

## **Beginnings 2 - Man, Created for Fellowship**

Gen 1:26-28 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

27So God created man in his *own* image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

28And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

Because Genesis is the book of beginnings, there are many foundational things that are contained in these verses. We could apply this passage to an understanding of a variety of topics including:

- God's design for marriage
- God's design for the home
- Man was created, he was not the product of evolution
- Man's responsibility over the management of God's creation
- The difference between man and animal
- The constitution of man

As we examine the passage, what stands out is the significance of fellowship.

### **1. Designed for Fellowship.**

We are peculiarly equipped to have fellowship with God because we are like Him in our nature. We are not infinite, but we *are* similar in quality.

People struggle over how they perceive themselves which blinds them to the fact that we are created in *His* image. They focus on body image which never measures up to the image of the perfect body that the world says we are supposed to strive for. And then people go to the opposite extreme responding to the depression this can create. They are encouraged to accept their weight as normal which also puts them at risk for their health. Teenagers are subjected to marketing that suggests they will feel significant if they take on the styles of those who have fame and popularity. The world has a conflict of interest in this: they market people to make them famous and then market the style that we are supposed to think made them famous. Bullying is also very much an issue of targeting someone's self-image. Another

perception that is promoted is that of victimhood. If you can create a system of victimhood, then you can always keep people divided by envy and bitterness. We should not be comparing ourselves with each other. Man is not the measure of man

We need to break the bondage of the images the world and self create. We are made in the image of God and should stand tall in that image. Man is the crown of God's creation. Made in the image of God, we are equipped to be able to have fellowship with the God of the Universe, the King of kings, and the Lord of lords. When we have that image and we see that image in others, we can then have the right kind of fellowship with each other. We can have this fellowship in ways that are unique to God and man alone.

Psa 8:3-8 When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;

4What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?

5For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.

6Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all *things* under his feet:

7All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field;

8The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, *and whatsoever* passeth through the paths of the seas.

- We are equipped with a spirit.

In his creation, man is different than all the rest of creation.

Gen 2:7 And the LORD God formed man *of* the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

Although all of the animals were created and were alive, man was created and then God brought him to life in a different way. Man became a living soul by God breathing into him. Animals are described as having the breath of life, but they do not have life because of *God breathing* it into them. This is the same way that God's Word is quick, or alive:

Heb 4:12 For the word of God *is* quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

2Tim 3:16 All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

When you read the Bible, you are communing with God Himself. The Bible is a living book that is inspired, or God breathed.

Only man is described as having soul *and* spirit. The soul and spirit separate, according to Heb 4:12 and Paul further clarifies this in:

1Thess 5:23 And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and *I pray God* your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The body is able to sense the physical world, the soul has self-awareness with a sense of personality, but the spirit is conscious of God.

1Cor 2:10-11 But God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

11For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.

- Man has a moral capacity.

Man was created in innocence, but that does not mean that he was *amoral*, or, without morality. He was created sinless. His moral condition was a reflection of the sinless nature of God. The fact that he could fall into sin demonstrates that he was *subject* to morality. Without that ability, he would not be held accountable when he *did* choose to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. We see this reflected in the fact that our very *thoughts* are judged.

Matt 5:28 But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

1John 3:15 Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.

Contrary to Disney's *Lion King* movie, there is no animal court where one animal can be brought up on charges of murder. When one animal kills another, it is not always out of hunger, but we understand this to be the way of nature after the fall.

- We are equipped with the ability to have faith.

Mark 9:23-24 Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things *are* possible to him that believeth.

24And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.

The father of the possessed boy was presumed to have faith. Jesus did not say, "I give you faith so you can believe." The man had faith, but only asked to be strengthened in his faith. For animals, faith is not even an issue in the Bible.

- We are equipped with volition.

While animals have the appearance or perhaps a form of volition, or will, it is different than man. Animals react more out of instinct, which is why they are not held accountable the same way man is. For man, there is a sense of moral deliberation. This is present in Rom 1:

Rom 1:21-32 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified *him* not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

22Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

23And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.

24Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:

25Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.

26For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:

27And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.

28And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;

29Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication,

wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,

30 Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,

31 Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:

32 Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.

This is why there should be no sympathy for the adulterer who says, "I didn't mean to fall in love, it just happened."

Job 31:1 I made a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid?

That is just the beginning of woes.

- No man is an island.

As strong as one might be, there is no way man can make it through this world by himself.

1Cor 10:13 There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God *is* faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear *it*.

## 2. Created for fellowship.

We are not only equipped for fellowship, we are created *for the purpose* of having fellowship. To see this, you have to look at the unfolding of events:

God created man and placed him in a beautiful garden.

Gen 2:7-8 And the LORD God formed man *of* the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

8 And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.

God prepared Adam to receive his help meet, or, a helper that was *suitable* for him.

Gen 2:18-20 And the LORD God said, *It is* not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.

19 And out of the ground the

LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought *them* unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that *was* the name thereof.

20And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him.

God created Adam's help meet.

Gen 2:21-25 And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof;

22And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.

23And Adam said, This *is* now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.

24Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

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

Now this might seem like a fairly straightforward account of what happened. But we need to appreciate it more carefully. First of all, although we have seen that man was created equipped for fellowship, God declared that it was downright *necessary*. He said that it was not good for him to be alone. Man was created with a *need* for fellowship. It was not to be found in God alone, but with God's creation and that creation, as good as it was up that point, was not sufficient to fulfill his needs. The garden was beautiful, but it is not sufficient to *commune* with nature. The animals were fantastic, but they don't compare to our deeper needs

We next look at the *provision* for fellowship. God provided a tour of the animals so Adam could get a clue. God then took Eve from Adam's side and from his flesh. Eve was physically complementary to Adam. Matthew Henry poetically said,

The woman 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.

The thing I find most striking about this whole event is the timing. It is not as

though Adam was created and things were going along fine enough until he started to get uneasy and then God decided to get around to creating Eve. All of this took place on the sixth day! Because we are accustomed to seeing the summary of the creation in Genesis 1 we might not notice that Genesis 2 is not some later addition. Genesis 2 is just an expanded version of Genesis 1:26-28. The whole creation of Adam *and* Eve was in the context of the need for fellowship. It didn't take long for Adam to figure out. He was created, and God said, "Look at all the animals. What do they have that you don't have and need? Here, take a nap." I think its wonderful that Eve wasn't just created simultaneously. Adam had a chance to know why he needed her. If she had been created at the same time he might have had cause to take her for granted. He could have said, "Oh, she's always been around." It has been suggested that in Adam's form that he was not as we are today with the effect of generations of degrading. His mind was created perfect and was possibly a genius. I think that he was very acutely aware of what he didn't have. And then, Adam had the blessing of investing something personally in her. Everything points to the creation of man being all about fellowship.

The fellowship man had was a reflection of the fellowship nature of God Himself. If you noticed, God said let *Us* make man in *Our* image. The trinity was present in that work.

John 1:1-4 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2The same was in the beginning with God.

3All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

4In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

We see that fellowship as God would walk with Adam in the cool of the day. Imagine what it must have been like to hang out with *God* like that. This is the fellowship He wants to restore us to:

John 17:22-23 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:

23I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, **as thou hast loved me.**

The whole idea of Jesus coming to earth was fellowship based. When He died on the cross it was to pay the price of judgment to redeem us and bring us back to God.

### 3. The blessing of fellowship.

We are *equipped for* fellowship, we *need* fellowship, and there is *blessing* in fellowship.

- We have peace and comfort with God.

We need to be with God. There is never a time that we do not know this, but we are all the more aware of it when we go through times of crisis. There are times when crisis is overwhelming and we enter into that eternal and absolutely perfect fellowship with God. But, while we are here on earth we do well to remember the 23rd Psalm:

Ps 23:1-6 The LORD *is* my shepherd; I shall not want.

2He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

3He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

4Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou *art* with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

5Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

6Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

- We have joy with God, but it has to be shared.

While we are here, our soul should pant after Him as the deer for the brooks of water, but that joy with God has got to be shared.

Ps 42:1-4 As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.

2My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?

3My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, Where *is* thy God?

4When I remember these *things*, I pour out my soul in me: for I had gone with the multitude, I went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holyday.

Nancy and I got to visit New England Baptist College the other day where I preached in their chapel. Being there on campus and watching them serving and learning was a tonic to us. I enjoyed the memories of being in Bible college, but



I am even more thankful for the years we have had here. I think of the days we kept holyday together here and look forward to more of them.

- We have strength in fellowsip.

Eccl 4:8-12 There is one *alone*, and *there is* not a second; yea, he hath neither child nor brother: yet *is there* no end of all his labour; neither is his eye satisfied with riches; neither *saith he*, For whom do I labour, and bereave my soul of good? This *is* also vanity, yea, it *is* a sore travail.

9Two *are* better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour.

10For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him *that is* alone when he falleth; for *he hath* not another to help him up.

11Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm *alone*?

12And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

The third cord here is the Lord. This is a great passage to prepare for marriage, but it is true of any relationship. There are those we might not pal around with in the world, but once Christ enters into that relationship, it becomes precious.

- We make up for each other's deficiencies and encourage each other.

1Cor 12:4-11 Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.

5And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord.

6And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.

7But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

8For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;

9To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;

10To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another *divers* kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues:

11But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.

1Cor 12:18-26 But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.

19And if they were all one member, where *were* the body?

20But now *are they* many members, yet but one body.

21And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.

22Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary:

23And those *members* of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely *parts* have more abundant comeliness.

24For our comely *parts* have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that *part* which lacked:

25That there should be no schism in the body; but *that* the members should have the same care one for another.

26And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.

It's hard to pat someone on the back, put an arm around the shoulder, or have a good laugh with in an online meeting. Regardless of the effectiveness of face masks in a pandemic, society is suffering because of the barrier it puts between people. Our country's founders wisely planted the freedom of religion and to practice it as the very first of our enumerated rights. The highest court in the land has ruled time and time again, five times just over the state of California, to stop government from infringing on those rights. How vital our churches are for countering the pall that has fallen on our country leading to the rise in suicide and addiction.

As you read through the Bible, look at how often feasting accompanies spiritual events. Saul was chosen king at a Jewish feast. David was anointed at a Jewish feast. Samson's parents wanted to make a feast for the angel. There were three feasts that were mandatory for all Jews. Our communion is a commemorative feast. The early church met regularly to break bread. Our lunches are not just some nice little add on...they are actually essential. I regularly invite people to eat lunch and they never give it a thought how it sounds to say, "No, that's okay, I..." What does "that's okay" even mean? How would it sound if you asked me to dinner and I said, "I prefer to do anything but come to dinner with you."

Do we know each other? We should look for ways to develop our social skills.

Gal 6:2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

- We grow in our appreciation for our homes.

The most intimate human fellowship is that of husband and wife.

1Pet 3:7 Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with *them* according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.

Over time, you find you need to refresh old memories. You go through problems together that not only help you grow personally but in your bonds with each other. Each day, you discover new things to share. There are new things to explore together, movies, museums, historical sites. There are things outside of our expertise that the other can share. There are people to see together. Sermons to discuss, Bible reading to discuss, books to discuss, children to discuss, work to discuss, challenges to discuss, painful memories, joyful memories.

The most intimate fellowship in the home might be husband and wife, but that is not the only home fellowship. Our children, brothers, sisters, mothers, fathers are all a bit closer than those on the outside.

Like anything neglected, our bonds will only decay if left unattended. These relationships don't happen accidentally. They must be cherished and nourished regularly.

Gen 1:26-28

1. Designed for Fellowship. Psa 8:3-8, Gen 2:7, Heb 4:12, 2Tim 3:16, 1Thess 5:23, 1Cor 2:10-11, Matt 5:28, 1John 3:15, Mark 9:23-24, Rom 1:21-32, Job 31:1, 1Cor 10:13
2. Created for fellowship. Gen 2:7-8, 18-20, 21-25, John 1:1-4, 17:22-23
3. The blessing of fellowship. Ps 23:1-6, 42:1-4, Eccl 4:8-12, 1Cor 12:4-11, 18-26, Gal 6:2, 1Pet 3:7