. There's trees that'll cause life. There is the tree of life, and then there is the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. That one tree, if you eat of it, you will," what? "Die." So there's a parenting lesson here. The goal is not to say no to your child all the time. Now, I'm blessed. Our five kids growing up, they were good, godly kids, 'cause Grace was their mother, and so they overcame incredible odds with this father. And so what happened was my kids would ask for whatever they wanted or needed. How many of you have kids, and they just keep asking questions, for things? You have to teach them all kinds of things. You don't need to teach them

how to ask for things. They just sort of pick that up on their own. And my answer was usually, I'm a dad who likes to say yes, and I usually do say yes. Some of you grew up in homes where it always was red light. No, no, no, no, no, no, no. So what happens is that discourages the child. In addition, it causes the child to either rebel or get sneaky. How many of you were that kid? You're like, "Well, if you say no, I'm just gonna rebel. And if you say no, I'm gonna sneak, and you need to catch me if you can." We call that the teen years. And I didn't want my kids to rebel and I didn't want my kids to be sneaky. I wanted them to bring their requests to me, and my inclination was to say yes, and I'd only say no if it was to hurt them. So to give you an example. Some years ago, I went to my youngest daughter. I was like, "Honey, is there anything you've had in your heart that you haven't told your dad, that you would like?" And I thought ice cream, a pony ride, hug. She said, "Yeah, I want to go to Alaska. I want you to rent a float plane. I want to land on a glacier after you buy me a promise ring, and I want to do a cartwheel on a glacier with my dad, with my promise ring." And I was like, "That's more than I was expecting." I was thinking, you know, ice cream, and she looked at me, she said, "So when are we going?" I was like, "Okay." So we did. So I got her a promise ring, we went to Alaska, we got a float plane, we landed on a glacier, she did a cartwheel, I took her photo, and her ring fell off and she lost it in the snow. She comes up, she's like, "I lost my promise ring. I need another one." You do. Boys need to know that you are not a possibility, and so I'm willing to fund this public statement, so we got another one. The point is this. You don't have to rebel against a parent who likes to bless you, and it tells us 80-plus times in Genesis that God blessed. And God is a God who likes to bless, and what he says is, "Everything but one thing," and then he explains why. So again, here's a parenting lesson. You can't just say no. You have to say why. Adam says, "Hey, what's the rules?" God says, "Eat of any tree you want, except for the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, 'cause when you eat it, what's gonna happen? You're gonna..."

- [Audience] Die.

- Die. And oftentimes what parents do, they'll tell children what to do, but not why, and that doesn't train the child. The child doesn't know why. How many of you were the kids, you needed to know the why? You were that kid? Why, why, why, why, why, why, why? There's certain kids, you're just looking at them like, your parents should have named you Why. That's just, you know, because they just need to know why. And oftentimes, parents think they're being annoying, they're being rebellious. Oftentimes the kid is just curious, and they're like, "I don't want to just do what I'm told. I want to learn how to make my own decisions, so you can't just tell me what to do, you gotta tell me the why." And so God tells Adam, "It'll kill you." Okay, that's a good reason. Now we know God's heart is not to restrict our freedom, but to preserve our life. In addition, we're gonna look at why God made us, and God created us for relationship with himself and with others, and we read in Genesis 2:18 through 23. "Then the Lord God said." You'll see that our God is a God who speaks. We are revelation receivers. We are to hear and interpret and communicate back. "It is not," what?

- [Audience] Good.

- "Good that the man should be alone." Have you ever seen a single guy? That's not good. If you're a single guy and you're like, "I disagree," you're wrong. We all see it. You need to deal with reality. So God says, "I will make him a helper fit for him." So here comes his wife. Here's the beginning of marriage, and we love marriage. We believe in marriage. "Now out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, every bird of the heavens, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them, and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all the livestock, the birds of the heaven, every beast of the field." Let me just start here and just say, I think this is kind of funny. So God tells Adam, "Hey, good news. Good news. I got a mate for you, but first, you're gonna name some animals, okay?" So here's Adam. "Oh, Father, please tell me that's not her. No, that's not her. Okay, aardvark." He names it. Next. Next. "Oh, Father, please tell me that's not her. Goat. Okay, okay, so..." Let me say this, he's having a long day, and what happens is, and this is a lot of stress. You're like . Okay, when Eve shows up, she looks amazing because she is amazing. But before that, what God does, God says, "You are a human being. You have differentiation from and dominion over animals." This negates macro-evolution, where animals become people. It's not like there was, you know, an ape and then a half-ape, half-woman, and then a woman. There was an ape, and then there was a woman. Categorically, each creates according to its own kind, and so ultimately Adam is waiting for his wife. Let me just say this tangentially. Once you get a wife, you're going to be waiting. Right? See, the men laugh, and the women are like, "This is offensive." Oh, we've only started, sister. But the point is this. He waits, and let me just see this, though. She's worth waiting for. I didn't... So this happened to me some years ago. My wife's always late, always late. I'm always early. So we have an issue, and so pray for Grace. So what happens is my wife takes longer to get ready, and I'll just tell you, she looks better, so it's a worthwhile investment of time. And Grace is usually late. Poor Grace, she sets all over clocks to different times, and she's not here. She'll be here later. So anyways. So I probably shouldn't be saying any of this. So... I say, "Why do you set your clocks at different times?" She's like, "Well, so then I can be early." I say, "How do you even know? You don't know what time it is." So I remember the one day, I was sitting in the Suburban, 'cause we have five kids, so I load up the five kids, I'm sitting in the car, and I'm waiting for Grace, and I'm waiting and I'm waiting and I'm waiting and I'm getting very upset. And Grace comes out and I said, "Man, I was waiting. I'm frustrated, honey. I was waiting for you." And then in the backseat, my youngest daughter with a cute little voice in her car seat says, "But isn't your beautiful wife worth waiting for?" Shots fired. Okay, dad, dad, you're right. Yes. Let me say this. Sometimes you wait for your girl, but if it's your girl, she's worth waiting for, right, ladies? All right, all right. That was just, that was free. All right. We're back to the story. "But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him, so the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man." Let me just... Okay, so how many of you, your husbands take naps? They fall asleep in their chair. It's in the Bible. Don't judge them. I just want to point this out. Who caused the deep sleep? The Lord did. Your husband is a victim of the Lord. Amen!

- Right? So just, you know, okay. So there we go. So here's the big idea. She's gonna be late and he's gonna be asleep. That's how God made it, okay? That's how God made it. "And while he slept took one of his ribs and closed the place with flesh, and the rib that the Lord had taken

from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. And the man said, "This is at last..." I've been waiting a long time. "Bone of my bones, flesh of my flesh. she shall be called Whoa-man, because she was taken out of woman." And so God made us for relationship with himself and relationship with others. At this point, does Adam have a relationship with God? Yes. Okay, single guys, let me point this out. He had a relationship with God, then he got a job, then he got married. Write that down. Okay? Right? God, job, girl, all right? One, two, three, go, okay? That's your process. He has a relationship with God. Does he have a perfect relationship with God? He does. There's no sin in the world. Adam is still perfect. God is still perfect. They have a perfect relationship. Everything up until this point God said was good. Here's the first thing in human history that God said is not good. It's not good for the man to be alone. How many single guys agree with that? He made a single guy. You're like, he's got a leather couch. He's good at video games. This is not good, okay? It's always a black leather couch. It always is. Black leather couch, huge TV, high-speed internet connection, good at video games, right? There are zero women looking for that guy. There are zero women looking for that guy. He's alone and it's not good. He obviously needs a lot of help. And the point is simply this, that you can be even in a healthy relationship with God, but incomplete unless you're in relationship with others. And we saw that, the last two years, what we did is we isolated people, and how are they doing?

- [Audience Members] Terrible.

- Not good. All of a sudden, the psychologists are like, "Oh, we isolated people and told them to, you know, just live alone. Oh, shocking. They're not doing good." Well, yeah, that's what it says. It's not good to be?

- [Audience] Alone.

- Alone, because you can be alive and not living. And here, in addition to relationship with God, Adam needs relationship with others. So do we. So you're like, "I just need the Lord." You need, well, the Lord says you need others, 'cause what Adam has, he has God above him, he has creation beneath him, but he doesn't have anybody alongside of him. And God already told us in Genesis 1, "Let us," plural language, "make man in our," plural language, "image and likeness, male and female." And so what God says is that he is a Trinity, one God, three persons, Father, Son, and Spirit, and that they live together in unity as peers and equals and partners. And God says, "You can't mirror and image me all by yourself. You need someone alongside of you." And so here, we are talking about God making us in a way that we need each other. This is why church needs to be open. This is why life needs to be lived. This is why people need to be gathering. It's not good to be alone. And so what God does, God has Adam and then he creates Eve. This is the first man, the first woman, the first marriage in the history of the world. Where does Eve come from? His side, the side of Adam. So three things about Eve. One, she is equal. It says that he made them male and female previously in the image and likeness of God. So men and women are equal. They're equal, but Eve comes from the side of Adam, showing equality. Chauvinism would say men should be out front and women should stay behind. Then

the feminists come along and say, "No, we want to reverse this. The women should be out front and the men should be behind," and we have something called the gender wars. God comes along and says, "Actually, I made you both. I made you equal, and she comes from your side. She should stay at your side." So ultimately, my wife Grace, we do everything together. She comes from my side. She is alongside of me, and when we snuggle, what do I tell her? "Welcome home." That's what I tell her. She likes to burrow into me. I like being burrowed into. Works out great, and what I do is I just tell her, "Welcome home," and she feels like that is home for her, because that's where she came from and that's where I love to have her. So Adam and Eve, they are equal, but true or false. They are different. Are men and women different?

- [Audience] Yes!

- Yes. See, we've established last week that there are fixed binary sex, gender, and sexuality categories in the Bible, male, female, masculine, feminine, attraction toward the opposite. And it got very quiet. There was a, "Can we say that?" We just found all the people who went to college, okay? You got confused. You got confused. You went to college, you're like, "I don't know." Well, it's very clear. I have an Adam's apple and a beard. I'm not a girl. There you go, okay? It's not that hard. And so God makes them male and female, but they are different. Men and women are?

- [Audience] Different.

- Different. Well, we don't know this in college athletics, but they're different. I got kicked off of TikTok for saying that this week, and I was like, "Well, did I Tik or Tok wrong? I'm not sure which." What I said was that there's males and females and that men should be in men's sports and women should be in women's sports, because it's true. And so ultimately we have this massive confusion, but men and women are different. They are distinct. In the same way, Grace and I are different. And so like a left and a right hand, there are similarities, but there are strengths and weaknesses. Each is good at something different, and together, we are better. That's how marriage works. So ultimately, Adam and Eve were equal. They're different, and the woman is made to be the helper, and in hearing this, oftentimes women get very offended. That's very offensive. Don't get offended. And first of all, what he's saying is that guys need help. If anybody should be offended, it should be the guy. Well, you're saying I'm messed up. Exactly. You're saying I'm a total disaster? 100%, yes. There you go, right? And so this language of the woman being the helper, first of all, it means that a man needs to be humble enough to say, "You know what? I need to listen. I need to learn, then ultimately I need her and I need her wisdom, and I need her input and I need her help." How many of you, if you were not married, you would not be better? Okay? How many women? You know that your husband without you would not be as good. Amen? And so at the end of the day, this language of helper means that the man needs help, but also it's the same language that God uses for how he relates to us. The Bible says over and over, "The Lord is my helper." He's my helper. Jesus said he would go to heaven and he would send down the Holy Spirit as the helper. God helps me. My wife helps me. My wife has got the same categorical depiction and description as the Holy

Spirit. I need God's help and I need her help to do the things that God has called for us to do. And I just want to say that we love marriage and we believe in marriage, and one of the most important things a man can do is acknowledge that he needs his wife and he needs his Lord, and any man who looks at his Lord and says, "I don't need her," is calling God a liar, because God said, "It's not good to be alone." And so ultimately what happens is everything is good. Even though Adam is still sinless, he's incomplete, so it's not good to be alone. Here's what is good. It's good to find a wife, not a girlfriend that you live with, not six girlfriends that you trade between, but one wife that you covenant with. And Proverbs 18:22 says, "He who finds a wife finds a good thing." That's good. "And finds favor or blessing or help from the Lord." So here's the first wedding, Adam and Eve, and I see it like God is a father walking Eve down the aisle, and then he's the pastor officiating the ceremony. I had this with my oldest daughter, Ashley. On this very stage, I walked her down the aisle. I was the dad, and then I was the pastor that officiated. God is like a father and he is officiating the first marriage. Here's what you need to know. God made us male and female and God made marriage. This is before government. This is before everyone and everything. There's just two people, and God made marriage, and he made it between a man and a woman, and I know people would be like, "I disagree." Well, we disagree with everything in the Bible, and I don't expect people who don't know God to agree with God, but for those who do know, God, we must agree with God. So what happens here is it's one man, one woman. This negates what we would call same-sex marriage, and what is on the horizon is polygamy. I'm just telling you, in our lifetime, we will see it legalized, because right now, it was one man and one woman. They're like, "Why a man and a woman?" And then the next question will be, "Why just one and one?" And if the progressive liberal Christians who have denied the authority of scripture have already caved on a man and a woman, it'll be far more difficult for them to hold a firewall against polygamy, 'cause as we get into Genesis, there are believers who are polygamous. Let me just say it never ends well. Two wives is too many. Amen? Right. I tell you what I think, but I'll just keep going. So what we have here, so Eve is brought to the man, and ultimately here, Eve has had, true or false, ladies? She's had a big day. What has happened to her today? She got made. "Hello? Oh, you're God. Okay." And then God looks at her and says, "You're gonna get married." She's like, "What is that?" "Well, it's where you're in a covenant with a man." "What's a man?" She's learned a lot. How many of you ladies, you would like a little more advanced preparation for your wedding day, right? Let me tell you this, single guys, women start preparing their wedding in their crib. That's when they start. They've already got the bridesmaids figured out and the bridesmaid's dress, and it's a strategic plan that the bridesmaid's dress would be ugly so that they shine a little brighter. It's just, there's a whole thing going on. You know it's true. You've seen the wedding photos. You're like, "Who picked those dresses?" She did. Yeah, she did. And so, and so what happens is, for a woman, preparing her wedding day is a big deal, and the big, big, big deal is, it's the dress. We have a whole show, "Say Yes to the Dress." How do I know this? I have a daughter. I've seen so many episodes of "Say Yes to the Dress." I see white, it's like a trauma trigger. I can't... My daughter loves watching "Say Yes," and I love my daughter, so I snuggle with her, and I don't know why the show's interesting. It's totally predictable. Every time they're like, okay, these ladies go into a place, and then the one lady tries on a bunch of dresses. They're like, "No, no, no, no, no." Then they all have a mini heart attack, and start crying, and then, you know, an angelic choir arrives

and a string section comes out, and then she's looking in the mirror and she looks at her mom, and then the question is, "Will you say yes to the dress?" They don't even care about the guy. It's not like, you know, "Would you say yes to the guy?" Whatever. The dress. So the dress, now, then she puts the dress on, and then she gets to go to her wedding. What is Eve wearing to her wedding?

- [Audience] Nothing!

- A lot of guys are like, "I like that." I like that. How many gals, this would be a tough day? You have the naked wedding, okay? Some of you like, "Oh, it's a good..." No, it's not, hippie. No, it's not, okay? So what happens is Adam sees Eve. Now he's got to speak to her. This is huge, because if he blows it, it's back to the aardvark or the goat. He doesn't have a lot of options. Now let me say this. How many men are on the earth at this point? One. How many women are on the earth? One. So here's the big idea. God doesn't give you a standard of beauty. He gives you a spouse. Okay? Your standard of beauty is your spouse. Adam can't say, "Oh, that's not what I was looking for." He's like, "It's the first one." So let me say, in the Bible, it says that a man should be a one-woman man. What that means is the standard of beauty is his spouse, okay? So when you get married, your standard of beauty is your spouse, husband or wife. And so ultimately, Adam sees her, and he's gotta nail this, because if she leaves, he's got no backup plan. So what he does, he sings to her. The first recorded words in human history, "Bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh. She shall be called woman, for she was taken from man." In the original Hebrew, it's a song. He's a songwriter. He's a poet. I don't know if he's got a guitar and bangs, but he's a creative, and he sings. Ladies, does that still work? It does. It's why the guy with the guitar's always got the advantage. That guy's always got the leg up. So Adam looks at her and he sings a song to her. Now what we have is the first recorded words in human history, and it's a poetic love song between a husband and a wife. And at this point, the animals are also obeying. They're coming to him and they're obeying him. Some would say that actually the Disney musicals, where all they do is sing and the animals obey, that's what happened until sin entered the world. The first human emotion is joy, and the first nickname is positive. He calls her Woman. We give nicknames to the people we love and hate the most. The negative nicknames are for the people we hate the most. The positive nicknames are for the people love the most. He gives her a nickname. If you're married, you need to have a cute little adorable nickname for your spouse, and no negative nicknames. Now, what we've done here, we've seen the first marriage between the first man and the first woman. And the book makes a pivot here. It's recorded what's happened, and then Moses stops and he gives us commentary, and ultimately, we know the commentary is for us, because he's going to tell Adam and Eve to leave their mother and father, and they don't have a mother and father or a belly button. It started with them. And so from this point forward, the book of Genesis, hear me in this. I'm super excited. It's a generational case study in sex, gender, marriage, sexuality, and family dynamics. You're gonna look at this family system over the course of generations, how the decisions of one generation positively and negatively impact and affect the next generation, and it's going to cause you to evaluate your family of origin, and say, "Huh, what kind of family did I come from? And what decisions have implicated me? And what kind of family am I creating? And what kind

of legacy am I leaving?" What we're gonna do now, through the rest of Genesis, we're gonna meddle in your family. We're gonna talk about your in-laws and your out-laws. We're gonna talk about your parents and your grandparents. We're gonna talk about your marriage and your sexuality. And for both of you who come back, this will change your life. So we'll jump right in. Genesis 2:24 and 25. God created us for marriage and family. Therefore, here is a process that Jesus repeats twice. Matthew 19, Mark 6, and also Paul quotes this same scripture in the section in marriage in Ephesians 5:31. "A man." Marriage is for men, not for boys. Marriage is for men, not for boys. "A man shall leave his father and mother, hold fast or cleave to his wife. They shall become one flesh. The man and his wife were both..."

- [Audience Members] Naked.

- Does it feel awkward to say that in church? Well, you said it, not me, kid. All right. "The man and his wife were both," if you're in Texas, "naked and were not ashamed." So there is a fourfold process here. Pastor Jimmy Evans deals with this in his book, "The Four Laws of Love." If you want to read more and look at a good marriage study, that would be a great one. But here we see that marriage is for one man, one woman, and it is two elements and aspects, covenant and consummation, covenant and consummation. And so we'll look at the four laws. First law of priority, then the law of pursuit, then the law of partnership, and then the law of purity. The first is the law of priority. It says a man shall leave his mother and father, and what this means is that men and women are raised equally but a little bit differently. The Bible says that a man will leave his mother and father and that a daughter is given in marriage. What that means is that before a man can have a wife, he needs to be a responsible, independent man. He needs to be standing on his own two feet. He can't just be a guy who still lives with his mother, and has her tend to him. Let me just say this. You're not ready to get married if you don't have a different address than your mom. Okay? And ultimately, what happens is we live in this generation where we've created this intermediate stage between childhood and adulthood called adolescence. It's your twenties. It's for dating, relating, and fornicating. It's for just voting for socialists to pay for your bills. It's trying to transition from your mother looking after you to your government looking after you, and we've got a whole generation of young men who are not in the workforce. They have no plan, they have no progress, and they're a joke with no punchline. And let me just say this. If you're a guy and your mom's putting beer in your sippy cup, it's time to pivot and come up with a plan B, okay? The single guys don't find this funny, but their dads are tracking, okay? And so what happens is you need to leave. So what does that mean, practically, gentlemen?

- [Audience Member] You gotta grow up. You gotta grow up. You gotta leave, get a job, get off your parents' payroll. You gotta figure out what your plan is, because you're not ready to love a woman and raise a child if you can't even take care of yourself, and what we end up with, we end up with overly responsible young women who are then dating, sleeping with, and stuck with irresponsible young men, and what they have is more of a mother-son relationship than a husband-wife relationship. Ultimately, she thinks that's interesting until she needs him, and then she's very frustrated with him because he's just one of the children, and what she really needs is a man. Now, this is, some of you are like, "Pastor Mark, does this happen?" Yeah, it's called

America. This is what we have done. We have broken gender, we have broken marriage, we have broken family, and we have absolutely crushed young men. We don't call them to any sort of expectation, like leave your mother and father. That means physically move out. It means financially be independent, responsible. It means make your own decisions. If your mom is the one who's, "Did you get a job? You know, did you get another DUI? Did you pay your ticket?" That that's not a grown man. That's a boy who can shave. And so ultimately, the goal is for a man to leave his mother and father, and then take a woman in marriage, and what that means is he takes the initiative. A lot of guys don't like to do this. A lot of guys are like, "Well, what if I get rejected?" You're a man. You're supposed to get rejected, rejected, rejected, and then the one who doesn't reject you, that's your wife. The only way you find her is to get through all of the rejection. And what happens is a good man will get to know the woman and her family and her friends, and he will want to earn their trust. A bad man will remove the young woman from her family and friends. Any man who takes a young woman away from those who love her is dangerous. Anyone who gets to know those who love her is in fact one who loves her, and isn't going to harm her. And so what we have as well in our culture is a half-step called college, and it's where you live with your parents part-time, but not full-time, and then you are working part-time, but not full-time. And let me say that's okay, if your job and your goal is, I want to launch, and college will help me to launch into my career. It's going in the right direction. The problem is sitting at home doing nothing, becoming nothing, accomplishing nothing, and the reason why many don't leave their mother and father is their mother and father don't know how to parent adult children. So this is where I offend the parents. And so there are two errors we make in raising adult children. One is we under-parent when they hit 18. A lot of people are like, "Well, they're 18. Now they're an adult." No, they're not. They're not fully cooked. I mean, just meet an 18 year old, and at 18, you start to make the biggest decisions of your whole life. They've never had a job. They've never bought a house. They've never gotten married. They've never had a kid. They don't know what they're doing. So you can't just say, "18, good luck," 'cause there's no verse that says 18 is an adult. And so what they don't need is over-parenting, but what they do need is different parenting. When your kid hits 18, it's coaching, it's discipling. It's meeting with them. It's praying for them. It's hopefully building a relationship where they will invite you in for wise counsel, and they will seek others for wise counsel. The other error that we have is not under-parenting, but over-parenting, and there are some people that they just can't let their children grow up. They can't let them make decisions and mistakes. Sometimes these people, it's because they have brokenness or unhealed hurt or trauma, and oftentimes these parents, "I just love my kids. I don't want them to get hurt. I want to protect them." And the kids would say, "You're the one who's hurting me. You're squeezing me. You're taking away my freedom. You're making my life unpleasant. And it's out of your fears and your brokenness, and you need to heal and give me a little space." In addition, what oftentimes happens with the over-parenting is parents who are Christian will weaponize the Bible to try and control adult children. They'll quote a verse in the Bible that says, "Children, obey your mother and father." Well, obey! Well, the word there for children is young child. Not somebody who's grown, right? If you're married, you've launched. You're an adult. Your parents can pray for you. They can talk with you. If you have a relationship, you can invite them in for wise counsel, and you should, if they love and know the Lord, but at the end of the day, you can't control your child, and there's a

leadership principle here. It says, men leave your mother and father, and sometimes parents don't want to let this happen, and what they'll do, they'll try and control, and there is a continuum of leadership. It's true in family, true in marriage, true in business, true in ministry. You either have control or influence. You've got to pick where you're gonna lead from. When a child is little, can you control them? Pretty much, yeah, they can't do anything, so you just wrap them up, you put them in the bassinet, you put them in the car seat, you put them in the crib, and if you have a problem with them, you pick them up and you put them in the time-out chair. You control them. What about when they're 25? You can try. It doesn't work. As soon as your son is taller than you and his voice is deep, the wooden spoon is no longer going to have the same effect, unless you got a really weird son. And so what you move from, as a child gets older, you move from control to influence. As they get older, you talk with them, you pray with them, you disciple them, you explain to them. And as they get older, you're working from the relationship, 'cause here's the big idea. Do you need a relationship with someone to control them? No, but you have to have a relationship with someone if you want to influence them, and as your children grow up, it's about the relationship, so you can influence them, but you can no longer control them, but what the parents want to do, then they're like, "I don't want them to leave. I don't want them to grow up, so I'm going to control them." Fear, guilt, manipulation, religious legalism, family pressure, and financial manipulation. Okay, I'll pay for college if you go to the college that I choose and take the major that I choose, and if you stay at my house and don't leave. Strings attached. Okay, I'll help you buy your first home if you buy the home that I think you should buy, and if you leave a room available for me to come and visit. See? Oh, we just hit a few families right there. You can feel it. There's a lot of moms going . At the end of the day, my job is not to control my children, but to launch them and trust the Spirit of God to control them. The most important thing you can do for a parent is not control them, but to teach them how to listen to and follow the leading of the Lord. And so what happens is, as we're raising adult children, it is difficult oftentimes for parents to let them launch. But parents, we only leave three options for our kids, healthy relationship, unhealthy relationship, or no relationship, and if we won't choose a healthy relationship where we have influence and we treat them like an adult and we pray for them and we walk with them, we're only giving them two options, unhealthy relationship or no relationship. And what that means is they'll endure a certain amount of pain, they'll create certain kinds of boundaries, but at some point that we're violating them, at the end of the day, they'll choose no relationship. This is the law of priority, that your priority is no longer your family. This will be very clarifying, but it could save generations of pain in your family. I'll give you an example. My oldest daughter is married. My oldest son is married. When they got married, I told the kids, "You, the spouses, are not joining my family, and my kids are not joining your family. You are leaving mother and father and starting a brand new family, and your family gets to decide how you want to be a family. What church do you want to go to? How do you want to raise your kids? When do you want to have kids? How many kids do you want to have? What kind of house do you want to live in? Do you want to buy it or rent it? And what do you want to do for Christmas? What do you want to do for Thanksgiving? What do you want to do for Secretary's Day? What do you want to do for Kwanzaa? Whatever your thing is, you get to decide what you want to do." And that couple gets to make their decisions, and what we have now in my extended family, we have three families. We don't have one big family. We have one extended family comprised of three

families. The only way those three families coordinate life together, is we have to respect one another, understand that there are boundaries between the families, talk and pray about everything, so that we can try and come to some mutual agreement that is a working scenario for all of the families. If I just told my kids, "You're my family," eventually they would say, "We need no relationship." 'Cause at the end of the day, they need to launch. They need to start a family, and sometimes parents will want to control, and the point is simply this. Why do you think that the Lord would speak to you before he would speak to them about their family? In addition, if it only works when you are controlling your kids, what happens when you're gone? You want to set up a family system that works for generations, 'cause they're gonna be here when you're not. In addition, I have a family. Her name is Grace. And I love Grace with all my heart and I believe in marriage and ultimately, at the end of the day, we had a family before we had kids under roof. We will have a family after we don't have kids under roof. And I tell my kids, "I love you with all my heart. I love being your dad, and when you go, I'm fine. I have a family. I have your mom." But if we don't work on our marriage, then when our children leave, we have a crisis, because at the end of the day, if the children are the only thing holding the marriage together, when the children leave, the marriage falls apart. That's why parents try and pull the children back into the marriage or guilt the children to give them grandchildren, because the marriage doesn't work unless there is a child. This is where marriage is a priority, and then children are added to that marital family. So that is the law of priority. Number two, the law of pursuit. It said, "He will hold fast or cleave to his wife," and what this is, this is passionate energy. When you are single, your priorities are God and your extended family. Those are your relational parties. When you get married, God and your spouse. All of your energy can't go toward your crazy, dysfunctional, demanding family. And sometimes people are like, "Well, that's our family." Well, your family's wrong, because this is God's Word, and this is God's perfect design blueprint for marriage and family. In addition some people say, "Well, that's not our culture." Well, then your culture's wrong. There are certain cultures that want to override the scriptures with their traditions, and ultimately, when you get married, your energy, your passion, your time, it goes to your spouse, and the leaving is the priority, and then the passion is toward the marriage. And so what this means is marriage takes a lot of work. Anybody married? See, there's this cultural myth. Oh, we fell in love and oh, it just feels like... I don't know what you're talking about. Marriage is a lot of work. It's gonna take a lot of intentionality, a lot of architecting, a lot of prioritizing, a lot of repenting, a lot of forgiving, a lot of seeking, a lot of praying, and your energy can't go toward trying to codify your extended family. Your energy needs to go toward your marriage, so that you create an environment that is ready to invite children. And so what happens then is it moves from the law of priority to the law of pursuit, to law of partnership, that they shall be one, one, and this word is beautiful. See, the Jews who'd originally heard it. It's a word that they said three times a day in something called the Shema. Jesus said this word three times a day in the Hebrew. It's in Deuteronomy chapter six, verse four. "Hear us, O Lord our God. He is a God." And what that means is like a cluster of grapes. There's one cluster of many grapes. It means that there are more than one, but they are so unified that they are one. The same word for the Trinity, the Father, Son, and Spirit, is used for the husband and wife. The goal is that the husband and wife would be a bit of a mirror, a reflection, an image of the Trinity on the earth, and what happens when we come to describe the Trinity, sometimes people are like,

well, it's like water, and it's like mist, and it's like ice, or it's like an egg with a yolk and a white in a shell. Those analogies I'll make you a heretic, just so you know, and so the better analogy is a husband and a wife. So when my kids were growing up, they'd say, "Okay, dad, what's the Trinity like?" I said, "Well, your mom and I... How many of us?" "Well, you and mom are distinct." I said, "But are we one?" "Oh yeah, you're one. You and mom are one. You're one." Okay, the Trinity's kind of like that. Think relationally, not physically. And let me say this. Oneness for your family, it's the crucial bedrock. We went through the most difficult, horrific season of our entire life. Everything around us just felt like it was totally collapsing, and I met with each of our five children individually, permission to speak freely, be honest with your dad, how are you doing? Every one of the five children said the exact same thing. This is a really hard season, but I know we're gonna be okay because you and mom and God stick together. When everything shakes, if mom and dad and God are unified as bedrock, it provides a secure environment for the children to look to their future and to endure whatever they happen to be a part of. So what does it mean to be one? One last name, one bed, one church, one God, one authority, living in one city, living in one relational community. It's oneness, and the goal is to architect your life so that it's not two people, but it's two becoming one, and it's not domineering. Which one? It's a new one. It's a new one. And that's God's intent for marriage. Now, the problem in marriage is not a strong personality, but it's independence. True or false? I'm a strong personality.

- [Audience Member] True!

- True, okay? This is not trick question. But if you meet my wife Grace? It's true of our personality. We raised five kids just like their mother. Strong personality. And guess what? That's not a problem as long as we're unified. Strong personalities, actually, two strong people going the same direction, that's great. Two strong people going separate directions? That's exhausting, and so the goal is oneness. It's living life together, doing things together, architecting life together as one. And then the result is the law of purity, naked without shame. Now, when it comes to shame regarding sex, it is oftentimes because of one of three reasons. Number one, we've sinned and done bad things. You can just feel it in the room. There's shame. This was me. Before I met Grace, I was sexually active. We were sexually active dating. I got saved. We stopped sleeping together. Jesus died for us, forgave us. We had to reset our life and renew our mind, and I'm happy to report that this year we'll be faithfully married for 30 years. And so we believe in the Bible that it is chastity before marriage, fidelity within marriage, and if you will obey God's Word, husband and wife, you have 100% guaranteed success rate for your marriage, because even if your imperfect people, God's perfect Word, he works things out. Now, that being said, sometimes we have nakedness with shame, because there's been sin committed against us, we've been abused or traumatized. You need literally a Christian counselor. You need to go through a healing and recovery process to just sort of understand that what has been done to you does not define you. And sometimes, too, what happens is just bad teaching in the church. And we're gonna get a lot into sex in Genesis. This is the beginning of everything, and it's the genesis of sex. But oftentimes at church, all we do, we tell people all the things that the Bible forbids, all the red lights, none of the green lights. And so I always like to say oftentimes to keep kids pure before marriage, we tell them, "Hey, sex is dirty, nasty,

violent, wrong. Save it for the one you love." And then we wonder why they get married and they're a little confused. We are pro-sex because we are pro-marriage, and marriage is the hearth to contain the flames of passion that warm the marriage. A fire is great in a fireplace. It's really bad anywhere else. Sex is awesome within the context of marriage. You take it out, and it is in the process right now of burning our entire culture to the ground. And let me close with this. Who created us male and female? God. Who created marriage? God. Who created sex? God, and God was not shocked when they consummated their covenant. It's not like God was like, "Adam, Eve, okay. You guys visit. I'm gonna go get a snack. Be right back, yeah. What the? What the? What, what, what, what? Angels? Nobody had... Nobody got involved? Like what the? I had no idea!" This was God's idea. It's a fun job sometimes. Our world has it totally backwards. Sleep together, live together, and probably never get married, and we wonder why it's not working, and we wonder why God is not blessing. It's because we're disobeying. Let me close with this. You read this like, okay, the world is perfect, we know the Lord, marriage is good, naked without shame, everything is working. What happened? What happened is, come back next week, we sinned against God. We defied, disobeyed, and we brought death, and here's the good news. That Creator knew that we had wrecked everything in creation and so he entered into creation. His name is Jesus Christ. The Creator entered into his creation and he lives a perfect life without any sin, and he dies to forgive our sin, and then he returns to heaven after his resurrection, and what Jesus is doing right now, in the days of Genesis, he was preparing a place. He's preparing a new place, and one day it says that he will return and that the seen and the unseen realms will rejoin, that you will rise from your body, and that God will go back to his original divine design plan of Genesis 1 and 2, and heaven and earth will come together and we will live as the full and free children of God. And so what I want you to do is I want you to accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, and I want you to be a Christian who is, in this day, preparing for that day, which is the beginning of all of the good days. Father, thank you for an opportunity to have a little fun and to teach your Word, and God, I thank you so much that your divine design plan in Genesis 1 and 2 is perfect and you haven't abandoned it. Despite sin, you're finding a way to make us new creations, and then you're coming back to lift the curse and to bring a new creation. And so God, we come now to worship you, and that is in faith, saying that we come from you, we're returning to you, and until we see you by sight, we trust you by faith in Jesus' good name. Amen.