

The First Couple  
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Genesis 2:7-9,15-25

Recently, Susan was describing a documentary she had seen online about the amazing story of British Airways Flight 5390. During a June 1990 flight from Birmingham, England to Spain the plane suffered an explosive decompression when “an improperly installed windscreen panel separated from its frame, causing the captain to be partially ejected from the aircraft.” For twenty minutes while the co-pilot flew the plane, a flight attendant held on to the belt of the pilot whose torso was outside the plane. [On YouTube: [https://youtu.be/6SI2V\\_DbCTw?si=Up6QDaM1GnwCCazW](https://youtu.be/6SI2V_DbCTw?si=Up6QDaM1GnwCCazW) ]

Amazingly, though his head and torso were bumping against the outside of the plane, that pilot survived with only a fractured elbow and frostbite. The story illustrates the truth that if it isn't your day to die based on God's timetable you won't die, but my point in sharing it has to do with the reason the windscreen panel failed. An investigation found that when the windscreen was installed 27 hours before the flight, 84 of the bolts used were 0.026 inches (0.66 mm) too small in diameter. The undersized bolts were unable to withstand the force due to the air pressure and the windscreen exploded out of place and the pilot was sucked out of the plane.<sup>i</sup> In summary: Deviating from a precision design can lead to disastrous results. How is this related to Genesis 2? Let me explain.

Scripture and life teach us there are no perfect people, however when God created human beings, the first man and woman lived in perfection according to His perfect plan. They were perfect workers, perfect spouses, and perfect companions living in perfect intimacy in a perfect place with no sin and no shame. Unfortunately, giving in to sin destroyed the perfection of Eden (we'll talk about that in chapter three.) Sin spoiled perfection but God's perfect design survived.

The point: There are no perfect people, but God's design for living is the perfect pattern. We won't achieve perfection in this life, but we should strive to follow His perfect pattern for living in our jobs, our marriages, and our relationship with Him.

**Genesis 2:7–9 (ESV)** — **7** then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature. **8** And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. **9** And out of the ground the Lord God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. [Jump to verse 15]  
**15** The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it.

- God “formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.” [Get your own dirt!”<sup>ii</sup>]
- The word “formed” is the image of a potter lovingly fashioning a vessel.

- One commentator said, “[Humans are] a combination of dust and divinity.”<sup>iii</sup>
- God made people from common elements but He breathed life into us.
- Merrill notes, “Especially noteworthy is the fact that man did not get a soul but he became one, that is, he became a person” (Dryer and Merrill, 8).<sup>iv</sup>
- God planted a garden and verse fifteen says He put the man (Adam) in charge.
- God doesn’t need our labor, but He designed us to labor with Him in His creation.
- Martin Luther wrote: ““God could easily give you grain and fruit without your plowing and planting. But He does not want to do so. . . . What else is all our work to God—whether in the fields, in the garden, in the city, in the house, in war, or in government—but just such a child’s performance, by which He wants to give His gifts in the fields, at home, and everywhere else? These are the masks of God, behind which He wants to remain concealed and do all things.”<sup>v</sup>
- God is accomplishing everything, but He allows us to wear the “mask” of work.
- Do you think of your “day job” as being a potential act of worship of God?
- In verse fifteen the Hebrew word *‘ābād* not only means to “work or serve” but it’s also used [elsewhere in scripture] to mean “worship.”<sup>vi</sup> [Strong’s #5647 Ex.23:24-35]
- **Colossians 3:23–24 (NLT)** — **23** Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people. **24** Remember that the Lord will give you an inheritance as your reward, and that the Master you are serving is Christ.
- Because of Adam and Eve’s sin, work now involves “sweat and toil.”
- Still, we can feel satisfaction from a job well done.
- After our labors we might say, “I’m tired, but it’s a good kind of tired.”
- There are no perfect workers, but God has given a perfect plan for all our labors. Honest work can glorify God. In that sense doing great work can also be worship.
- God gave the first workers the first “policy handbook” – one simple rule.

**16** And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, **17** 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.”

- “Eat of every tree in the garden” – What does that say about God’s provision?
- “Don’t eat the fruit of THAT tree.” – What does that say about needs vs wants?
- We will unpack the first sin next week in chapter three. Why do you think God placed a tree in the middle of Eden and commanded them not to eat its fruit?
- God has a perfect plan to meet our needs. Our part is to trust and obey Him.
- In Genesis 1:31 God pronounced His creation as “very good.” However, in 2:18 He observed the first thing in His creation that wasn’t good, a lonely man.

**18** Then the Lord God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.” **19** Now out of the ground the Lord God had formed every beast of the field and 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. **20** The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. **21** So the Lord

God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. **22** And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man.

- There are no perfect spouses, but God designed a perfect plan for marriage.
- God pronounced Adam as both only lonely and incomplete.
- In the movie Jerry Maguire, Jerry says to Dorothy, “*You complete me.*” Whether you cheered or jeered about the line, the concept didn’t come from that movie.
- God said I will make a “*helper fit for him.*” Let’s talk about that word “helper.”
- Why are some people offended by that term in reference to Eve?
- The Hebrew word for “Helper” (‘ē-zēr) doesn’t mean slave or a “less than” assistant. It means: “one who assists and serves another with what is needed.”<sup>vii</sup>
- Our lesson writer comments: “*The Hebrew word ’ezer carries the idea of one standing face-to-face as an equal. The picture is that woman corresponds perfectly to the man and completes that which is lacking in him. It is a word that pictures equality between the genders.*”
- The word for helper “also means “**strength** [or] power to accomplish a task.” Before someone finds it offensive, they should study the Bible. Our lesson writer continues, “*The word is used twenty-one times in the Old Testament, often referring to God as the helper of Israel (see Ps. 33:20; 121:1-2). It is also used in military context, portraying the ’ezer as a warrior. Thus, the woman was to be a strong helper to man, completing that which he lacked, standing back-to-back, equal in the fight.*”
- God’s perfect plan for spouses is that they are to be “face to face” as equals and intimate partners AND “back-to-back” as warriors in the battles of life.
- THAT is REALLY having your spouse’s back!
- When we reflect on Eve being created out of the “side of Adam” I like the words of 18<sup>th</sup> century commentator Matthew Henry (which are often used in the Christian marriage ceremony.) He wrote: “[W]oman was made of a rib out of the side of Adam; not made out of his head to rule over him, nor out of his feet to be trampled upon by him, but out of his side to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected, and near his heart to be beloved.”<sup>viii</sup>
- When God presented this perfect companion to Adam, Adam was clearly excited.

**23** Then the man said, “This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.”

- My paraphrase: “*She’s exactly who I need, custom-made by God for me!*”
- Next, God Himself pronounced a summary of His perfect plan for marriage:

**24** Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

- “Leaving and cleaving” might appear to only apply to young marrieds leaving home for the first time. I believe it still has meaning for “long marrieds.”
- For a marriage to work as God designed and a couple to be “one flesh” they must value their spouse above any other human relationship.

- We are to love our parents, kids and grandkids deeply, but NOT more than our spouse. Spouses must “hold fast” to each other in this unique relationship.
- The only relationship more important than that with our spouse is our relationship with God.
- He never competes – He COMPLETES our spouse-to-spouse relationship.
- Warren Wiersbe saw at least four purposes that God had in mind for marriage:
  - Suitable, equal companionship and help for the spouses
  - The God-given right to enjoy sex and create children
  - A third purpose for marriage is to encourage self-control (1 Cor. 7:1–7). “It is better to marry than to burn with passion” (v. 9 nkjv).
  - Finally, marriage is an illustration of the loving and intimate relationship between Christ and His church (Eph. 5:22–33).
- There is one last interesting observation in verse 25:

**25** And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

- With no sin there was no shame. Adam and Eve lived in perfect intimacy.
- Before we wrap up let me make two important points about marriage:
  1. God commanded Adam and Eve to be fruitful and multiply but that wasn’t a command for all couples. God’s perfect plan for many couples is to be a happy “family of two.”
  2. God created a perfect plan for marriage but that doesn’t mean everyone is meant to be married. Scripture makes it plain that God gives some the gift of singleness (1 Cor. 7:7-8)
- Other thoughts?

So, What’s the Takeaway?

- There are no perfect people, but God’s design for living is the perfect pattern.
- We won’t achieve perfection in this life, but we should strive to follow His perfect pattern for living in our jobs, our marriages, and our relationship with Him.
- To enjoy these aspects of living we must stick to God’s precise plans.
- Honest work CAN be a form of worship if we do it in a way that glorifies God.
- When we get discouraged about work, let’s remember Colossians 3:23-24.
- Our real boss is the Lord and He will reward our labors.
- There are no perfect spouses or perfect marriages, but God did give a perfect pattern and plan for marriage:
  - One man and one woman for life. Biology alone confirms that plan.
  - We need to love, support, and be “helpers” for our spouses. Face to face as equals and back-to-back as fellow warriors in the battle of life.
  - We need to “leave and cleave” to our spouses over all other human relationships. If we keep God in the center of our marriage, He will enhance our spousal relationships.
  - If our jobs and marriages don’t feel blessed or fulfilled, maybe we’re not following God’s precise, prescribed plan. We will never be perfect people but thanks to His grace we can change course and live based on His perfect plan.

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<sup>i</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/British\\_Airways\\_Flight\\_5390#:~:text=Investigators%20determined%20that%20when%20the,7D%2C%20which%20is%20the%20correct](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/British_Airways_Flight_5390#:~:text=Investigators%20determined%20that%20when%20the,7D%2C%20which%20is%20the%20correct)

<sup>ii</sup> Holman Old Testament Commentary – 2002 B&H Publishing

<sup>iii</sup> *ibid*

<sup>iv</sup> *ibid*

<sup>v</sup> <https://jdgreear.com/martin-luther-on-gods-masks/>

<sup>vi</sup> <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lexicon/h5647/kjv/wlc/0-1/>

<sup>vii</sup> Swanson, J. (1997). In [\*Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains : Hebrew \(Old Testament\)\*](#) (electronic ed.). Logos Research Systems, Inc.

<sup>viii</sup> Henry, M. (1994). [\*Matthew Henry's commentary on the whole Bible: complete and unabridged in one volume\*](#) (p. 10). Hendrickson.