

RESTORING YOUR FAMILY'S FOUNDATION

STUDY TWO

Healthy Marriages Start Here

Genesis 2:18–25

Where do we start if we hope to have a strong and healthy marriage? We need to seek the advice of the One who originated marriage—God Himself.

—Pastor Charles R. Swindoll

MARRIAGE was born in the heart of God and instituted at the dawn of creation. Genesis 1 contains the account of God fashioning all things. After each burst of creativity, God paused to size up His handiwork and then declared it “good.” First, the light was *good*. The ground and seas, *good*. The plants and trees, *good*. The sun, moon, and stars, *good*. The animals, *good*. All things perfect for their purpose and pleasing to their Creator! Until . . .

God created the garden of Eden and put Adam in it to help Him finish the work, which was when God noticed and then declared that something was *not* good: “It is not good for the man to be alone.” (Genesis 2:18)

Adam was not merely *alone*. He was also *incomplete* for God’s larger purpose for humanity. Adam was like a puzzle piece with no adjoining match. So, in a final creative flourish,

The LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep. While the man slept, the LORD God took one of the man’s ribs and closed up the opening. Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib, and he brought her to the man. (Genesis 2:21–22)

Fashioned from Adam’s rib, Eve was Adam’s perfect counterpart. God brought her to Adam as a father might walk his beautiful daughter down the aisle. It was a joyful wedding for Adam and Eve—and for us because in their God-designed relationship, we find a plan for building strong marriages today.



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PREPARE YOUR HEART

Embedded within the Scriptures are timeless truths that lead us into a fuller understanding of marriage. Say this prayer as you begin your study:

*Thank You, Father, for revealing Your truth to me through Your Word. Receiving the truth isn't always immediate or easy, so please grant me the wisdom to understand Scripture and the humility to accept its teaching on this profound and foundational institution You created. I pray in Jesus' true name.
Amen.*



TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES

Genesis 2 echoes the creation account of Genesis 1, focusing on the creation of Adam and Eve and the garden of Eden. Genesis 2 records that God placed Adam into the garden to tend it and enjoy its wonders, but with this privilege came a caution. What did God *free* Adam to do and what did God *forbid*, according to *Genesis 2:16–17*?

With this context in mind, let's take a closer look at the climax of the chapter, *Genesis 2:18–25*.



Observation: The Origin of Marriage

In *Searching the Scriptures*, we begin with observation. Pastor Chuck Swindoll encourages us to use our senses when we read: “Pay attention to the sounds in the Scriptures. . . Listen to the words, and feel the emotions.”¹



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The Need for Marriage—Genesis 2:18–20

What did God say Adam needed according to *Genesis 2:18*? Read this verse in several other *Bible versions* and write down the different ways the translators have tried to capture the key Hebrew words for *helper* and *just right* for him.

Instead of immediately creating the woman, what did God do in *2:19–20*? What was the purpose behind Adam's task, which is highlighted in the last line of *2:20*?

Read *2:21–23* and write down your initial observations. Then reread the passage and write down more observations. Keep observing until you see every element in these verses.



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When Adam received his precious bride, Adam expressed the intimate nature of their union in his exuberant response:

“At last!” the man exclaimed.

*“This one is bone from my bone,
and flesh from my flesh!
She will be called ‘woman,’
because she was taken from ‘man.’”* (Genesis 2:23, emphasis added)

Bone from bone. Flesh from flesh. No other union between humans is like the marriage bond formed by God!

When God brought Eve to Adam, Adam said, in effect, “This is the one!” God knew what He was doing. Men, you didn’t just reach into the pool of humanity and find some available woman. Women, you didn’t notice a man here or there and chose one. Knowing you and knowing what your spouse could provide, God brought you together.
—Pastor Chuck Swindoll

The Essential Building Blocks of Marriage—Genesis 2:24–25

Read [Genesis 2:24–25](#). Put in your own words what the author of Genesis was communicating to his audience. What did he want us to know about marriage from God’s perspective?

Adam and Eve’s union reflects the essence of God’s design for marriage. Let’s dig deeper into the meaning of these verses.



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Interpretation: Essential Elements in a Healthy Marriage

As an architect might design pillars to brace a building, the Master Architect included in His marriage blueprint four essential elements for a strong and lasting union between a husband and wife.

Below each of the following phrases from Genesis 2:24–25, write down an essential element of marriage and define its meaning.

“This explains why a man leaves his father and mother . . .” (2:24)

“. . . and is joined to his wife . . .” (2:24)

“. . . and the two are united into one” (2:24).



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“Now the man and his wife were both naked, but they felt no shame” (Genesis 2:25).

How do these essentials work together to form a complete picture of marriage?

I urge you to keep these four principles in mind. Without them, your marriage will never work. They are essential for the survival of a happy, healthy, and strong marriage.
—Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Correlation: Jesus' Affirmation of the Essentials of Marriage

When asked about His views on divorce, Jesus turned to this same section of Genesis to give His answer. What essentials of marriage did Jesus affirm in [Matthew 19:4–5](#)?



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Then Jesus applied God's original design for marriage with a principle that gets to the heart of God's intention for marriage. What did Jesus say in *Matthew 19:6*?

When sin threatens to weaken the bond that God formed, we must call upon the original builder to patch the cracks and repair the damage. Who is more qualified to restore a couple's marital union than the One who created it? Invite the Lord right now to mend the fractures in your relationship with your spouse.

You enter into a relationship with your spouse like you do with no one else. You are married to only one person “till death do us part.” To no other relationship do you pledge with such a commitment. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Application: Shoring Up the Foundation

Pastor Chuck Swindoll sums up these essentials in four memorable words. Included with each is a question for reflection.

- 1) *Severance*: husbands and wives separate from their parents physically and emotionally to form a new family unit. Are there ways I need to shift physically and emotionally from my parents to my marriage partner?
- 2) *Permanence*: the Hebrew word for *joined* means to glue together. God designed marriage as a secure, unbreakable bond. How can I strengthen the divine bond with my spouse?
- 3) *Unity*: through mutual acceptance, husbands and wives operate as one by affirming each other's strengths and gifts. How can I better work as one with my spouse, appreciating his or her differences?
- 4) *Intimacy*—complete trust and transparency characterize the couple's physical and emotional union of unconditional love for one another. How can I further cultivate an open, vulnerable, intimate relationship with my spouse?



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Which of these essentials would you and your spouse say is solid and healthy? Recall examples and habits of this quality, or qualities, in practice.

Which of these essentials would you and your spouse say needs some attention? Recall examples of the quality lacking or bad habits where opposing qualities are at work.

Brainstorm with your spouse how to make marriage improvements. Write down your ideas and steps to put these ideas into action.



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God delighted in meeting Adam's need by forming Eve as the perfect fit for him. God made the man and woman to complement each other and, together, to make a whole.

If there's anyone who can strengthen your marriage bond, it's the One who originated marriage and brought together you and your spouse. Conclude by praying for the Lord's help to shore up the foundation of your marriage.



A FINAL PRAYER

Write your prayer in the space below.

Father,

ENDNOTE

1. Charles R. Swindoll, *Searching the Scriptures: Find the Nourishment Your Soul Needs* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House, 2016), 96.

