

**Things Written In Earlier Times
(What NT writers taught from the OT Events)
Lessons from the creation of man and woman in marriage**

Intro: Today there is a lot of skepticism about the creation account of Genesis one and two. Those embracing a secular worldview would simply dismiss it as a myth created by ancient Israel to explain their origins and incompatible with modern “science.”

But the Christian has a perspective from which to view the creation account. It is the testimony of one who was there when all things were made—Jesus. Jesus not only referred to the creation account in Genesis one and two, but also sent the Holy Spirit to guide His apostles in their use of this text as well.

So tonight as we continue our series “Things Written in Earlier Times” we want to examine what the NT writers said about the creation of marriage; and what lessons did they teach from it?

Let’s quickly review the details of...

God’s creation of man and woman in marriage

He made them male and female in His image (Gen. 1:26)

He formed man from the dust of the earth and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life (Gen. 2:7).

He placed the man in the garden to cultivate and keep it, and tasked him with naming all the animals (Gen. 2:15, 19-20).

He placed man in a deep sleep and from a rib made a woman as a companion and helper to him (Gen. 2:21-22).

Adam with excitement recognized that she shared his nature and named her “woman” because she was taken from him (Gen. 2:23).

Moses declares that God’s creation of Adam and Eve establishes the parameters of marriage (Gen. 2:24).

This simple narrative was considered foundational teaching on the relationship of man and woman in marriage.

What the NT writers taught about marriage (based on the Genesis account)

Jesus taught that divorce for every cause was not lawful and that man should not separate what God had joined.

The Pharisees came to Him with a question, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any cause at all?”

“And He answered and said, “Have you not read, that He who created them from the beginning MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE, and said, ‘FOR THIS CAUSE A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER, AND SHALL CLEAVE TO HIS WIFE; AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH’? “Consequently they are no longer two, but one flesh. What

therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.”” (Matthew 19:4–6)

Jesus quotes Genesis 1:26 and 2:24 as foundational truth on marriage, and declares the logical implication of these two statements.

Consequently not only should those who are married Scripturally remain married, but those who divorce and remarry except for fornication commit adultery in their subsequent remarriage.

“And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery.”” (Matthew 19:9)

Paul used these principles as an analogy to teach the relationship of the believer to the Law.

Paul begins with the teaching of the Law that a man and woman are joined for life such that a divorce and marriage to another would result in adultery.

“For the married woman is bound by law to her husband while he is living; but if her husband dies, she is released from the law concerning the husband. So then if, while her husband is living, she is joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from the law, so that she is not an adulteress, though she is joined to another man.” (Romans 7:2–3)

He applies this principle to the relationship of the believer to the Law.

“Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the Law through the body of Christ, that you might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, that we might bear fruit for God.” (Romans 7:4)

Paul’s analogy is founded upon the creation account and its emphasis upon the principle of “leaving and cleaving.”

The Hebrew writer urged his readers to respect the limitations of sexual behavior implied by the creation of marriage.

“Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge.” (Hebrews 13:4)

The basis for honoring marriage and the laws forbidding sexual sin is the realization that marriage is the creation of God. Genesis shows that a marriage is the union of a male and female. It affirms that the husband and wife share a “one flesh” relationship; and the implication is that a sexual relationship outside the marriage bond is sinful resulting in fornication or adultery.

Numerous NT writers relying upon the teaching of Genesis 2 discuss the importance of putting away sexual sins like fornication and adultery. Paul frequently does this (1 Cor. 6, Gal. 5, Col. 3, Eph 5).

But consider his use of Genesis 2 in his letter to the Corinthians.

“Or do you not know that the one who joins himself to a harlot is one body with her? For He says, “THE TWO WILL BECOME ONE FLESH.” But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him. Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body,

but the immoral man sins against his own body.” (1 Corinthians 6:16–18)

The apostle Paul applies the teaching of the Genesis account to affirm the sinfulness of a same-sex relationship.

In the institutions of marriage God joined a male and female. Paul shows how that rejection of God led to rejection of His will for marriage among the Gentiles..

“For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural, and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error.” (Romans 1:26–27)

It would be one of a number of times when he stated explicitly that these relationships were a violation of the principles of marriage implicit in the creation account.

Moving in another direction..

The apostle Paul used the creation account of the woman to set forth the principles that should guide the man and woman in marriage.

The woman should respect and submit to her husband’s leadership since she was created after him to be his helper..

“Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body.” (Ephesians 5:22–23)

For Paul the order of headship is implied in the creation account.

Likewise Peter teaches the same principles of headship:

“In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives,” (1 Peter 3:1)

But in addition Paul finds in the creation account the principle of the man’s love for his wife “as his own flesh.”

“So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church,” (Ephesians 5:28–29)

Clearly Paul is thinking of Adam’s remarks concerning Eve, “this is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh.”

The relationship of man and woman in marriage typifies the relationship of Christ with His church.

“FOR THIS CAUSE A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER, AND SHALL CLEAVE TO HIS WIFE; AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH. This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church.” (Ephesians 5:31–32)

The apostle Paul likewise extends these principles of headship to the role of man and woman in the leadership of the church.

He stresses that is the role of men to lead in worship and teaching; but that women should learn in quietness.

“Let a woman quietly receive instruction with entire submissiveness. But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet.” (1 Timothy 2:11–12)

Maybe some of the women aware of the new movements in the empire that gave women positions of authority might ask, “But why?” Paul answers:

“For it was Adam who was first created, and then Eve.” (1 Timothy 2:13)

It was the teaching of Genesis two that shaped Paul’s conclusions about this topic.

Likewise Paul would use these principles to exhort those exercising spiritual gifts to acknowledge the principles of headship in their headress by either covering the head (woman) or remaining uncovered (man).

“For a man ought not to have his head covered, since he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of man. For man does not originate from woman, but woman from man; for indeed man was not created for the woman’s sake, but woman for the man’s sake.” (1 Corinthians 11:7–9)

Conclusion: As look at all these NT texts, we can see that the Genesis account of the creation of marriage is foundational teaching. The account of God’s creation of marriage has powerful implications for our culture as well. Though men may seek to change God’s order these verses provide us clear direction on what pleases the Lord.