

08.21.24

Genesis
The Sleep of Surrender
Chapter 2 (vs.21-23)

If you would turn in your Bibles to Genesis 2, we're going to be looking at verses 21 through 23. There are so many wonderful things in this book of Genesis. Most of all, it really reveals the heart of God. That's what Genesis does. I mean, what is God thinking? What in the world is God doing? God begins to show us what He is doing and how He thinks and what is important to Him. It is equally important, and I really want to preface a lot of what I'm going to be saying today to understand that the physical that is created are shadows of what He's pointing to that's far deeper and far greater. That fundamental point is really seen in the Book of Hebrews, and if you just take a moment, let me just emphasize this.

If you turn with me to Hebrews 8. We won't certainly go through every example that is given to us in the Book of Hebrews, but I want you to see just what is involved in the physical things that He creates and what He is doing. If you look with me in Chapter 8 in particular, he's been talking about the things of Melchizedek. He's obviously been talking about some of the things in the Old Testament and that they were pictures; that is to say, were signs of something greater. As you come to Chapter 8, we kind of get the idea that he's talking about the main point because it kind of starts off that way, right?

(Hebrews 8:1) "Now the main point in what has been said is this: we have such a high priest, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens."

So, he's been talking about Melchizedek, but the main point is this, there is a high priest in the heavens. So, what is the earth? It's a shadow. What is the greater?

Then, he says in verse 2,

"a minister in the sanctuary and in the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man."

Then, it says this in verse 4,

"Now if He were on earth, He would not be a priest at all, since there are those who offer the gifts according to the Law;

(Hebrews 8:5) who serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things..."

So, once again, He's revealing that the things on the earth are a copy and a shadow of the heavenly things.

In Chapter 9 you'll see this same emphasis as he starts off in verse 1 about the tabernacle and he uses the word "regulations" and the things that were there, and his point is that they were symbols. In fact, the statement that he makes in Hebrews 9:9 is,

"which is a symbol for the present time. Accordingly both gifts and sacrifices are offered..."

Now, he then goes in, once again, and talks about in verse 10,

"since they relate only to food and drink and various washings, regulations..."

But these are just, once again, symbols.

If you drop all the way down to verse 23,

"Therefore it was necessary for the copies of the things in the heavens to be cleansed with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.

(Hebrews 9:24) For Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands, a mere copy of the true one..."

So, what is he telling us about all the acts of worship, all the physical things that were literally created for these particular purposes? That they were symbols, that they were copies of things that were far greater.

Then if you look in Hebrews 10:1, it says this,

"For the Law, since it has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the very form of things, can never, by the same sacrifices which they offer continually year by year, make perfect those who draw near."

His point is that these things, the physical, are shadows of the real. So, we see created things. There are these real things that are created, but they are symbols of what God is doing, and there's a greater truth behind them. It behooves us to not just simply read, "And there were trees in the garden and there was a river flowing through it." There's a reason why He's telling us these things, and there's a reason why He created in the way that He did, even in the order that He did.

The second thing that I want to emphasize is that throughout Scripture, Christ is the focus and the anticipation of all Scripture. Probably the best place that I could have you turn for this would be in the Gospel of Luke. If you look at the end of the Gospel of Luke, and here again, without going to all the passages that make reference to this, but in Luke 24, as you come to the end of it, Jesus, the resurrected Christ, is talking to His disciples and it says this,

(Luke 24:44) “Now He said to them, “These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.”

(Luke 24:45) Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures.”

Understand the Scriptures about what? That it was about Him. The focus and the anticipation of all Scripture is the Christ. The reason why this is important is, and this is my third preface point that I want to get across, while we're looking at all of creation, what we're literally seeing is the word of God created all these things. John is very clear at the beginning of his gospel to let us know that God's word became flesh and dwelt among us. Now the point is this, that if in fact the word of God created all things, which Scripture is very clear and says that He did, and that the word of God is Christ, then everything that was created was created in the Spirit and in the character and in the nature of Christ. That is to say, everything had a purpose to bring us to Christ, and the focus is in Christ because it literally represents Christ in every single way.

So, for instance, if you look there with me in John 1, there are just a couple of verses in the Gospel of John I want you to see that make reference specifically to how the Creator, i.e. the word of God, that is to say, Christ is literally representing the nature of God in the creation. The statement reads this way,

(John 1:18) “No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him.”

Now the point is that God has been explained through creation, and if God is going to reveal Himself as through His word, and that is His Son, then all of creation is going to be pointing to Him in some way. That is to say, the characteristics of fundamentally, as John will say, “grace and truth.” You're going to see the grace of God and the truth of God in all creation. In other words, creation is going to shout Jesus Christ. It's going to proclaim Him in every way.

The same thing is seen in John 10:37, if you look there with me. Many people were doubting whether or not He was who He said He was, and His statement is,

(John 10:37) ““If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me;

(John 10:38) but if I do them, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, so that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father.””

His point is that the works that He does points to who the Father is, and is that which displays the nature of God, displays the character of God, displays the Spirit of God so that everything that He does, which if we understand and go back to John 1, that means in all creation; all of creation was pointing to the nature and the character of God. So, though it's a physical thing

that's being created, it's revealing a greater spiritual thing in not only the thing that was created, but the way that it was created.

That's a fundamental point, and you'll see that as well in John 17:4. Christ cries out as He's going to the cross, and obviously you're going to see God in a clearer way than ever before. Now, the creation declares the glory of God and the firmament shows forth His handiwork, but as Christ, as the word of God, not only created and shows the great glory of God, but Christ is also going to show the love of God on the cross and the glory of God is going to shine brighter than it ever has before.

(John 17:4) "I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do."

So, "glorified" meaning that He's made clear and evident to all who God is, and as Hebrews 1 would say that He's the exact representation of the nature of God. I say all this to emphasize that all of creation is just screaming Christ, and though we're looking at physical things that are being created, it's demonstrating a greater spiritual truth, and the spiritual truth is the real.

So, as you go back to Genesis and we look at the creation, we begin to see that creation is revealing certain things about God. It's revealing not only certain things about God, but how He's going to interact with us and what His desire is. For instance, at the beginning of creation, we read at the very start that God calls light out of darkness. Well, I mean, we read that, and we've read this before, but in 2 Corinthians 4:6, it's very clear that Paul is using that reference to demonstrate what God does in our hearts. In order for there to be light coming out of darkness; we know that light always existed, right? Because God is light. So, in Him there's no darkness at all. So, light is eternal. What's not eternal and what hadn't existed was darkness. So, that's why Isaiah says that He created darkness. He had to create darkness. Now, the question is, why would He create darkness, and then why would He call light out of it? Scripture is very clear, it's so that He might demonstrate what He's going to do in our lives; that things would be formless and void and empty and meaningless, and God was going to call light out of the darkness of our lives. So, He's given that picture. Did He actually do that in the physical? Yes. Is there a greater spiritual? Yes, and as you go on, you begin to realize that in order for this to take place, the Spirit of God has to move across, but it has to be the power of God, the power of the Spirit. As Zechariah says, "Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit," says the LORD." (Zechariah 4:6)

In Acts 2, you see the great mighty rushing wind of the Spirit of God coming upon the church, and bringing purpose and meaning into the body of Christ; life being breathed into the church.

So, the very beginning of creation is really demonstrating how God is going to work in the lives of people. As you go on, you begin to see in the third day that He actually brings up life out of

dirt. Coincidence. Maybe? I don't think so. So, He is giving us these clear pictures at the very beginning what His purpose is, what He's planning, what He's revealing to us and who He is. He creates signs in the heavens to direct us. I mean, is it a mistake, is it just a fluke that God goes, "Maybe I'll put a star up there and lead the wise men to Him?" Was it just kind of off the cuff, or did He say at the very beginning of creation, "One of the reasons why I'm putting these things up here are for signs"? Did He say that or was it just me? So, creating signs in the heavens to direct; giving every good and perfect gift. I mean, how does He end creation? It was "good," and then it was "very good." So, did you read in any of creation that God goes, "Oops, My bad." Well, I mean, was there anything that He created that was bad? Ok, so, it's every good and perfect gift comes from above from the Father of lights. (James 1:17) So, you see the nature of God. We see the nature of God in the fact that He creates so many things. I mean, the abundance that He gives, whether it's in the passage of 2 Corinthians 9, God abundantly supplies, or whether it's at the end of Philippians 4, that out of great abundance God will supply; that God loves to give abundance, and you see that in the creation itself. You see God desiring man to be transformed into His image in Genesis, "I'm going to make him like Us, in Our image." It's like it's taken straight out of 2 Corinthians 3, that God's going to transform us into the image of His beloved Son. That's the heart of God, and He's demonstrating this once again. The fact that He's breathing His Spirit in man is demonstrating a personal relationship with Him. I mean, you can't get any closer and more personal than that. God is demonstrating and signifying this personal relationship that He desires with man above all of creation. You don't see Him doing this with any other creation, but with man, it's very clear that He prepares a place for man, He prepares for man to come, but He prepares a place for him. Doesn't that sound like John 14, and doesn't it seem as if when He places him in the heart of the garden, the fact that He puts these two trees like smack dab in the middle, that He is placing them at the place where He's going to have fellowship with man? There are two things that He really wants man to realize and that is choice and everlasting life. Well, the Bible says that whosoever believes in Him, will not perish, but have everlasting life. "Whosoever believes" is the choice that you and I have to make, because once again, in order for you to have a relationship with God, guess what? You have to choose. I mean, the angels do what He tells them to do, but what He was looking for is you wanting to love Him back. In order for that to happen, there has to be choice. So, He's literally in the middle of the garden, He says, "The choice is yours." And you hear that same choice being reverberated by Moses. You have life and death, choose life. You can choose, but God gives us that choice and it is at the heart of paradise that God says, "It can't be paradise unless you want to be here." That's an interesting picture, isn't it? I mean, how can you have a relationship unless the two are agreed? There has to be that. So, there's this preparation, and there's a river flowing through it, and as the psalmist puts it so aptly in Psalm 46, that out of this river comes gladness of heart. You see that picture as well, as we talked about with Christ at the Feast of the Tabernacles in which He cries out, "I can give you

springs of living water inside.” God desires for life and joy to flow through you. He wants this for you. All of Creation is declaring this.

Then, as we looked at the fact that He places them not only in the garden, but He places them in there for a reason, and that is to cultivate. Now the question is, what is he supposed to be cultivating? If you just read it thinking on the surface, you'd say, “Dirt. He wants him hoeing the dirt and growing stuff.” That's true, but what you see is that in order for him to cultivate the garden, he has to cultivate things like faithfulness, right? He's going to have to cultivate things like stewardship. He's going to have to cultivate a sense of purpose. He's going to have to cultivate effort, endurance. Paul will even talk about the hard-working farmer that does these things. He's going to have to show restraint because there are certain things that he can do, and he can't do. He's going to have to cultivate values. He's going to have to cultivate understanding. As Isaiah says, the farmer knows exactly what to do for each thing that he plants. Well, there's some kind of understanding there, and that has to be cultivated. There has to be cultivated a sense of caring for the things that you're growing, for the things that you're getting ready and preparing for. You have to show some facsimile of care in that. You're cultivating care. As Psalm 37 would say, you cultivate faithfulness, but you're also cultivating all these other characteristics and the nature that God is wanting you to do. So, you're cultivating these things, and as you cultivate these things, the question is, “Why am I doing it?” And look, here again, the surface answer would be so we can grow stuff, but that's not what Genesis is saying at all. Genesis is saying all of this is preparing you for a relationship. This is a key point. As we were looking at last week, I just can't overemphasize this; here again, I hate to get too technical in in this aspect, but the sequential imperfect is all over the place in this text. That is to say, sequential, it's in a sequence. The sequential just keeps going and it keeps building. So, one sequence after the other, and this and this and this. It means that it's all interconnected and taking us to an end so that it's all conjoined, and there are very few places in all of Scripture that you'll see it build in such a degree. So, let me show you how that works.

It says in Genesis 2:15, “Then the LORD God took...”

See that?

Verse 16, “The LORD God commanded...”

Verse 18, “Then the LORD God said...”

Verse 19, “Out of the ground...”

Verse 20, “The man gave...”

Verse 21, “So the LORD God caused...”

All of those are sequential imperfect. That is to say, they're all connected and building on and taking us to a point. They're not separate entities in and of themselves. They are all leading to something. So, when you read these passages and you read that he's placed in the garden, he's placed in the garden for this woman, for this relationship. He's cultivating this ground to prepare for the relationship. God is bringing him to this point of even naming the animals so that he will develop some kind of observational skills, because in order to have some understanding of how to name an animal, you would name them according to what they do or how they look or something. Thus, you would come an inclusion, "Ok, this is going to be what it's called." Now, what's extremely interesting is, does he name any of the animals in the passage? I mean, are you reading, "Ok, this is the reason why a lion was called a lion, because he was lying around"? No, but other than that, does he say any name of any animal? No, it just says he named them, but in the text we're going to be looking at tonight, he'll say, "I'm going to name her, 'woman'." Who named her "woman"? Adam. So, Scripture is showing us the sequential imperfect that's taken us to this point of Adam coming to the conclusion of knowing how to name his helpmate. It's pretty interesting. So, all of this has a cumulative effect to bring Adam to the point of the most important thing in the garden, which in case you missed it, is the relationship. God is bringing us to that point. There are so many things that we do in our life, we get busy. God gives us things to be busy about. You read the Book of Ecclesiastes, as you go through the pages, you realize that it's good to work and there's a benefit in work, but if you read Ecclesiastes, it also says two is better than one. There comes a point where you ask yourself, "Why am I working so hard?" There comes a point where you begin to ask, "Who is this for?" Ecclesiastes does ask that question. I mean, a man works hard all his life, he comes to the end of his life, and he goes, "I never thought to ask, why did I do all of this? I'm just going to leave it to another." The wonderful thing about doing things is you do things together.

One of my favorite passages in Scripture is in Corinthians; as Paul would write, "and working together with Him." Can you imagine? We actually get to work together with God. It's not as much what you do, as it is, who you're doing it with. I've oftentimes told Connie, "You know, if something happened to you, I'm never eating out in a restaurant again." Because to me, I just don't like eating without her. What, joy and what fun would it be? You go places, and you go, "Look, there's a... there's nobody around." I mean, how can you fully enjoy it? You can't. You begin to realize that everything that you do is for the purpose of a relationship, and when you come to the end of your life, you realize that. Unfortunately, many people come to that conclusion at the end of their life, and they go, "It was all about relationships." And God goes, "Yeah, I told you that at the beginning. It was all about relationship." So, He does this interesting cumulative effect and we have this crowning day. Now, what's even greater about this, is that God through the relationship with the woman, is pointing to man and his relationship to God. So, the woman is preparing him for the greater relationship. That's pretty

interesting, isn't it? Because if you want to convey to somebody that relationship is important, you get them through all this cultivating and you begin to cultivate their lives, then you begin to show them relationships here, but then you begin to show them relationship here. God is doing that in our lives. When you think about children as they grow up, they develop. Connie and I were talking about this in the car today, that it seems as if people seem to be so detached romantically, in so many ways about any kind of affection. It's like they don't even know how to show any kind of affection. We began to talk about the fact that there aren't many parents staying at home and there's no attachment to those parents in a deep way. So, the child grows up very detached and, in a way, doesn't know how to relate to anybody. I mean, family cultivates relationships.

Dads, I want to let you know, you have a purpose in cultivating the relationship with your children, and that is to point to God. You're going to take your kids, take their hand out of yours, and you're going to put their hand in His, and that's what your job is; to give them the greater relationship, the relationship that counts. So, all of this is building, and that's what I'm wanting you to see.

So, as we come to this passage tonight, we're going to see another tie in the sequence of the cumulative effect stated a long way I guess, but in verse 21 it starts off this way,

(Genesis 2:21) "So..."

That "so" is once again sequential.

"So the LORD God caused..."

Now, what's clear at this juncture is that it's a solely God's idea. That at this juncture, it was not something that Adam came up with, but more than that, it is something that God is causing. Now, the reason why that's so important is because what we're going to see is Adam going to sleep, and that is going to piggyback on God causing, is man doing nothing. This is a very important point in God developing relationships, which really, you literally have fundamental principles in relationships here. So, here's the number one fundamental principle, where there's going to be the relationship, it actually has to begin with you surrendering to God. The question is, what is Adam doing? Well, he's going to go to sleep.

The passage reads this way in verse 21,

"So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and..."

What did Adam do? "I'm going to work for God. I'm going to do all this. I'm going to make it happen. I mean, after all, I've got to prepare for this relationship." God goes, "I've already made you do some work here to get your senses stirred and get you thinking around the right things,

but it's not going to begin with you. It's going to begin with you surrendering to Me." And I can't think of a greater surrender than sleep.

If you could just look at a passage, and like I said, there's so many passages we look at for all these references, but if you look with me in Psalm 4, we go to that wonderful passage of David's frustration. I can feel with the guy because, well, especially in political times, but you know, men of reproach, and they're saying things that they shouldn't be saying, and it seems like it's all about dishonor instead of honor. You would hope that it would be about statesman, but it's not.

His question is, in verse 2, "How long will you love what is worthless and aim at deception?"

It's frustrating to see people lying, cheating, railing people. It's frustrating. It's hurtful. It gets you angry. That's what it does, just gets you angry.

(Psalm 4:3) "But know that the LORD has set apart the godly man for Himself; The LORD hears when I call to Him."

(Psalm 4:4) Tremble..."

Or you could put in there, "be angry."

"... and do not sin..."

The "trembling" is, have you ever been so angry you were shaking? The passage is talking about an anger that is so intense that you're shaking. Be angry, but what? Do not sin.

"... Meditate in your heart..."

Oh, this is like sleeping, isn't it?

"... upon your bed, and be still."

This is a sacrifice of surrender. Actually, Scripture refers to it in this way in verse 5,

"Offer the sacrifices of righteousness,
And trust in the LORD."

What is the sacrifice of righteousness? Trust. Where does trust begin? Surrender. That's you letting go of all the control over things, and you go, "OK, it's up to You. Not my will, Yours be done."

(Psalm 4:6) "Many are saying..."

"It's not going to work; not going to happen. Nothing good is going to come out of this."

"...Lift up the light of Your countenance upon us, O LORD!"

“You're going to have to do this.”

When I rest in the Lord, what happens? Look at verse 7, instead of me sitting around getting angry and mad at everybody and being miserable, which I can be pretty good at that; instead of that happening, what does God do? He puts gladness in my heart. If you don't have gladness in your heart, what's the problem? You didn't surrender to God. You didn't offer the sacrifice of trust. You didn't do it.

It goes on and says,

“... More than when their grain and new wine abound.

(Psalm 4:8) In peace I will both lie down and sleep,
For You alone, O LORD, make me to dwell in safety.”

Adam's going to have to do something, sleep. He's going to have to let go. Immediately, it just jumps off the page, man cannot be the initiator, it has to be God. If you want to ever have any kind of relationship, it has to begin with the surrendering to God and saying, “Your will be done.” I've heard testimonies so many times of those that have finally surrendered to God and then God brought somebody into their lives and that's really the proper order for that to happen, isn't it? God is the One that has to do that.

So, it starts off with God is causing a deep sleep to fall upon man to literally get him out of the picture and cause him to put his trust in Him. It is entering this sense of, as we would probably define it according to Hebrews 4, we're entering into God's rest. If you remember, all of you who have taken that class many moons ago, and when you go into the class, and we begin to talk about entering into God's rest on the Sabbath, we begin to realize according to Isaiah 58, as it describes what the Sabbath rest is, that it's you ceasing (“rest” meaning ceasing) and desisting from, what? Doing things your way. So, that's you letting go, and you're entering into the rest of God. “I'm going to trust God. I'm going to let Him do the leading. I'm going to let Him call the shots. I'm going to obey what He says, and I'm going to do what He says.”

(Genesis 2:21) “So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh at that place.”

Now, the passage is telling us that God is actually calling upon man, as he puts his trust in Him, to sacrifice. That's an interesting picture. We oftentimes want to start relationships by taking, but God says if you want a relationship to start off right, it has to begin with surrender, and you have to start by giving, by sacrificing. It begins with you.

Philippians 2 will say this probably in the clearest way, that we're not only to hold others in higher esteem than ourselves, but like Christ who gave Himself for us. It's a great picture of

Christ literally establishing, before man is introduced to his wife, what needs to take place in order to have this relationship with God. So, he takes the bone out. We're going to talk about the bone in just a minute. He opens up the flesh, which obviously has a clear picture within that as well. He closed it up, and God brought a healing. There's no other way to put that. Scripture is telling us that there's going to be sacrifice, there's going to be wounding, there's going to be things that you'll have to give up, but God will bring the healing. God will make, more specifically, something good out of this.

Now, you have to realize that at this juncture, Adam has no idea what he's in for. Adam didn't look at God, and go, "Now, before I go to sleep, what are we going to do?" I mean, it's divine anesthetics, but he has no idea what's going to happen, and he's having to trust God. He's having to literally trust God, surrender his life, and God begins to move in his life.

Look, I remember when I gave my life to the Lord. I remember saying something like, "I don't know what this means, but I'm willing." And truer words were never spoken. I had no idea what it meant, but I did find out, and I am finding out as time goes on what it means to surrender all. In order to have a relationship that has to happen, doesn't it? We have to be the giver.

(Genesis 2:22) "The LORD God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man."

"Here, look what I made, just for you."

So, not only would God call upon us to sacrifice and to be selfless, but in a very interesting way. The way that Adam sees this, and I want you to pick up with me in verse 23,

"The man said,
"This is now bone of my bones,
And flesh of my flesh;
She..."

Actually, the word is not "she," it's "this one." I mean, it's the first time you've seen a woman. So, what are you going to say? "This one, this thing that you've made here."

(This one) "shall be called Woman,
Because she was taken out of Man."

Now, what's interesting is in verse 23, "The man said," do you see the word "man" there? That's "'*ādām*," or dirt. I was thinking just last week, woman is of higher quality than men. The reason why I say that is that she was made out of bone and flesh. We were made out of dirt. So, she kind of has it better, but the passage is revealing that it starts off with this man that is dirt, but Adam used a different word for man at the end. So, it's this difference that I want you to

see. Actually, the word woman here is “*’iššâ*,” For she was taken out of “*’iš*”. Instead of “*’ādām*” for “man,” if you look at the end,

“She shall be called Woman,
Because she was taken out of Man.”

See the word “man” there? That's “*’iš*,” not “*’ādām*”. What's interesting about “*’iš*,” is that it is often used, not always, but instead of “*’ādām*” which you think of as dirt, and it has more of the connotation of weakness, this has the connotation of more “hero” or somebody honorable. In some cases, warrior. So, it will oftentimes use “*’iš*” for that. It's almost as if at this moment, man becomes more of a protector and once again more of a giver than he is just dirt. Isn't it wonderful how God can raise us out of the dirt and actually bring us to be somebody that can help somebody and to care for somebody more than ourselves? So, “*’iššâ*” just means basically, “coming out of man.” In other words, I'm going to stretch it a little bit, but a byproduct of the hero that gave his bone and his flesh.

Now, the two words that are used, and he repeats this within the passage, “now bone of my bones.” “*Ešem*” is the word “bones” there. The reason why that word is so important, and why he starts off with “bone,” is because yes, the bone has a connotation of that which is strong; naturally, a bone is stronger than the flesh, so it gives that picture of strength and stability, but more specifically, when you look at the word “bone,” it has the focus of substance. The picture is that the man is giving something substantive into this relationship. So, if in fact I said to my wife, “I love you,” it would be wise for me to give her something substantive to prove it. I remember her dad wanted to make sure that I could support her. “So, what, you love my daughter? So what? Do you have a house?” And I remember saying to myself, “I've got to go out and buy a house.” It's pretty hard to buy a house at 18, but at 18 years old, I bought a house. When I came before him, I said, “I got a house.” And I was able to say that because it was something substantive. It's one thing to say that you love somebody, but to provide something for them to care for them, it's something substantive. Sacrifice is substantive.

Once again, you go to the Book of Hebrews, and all the way through Hebrews, it talks about the shadows, but in Chapter 11, what does it say substance is? Faith. Now, faith is the substance, and when you read about faith in Hebrews 11, what is it? Well, Abel offered a better sacrifice, substance. Noah built an ark, substance. Abraham left his home, substance. Scripture is telling us that in order to have a relationship, you not only have to have skin in the game, you have to add substance to what you're doing. Fundamentally, what we're talking about is real, isn't it? It has to be real. So, “this is now bone of my bones.” In other words, this is real sacrifice. Once again, you could say that you love somebody, but you start pulling body parts off, now you're speaking like you're really believing it, and you really mean it, right? Ok. So, that's the first part of this.

The second part is “flesh,” and the word that he uses, “*bāśār*,” is actually rooted in the word “*bāśar*,” which they sound pretty much alike anyway, but the two words, strangely enough exist. The one seems to define simply the word “flesh,” and in some ways, conveys the external feelings and senses which flesh has, as well as its sense of weakness and softness. It's clearly that, and you're going to be surprised what the root word actually means, but it's actually used in Scripture to define “good news.” In fact, I think in particular it's used in Isaiah 41, in which God said, “We proclaim good news to you.” Of course, you read a little bit further in Isaiah, “How lovely on the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news...” (Isaiah 52:7) This word could actually be translated “gospel,” and you have this interesting picture of Christ giving His flesh. “This is My body which is broken for you.” Good news. It gives a wonderful picture of God's love, doesn't it? That not only was somebody willing to give in a substantive way, but even to Him, it was good news. It was something that He wanted to do. You can sense that when God presented Adam with the woman, Adam couldn't help but say, “This is great news. This is flesh of my flesh, and I would have done it again. I wouldn't have withheld anything.” And once again, you begin to see the value of what God is picturing for us in the relationship. So, you have this sense of it has to begin with surrender. You have this sense of God's going to call upon us to sacrifice, and God's going to call upon us to give of ourselves, of our substance, willingly. I mean, it has to be good news. I just can't picture that if God were to do this, and He were to say something like, “You have no idea how miserable I was feeling while I was up on that cross. I mean, I wish I'd never had to go through that.” It would almost take the good news out of it.

(Hebrews 12:2) “... who for the joy set before Him endured the cross.”

So, He tells everybody, “Tell everybody, ‘Good news.’”

You read Isaiah 53, and it says that it pleased God to crush Him, that He would bring, as Hebrews would say, “many sons to glory.” It's one thing to give, it's another thing to do so joyfully, and to realize that all of this was worth it. It's no different than a mother having a child. It's no different than somebody dying for somebody that they love. It is that interesting, and I would say, wonderful picture of believing that what God is doing as He calls upon me to surrender and sacrifice is good. I have to believe that, and I begin that process by resting in Him. That's where it begins. Also, trusting that He's going to do work.

Now, there's a verse that can't help but run through your mind when you're reading something like this, and what is it? Well, it has to be Psalm 127. Not only, “Unless the LORD builds the house, they labor in vain,” but how does it end? “He gives to His beloved even in his sleep.” What's happening here? Is it true that if you surrender your life, is it true that if in fact you'll be willing to sacrifice when you see no result to this, or how this is going to end, or what it's actually going to produce? Did he have any idea? No, but he just rested in God and God's going

to call upon us to do this. But I know this, I know it's going to be great. I know when it's all done that is just going to be the greatest thing that ever happened. He says, "You know what? God allowed me to be a man. He took me out of the dirt, and He allowed me to be a man. He only gave me a wonderful wife, but He gave me a sense of dignity, and He gave me a sense of honor. Here's somebody that I can share things with and live."

Now, here's the last point, God is ultimately bringing us to the greater relationship. So, all the way through, He's been cultivating all these things and been preparing all these things, but it's all to have the relationship with God, and there's no clearer place to see this than in Ephesians Five. So, if you turn there with me, we'll read a very familiar passage, but maybe see it in a little bit different light, and that different light is in the light of creation and what God was doing right at the very beginning. When you hear the Pharisees coming up to Jesus and they begin to question Him about divorce, "Is it ok to divorce for any reason?" How does Jesus answer? You remember? He goes back to Genesis, and He goes, "From the beginning, it was not so." And you have this wonderful picture in the beginning of exclusivity. I mean, it's not like God created a bunch of women, like maybe Solomon would have thought, but it was just one man, one woman, and that's it. Christ went back to the foundation of how everything was made, why it was made the way that it was, because He wanted that exclusive relationship. Now, you'll have that same sense in James 4, when God says, "Do you not know that I jealously desire just you and Me; that you wouldn't love the world, that it would just be you and Me?" He's saying the same thing, because that's the way the relationship needs to be. That was the way the relationship was meant to be from the very beginning. So, you come into Ephesians 5, and it tells us,

(Ephesians 5:22) "Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord.

(Eph 5:23) For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church..."

Now, right away, he begins to give the parallel and the analogy of the two, and how they seem to be conjoined together.

He even says in verse 24,

"But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything.

(Ephesians 5:25) Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her."

Now, as it goes all the way through this, he ends this way in verse 31,

“FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND SHALL BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH.”

Did you hear that? “Good news.” Did you hear that in the flesh? That's good news.

(Ephesians 5:32) “This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church.”

At the very beginning of creation, God was demonstrating what our relationship was made up of, how a relationship would begin, what would solidify the relationship, what would make it last, and Christ would do all those things for us. While we were yet sinners, Christ would die for us. He would get on that cross, and you know what He would say?

“INTO YOUR HANDS I COMMIT MY SPIRIT.” (Luke 23:46)

And out of His side, the church was born; the bride was created, and God was developing a relationship with us. How wonderful the picture is of what's being developed.

In Genesis, my point in all of this is that it's taking us to a place, and that place is a consummation of relationship. We're learning through the things that we do in our life. God gives us tasks to do. You say, “Well, I've been given these tasks so I can make money.” No, you're given those tasks so you can learn how to develop relationships. Everything is for the relationship; that of all the things in all the garden, the very most important thing was the relationship, and this is what He's proven.

Closing Prayer:

Father, we give You thanks for Your word, and how You direct our paths and our way of thinking. In Your word, we begin to realize that none of these things were a mistake, and all of these things were pointing to something far greater than just the mere physical. They were taking us into the realm of the real; out of the shadows and into the real, and we begin to understand what You were doing and how You're talking to us; how the changing of heart causes us to think like You and causes us to change. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.