

October 3, 2021

Genesis 2:18-25

“True Love!”

Pilgrim Lutheran Church
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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

If there is one thing we get from all of our lessons for this morning it's this: Marriage is a great gift from the Lord God and is to be taken seriously. The reason why very few take it seriously is because most have no idea as to what it really is. If we had a better understanding of it we would be more careful about the choice of our spouse and we would be less likely to divorce. The destruction of a marriage will attack our relationship with the one who made us.

When a child of the Lord God looks back at the book of Genesis and hears the account of the making of the first man and woman, one is able to see Jesus and his relationship with his bride, the church. But, before we dive into this amazing truth, I would like for you to consider the words of Paul in 1 Corinthians 11:7. He writes that a man "... is the image and glory of God, but woman is the glory of man." In brief, what that means is that when the Lord God made the first man, he made him to be a picture of himself, and when he made the first woman, he made her to help us to understand how he sees all of us. Having received the forgiveness of sins we are viewed as a most beautiful woman, a bride who is to be the eternal companion of the Lord God without end. No divorce. Just **True Love** - Forever!

This truth is very hard for us to wrap our minds around because everything has become so shattered with sin and death down here. So many are hardened to this truth and are ignorant of why the Lord God made us and what he intends for us as our final destination. Because our relationships are so shattered they skew our understanding of everything. What the Lord God established has become so corrupt that it turns everything upside down so that we cannot clearly see the wonders of the Lord God and his love for us. The serpent is very happy about that. It is terribly sad. Everything that was turned upside down in the garden continues to be a thick veil whereby we cannot see what is so vital to see. What the Lord God has joined together let no one rip apart. What is ripped apart rips us apart from the Lord God.

In the garden, the serpent ripped up everything in the lives of Adam and the first woman who was later to be named "Eve," the mother of all the living because of her offspring who would be Jesus. Since the garden fiasco, things have never been the same. Our first parents were willing participants of the whole scheme of the serpent and, from the Lord God's point of view, all of us were there even though we were not yet born. In other words, the outcome would have been the same if it had been any one of us. Things are a terrible mess. Dust we are and to dust we shall return. We are spiritually dead in our relationship with the one who made us. We are spiritually blind and cannot see as we ought.

All of this serves then as the background for what I want to talk to you about today. In our Old Testament lesson we have the creation of the first woman. We are told, "...the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs [a part of his side] and closed up its place with flesh." This is a very unique way that the Lord God makes the woman. She is from the man as we are from the Lord God. They are of the same flesh and blood but quite different from one another. They belong together. As the man will hold fast to his wife so does the Lord God hold fast to us. They shall be one flesh, that is, they together produce a child, much like we have been promised that there will be a new creation that will embrace both Creator and Creature. As man and woman were both naked and not

ashamed, we will see the Lord God as he is and know him. Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 13:12, "... I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known." And there will be everlasting, **True Love!**

It was all of this that the serpent set out to destroy. And he is still trying, as we are told in Revelation 12:12, "... the devil has come down to you [the earth and sea] in great wrath, because he knows that his time is short!" Sin, death, and hell are always creeping into our lives like weeds creep into our gardens to choke out the good plants. Even as Christian people there is this intersection in us called the sinful nature where the devil and this unbelieving world is always trying to completely overcome us like gangrene overtakes the body to bring death. This gangrene of embracing what is against the love of the Lord God must always be dealt with by the Law that shows us our sin and the Gospel that raises us to life. There are forces that are working to divorce us from our Heavenly Companion. This is why we need to be reminded again and again of how much we are loved in the forgiveness of sins and the anticipation of being with Jesus.

Indeed! We are bid to look to Jesus again and again. He is our bridegroom who has rescued us from sin, death, and the horrors of hell. Here it is good for us to see the connection between the creation of the first woman and the amazing creation of the bride, his Church. As I already stated, life between the first man and woman was to be a picture of that between Jesus and his Church. In the fifth chapter of Romans we are told that Adam was a type of the one who was to come (v.14). Sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all of us. Then Paul writes this (v.18), "as one trespass led to condemnation for all ... so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all ..."

With these things in mind, we begin to see some astonishing connections between Adam and Christ. One of the connecting points is in John 19:34-35 with 1 John 5:6-12. First hear John's record regarding Jesus in his death. John records in his gospel: "... one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water. He who saw it has borne witness—his testimony is true, and he knows that he is telling the truth—that you also may believe." Now combine this with the apostle John's commentary in his first epistle:

This is he who came by water and blood - Jesus Christ; not by the water only but by the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the one who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. For there are three that testify: the Spirit and the water and the blood; and these three agree ... Whoever believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself ... And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

What shall we make of all of this? It is extraordinary and touches the heart powerfully! The life of the Church, the bride, is from the death of Jesus who gives HIS life. In other words, the way in which the first woman was created foreshadows the way in which we had to be recreated to be the bride of Christ. V. S. Grieger does an excellent job of putting into words what was done for the life of the Church:

To accomplish this Christ had to die, going into a deep sleep [similar to Adam], and shed his blood for her, his side being pierced, so that from this great sacrifice his Church might come into being. Because it was to cost Christ a tremendous price that his precious Bride, the

Church, might be brought into existence, so it cost Adam something - his own rib [a part of his side], his own flesh and blood from his pierced side, so that Eve his wife would be created. Clearly this was no accident or unplanned circumstance, but it was surely part of God's plan right from the beginning. The creation of man and woman, with their human sexuality and relationship, was to be a little earthly picture, as it were, of the sublime heavenly relationship between Christ and his Church.

We have entered the amazing realm of **True Love**. This isn't made up. The apostle Paul puts it all into perspective when he says in Ephesians 5:25-32, "Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish ... we are members of his body." Paul then quotes our Genesis passage where it says that a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. Then Paul says, and it is breathtaking, "This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church."

We talk about true love all the time but most have little idea as to what that is. It can all be summed up in the words of Solomon, "I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine (Song of Solomon 6:3)!" **True Love** in the forgiveness of sins and the hope of being with Jesus is a serious thing and is beyond wonderful! And we need to be reminded again and again so that we do not end up divorced.

Amen.

Pastor Brock Abbott