

08.28.24

Genesis  
Chapter 2 - God's Grace Toward Men  
Together Unashamed (vs.24-25)

Well, if you turn your Bibles to Genesis 2, we're going to be looking specifically at verses 24 and 25 as it begins to talk about the relationship between the man and the woman and really goes into future relationships in the sense of marriage. Actually, one of the first places where we begin to see the emphasis of this relationship, like a covenant type thing. Although the promises are not in this particular passage, but the two becoming one flesh is the focus of the text. As we come to this, I know I've been kind of saying this all along, but it is important to realize that all of these things that God is creating is for a specific purpose and that is to bring us to Him. It is to draw us to a relationship with God because ultimately, as we read in Revelation 19, it is the bride of Christ that we are gathered together to become a part of Him. You really see that in particular, in John 17, because when you come to John 17, you see the prayer of Christ. As it comes towards the end, it is emphasized that Christ wants us to be with Him. He uses this phrase, we'll look at it a little bit later on, but as He is one with the Father, He wants us to be one with Him. So, this whole two becoming one flesh is really all the way what all these things are about, and all of creation is drawing us, whether it's man being placed in the garden for the purpose of cultivating it, and we kind of touched upon that, but that sense of here you are in the garden, and you're going to have to cultivate faithfulness. You're going to have to cultivate endurance. Why is God having him cultivate the garden? The answer is He's preparing him for a relationship. So, there he is in the garden, and then God brings the animals in, and He goes, "Now, you need to name them." And why does he need to name them? Why is he going to be over the animals?

Somebody was asking me this past week, they said, "Why did God even make animals?" And I said, "They're training. They're there to train us." And you see specifically, Moses, as he is trained to deal with the children of Israel, and how does God train him? Well, 40 years with sheep. If that doesn't train you, I don't know what will. You begin to realize that here are these and they never seem to be quiet. They're always crying out. A couple of years ago, I was looking at a documentary where they still take care of literally thousands of sheep on the hills, and I was just struck by the fact that those sheep never shut up. They literally never shut up. So, in the documentary, you're watching the sunset, and as the sun's setting, they almost seem to get louder. Then, you just see the little light in the tent and they're still crying out, and it just goes

through the whole night. They kind of speed it up and slow down and let you listen. It just never stops, and you're going, "Wow. How we must sound like that to God." And yet He still says, "Come. Let your request be made known." It's just a miraculous thing. If in fact you can learn patience, if in fact you can be attentive and care for animals that would not only be dead without the care of man by virtue of the fact that they're fleece gets so heavy that if they're not shaved, they're going to die because water is going to hit them or something; that's going to get so heavy that they're just going to fall over, and not going to be able to get back up. God begins to reveal to us the necessity of that, and you look at all the other animals, such as the lions, bears, tigers and oh my, and you begin to realize that they are actually used as that which describes nations that have insatiable desires to do things. So, you see that in particular with Daniel. Why is it that God created animals? It was all to prepare us for relationship. I remember with our kids, one of the ways that we help prepare them is with a dog, and "You're going to have to be responsible." "Dad, can you feed the dog?" "No, it's your dog. You feed the dog, and you take care of the dog." And they begin to learn responsibility for those things, and it's preparation. Here again, I'm not saying that everybody has to get a dog or a cat or whatever, but the point is that they're there for a reason and God is training us. We live in a world today in which the thought is, "We're here for the animals." That's not true. The animals are here for us, and God is using them for our training. So that in Adam's particular case, He was not only training him in the sense that he was going to rule over them, but He was training him in the sense that he was going to have to name them, and he's going to have to use observational skills to do this. In other words, he was going to need some kind of understanding so that he can name them properly. Then, of course, as it comes to the point and time in which God says, "It's not good for you to be alone." And Adam realizes by virtue of God saying that, all the other animals seem to have somebody, but he doesn't. God was once again preparing him for the relationship. So, as He brings woman into the sphere, we realize that it doesn't end there because the relationship between the man and woman is there to prepare us for our relationship with God. So, all these things are bringing us into this relationship and everything that God is doing and the way that He's doing it is preparing us for the relationship with God because all these other relationships will ultimately end, but it is the relationship of God that will draw us ultimately together. We're going to see that as we come to this particular passage. There is this wonderful cultivation, and it's bringing together.

So, when you see the passage in verse 24, it gives this summary statement,

"For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife."

It should not surprise you that the word "cleave" (joined) is now going to be mentioned specifically for your relationship with God as well.

(Deuteronomy 10:20) "You shall fear the LORD your God; you shall serve Him and cling..."

Here's the same word, "cleave" is now translated "cling," but it's the same word, "dābaq" within the passage.

"You shall fear the LORD your God; you shall serve Him and cling to Him, and you shall swear by His name."

You're going to see that in Deuteronomy 13:4 and you're going to see in Deuteronomy 30:20, that it's going to be repeated, "You must cling to God. You must cleave to Him." It's the same word that is used in the relationship between the man and the woman. So once again, it is a preparation for our relationship with Him.

The way that Jeremiah puts it in Jeremiah 13:11, as God says, "I want you to take this waistband, and I want you to put it around you." And it says, "As the waistband cleaves to you, so you should cleave to Me." So, it gives that interesting picture of cleaving.

In one text, actually I think it's Deuteronomy 11:22, it uses the phrase to "hold fast," but it oftentimes it's translated as "glued together." So, as we come to this passage, I just can't overemphasize the fact that all of this is drawing us to Him, and He is preparing us for the relationship. That's why the relationship with the husband and the wife is so important because it literally then begins to define the way the relationship with God needs to be. Once again, that's why the church is referred to as the "bride of Christ." So, as we come to this, what we begin to see is the declaration, in verse 24, of a reason to leave and a reason to cleave, and we're going to be looking at that because that's actually a phrase that we use quite frequently when dealing with marriages and relationships. I think a lot of times it's just clearly not even understood, and many times, even though perhaps understood, it's not obeyed. It's one of the reasons why there's so much confusion in relationship because people don't know how to leave and cleave. As we come to this passage, it is important to realize at the beginning of verse 24 that it starts off with this sense of a demonstrative in the emphasis of there is a reason why you're doing this, and that reason is going to be directly connected to something that you wouldn't normally think.

If you back up into verse 23, it's coming out of the declaration of Adam, in which he now embraces this woman, and his statement is,

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

"Iššâ," coming out of man, "iš"; not "mannish," but "iš," and she's "Iššâ." So, it's another way of saying "out of man she came" because she was taken out of man.

Then, verse 24 piggybacks on this. It says,

“For this reason...”

So, it's actually given us a reason why, if you look at this,

“... a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife...”

I've often heard people proclaim on this particular topic, that it's the man that needs to leave his father and mother, but the wife doesn't have to, and that would be a misnomer. That would be a misunderstanding of the text, because the emphasis of the passage is that the two have become one. So, the two as one leave mother and father. Actually, in the Samaritan, the Syriac and the Arabic text, it literally reads, “And the two of them shall leave and cleave.” So, it's pretty interesting, and it is affirmed by Jesus Himself.

If you go with me to Matthew 19. I'm going to try to deal with some of the technical and then I'm going to draw it together for the spiritual, but sometimes you just have to get the definitions out of the way. Within this setting, and Mark actually covers this as well in Mark 10, but the Pharisees are coming to Jesus, and they're looking for an excuse to divorce. “Is there something lawful we can do to get a divorce? Can we do this lawfully? I mean, after all, Moses said we could.”

(Matthew 19:3) “Some Pharisees came to Jesus, testing Him and asking, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any reason at all?”

(Matthew 19:4) And He answered and said, “Have you not read...”

Which was kind of an insult because these are Bible scholars, or I would say Torah scholars.

“... Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE...”

In other words, “Divorce and marry who else?”

(Matthew 19:5) “and said, ‘FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE...”

And look at the phrase that's actually not in the Genesis text,

“AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH.”

Now, I know that sounds like a minor detail, but the point of the matter is that the two are leaving. Once again, the whole emphasis of Genesis is that the two are seen as one. So, it's not contradicting, but the point is that the wife is leaving her mother and father as well as the

husband is leaving his mother and father. Why? To become one, and that's the reason of the passage.

(Matthew 19:6) “So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.”

Now, the key point in this is that the marriage ceremony or the marriage itself is where the covenant is made and that is to say that a promise is made to each other, but the joining together is really of the flesh. So, the two are joined together because of the flesh. That's the joining. The Covenant is the promise, and that's the marriage. So, why have a marriage? Because you're making a promise to somebody, but the fulfillment of that promise is really in the consummating of the flesh, which is going to be a key point in this whole passage.

So, as you go back, it starts off with this,

(Genesis 2:24) “For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife...”

Now, I just have to say this about this first, there's been debate and I'm not really sure why, but here again, who's saying this? Some say, “Well, Adam's saying this.” I don't think Adam saying this. We know God is saying it because it's the word of God. So, you're real safe in saying that, but it's to be noted that Adam wouldn't know what a mother and father was. So, how could he interject something such as that? We're seeing that because woman came out of man and was part of his flesh from now on, and the text is really inferring this because if you read it with me,

“For this reason a man shall leave...”

This is more future tense.

“... his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become...”

See the emphasis? This is saying this is the way it's going to be from now on because this is the way it was established that the two are one flesh. Now, from now on, the two will become one flesh, and this will be the reason why they leave. The emphasis of the passage is that he shall leave his father and his mother and shall cleave to his wife. I know this is going to sound like semantics, but the best way to read it would be, “For this reason he doth leave and he doth cleave.” The point is that he is leaving his mother and father for the distinct purpose of cleaving to his wife. This is the point. This is why he leaves. He's not leaving because he's sick and tired of his mother and his father, it's because he is desiring to cleave. Now, this is a magnificent picture and we're going to go into this as we go, but it then goes on and says this at the end of verse 24,

“... and they shall become one flesh.”

Now, the word “flesh” is going to be the interesting word that we hit upon last week. Here again, maybe I could just give you this word so you can just see it, “*bāśār*.” That's the word “flesh.” I have a reason for spelling it out for you. Once again, that's not even Hebrew, but if in fact you go to the root of this word, and once again we touched upon this last week, this is the root word of this word. Once again, this is “flesh,” right? This is the root word. In other words, this word comes from this word. When we say, “it's the root word,” that's what we mean. So, what does this word mean? Good news. That's what it means. So, what you have is an interesting picture of man's flesh being opened up for the bride, and it's good news because by virtue of his sacrifice, good news comes. Now, you'll see this word, and there are number of places that you will see it, but no place so endearing as in Isaiah.

So, if you turn with me to Isaiah 52. You're probably already feeling where I'm going with this. This is proclaiming that wonderful message of good news that the Messiah is coming, and it starts off this way,

(Isaiah 52:1) “Awake, awake,  
Clothe yourself in your strength, O Zion;  
Clothe yourself in your beautiful garments,  
O Jerusalem, the holy city...”

(Isaiah 52:2) “Shake yourself from the dust...”

“I've got good news for you.” And the way that he puts it is this,

(Isaiah 52:7) “How lovely on the mountains  
Are the feet of him who brings good news (*bāśār*)...”

That's actually the word there, “*bāśār*”.

“Who announces peace  
And brings good news (*bāśār*) of happiness...”

Literally, the word is a preaching too. It's not just bringing good news. It actually has the emphasis of preaching. So, what an interesting tie that is, as you begin to realize that you have this picture of glad tidings of announcing good news. This is why, when you look at the Gospel of John, in John 1:14, it says, “And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us.” And what is that called? Good news, because He's going to give of His flesh. This is why you come to the table, and He says, “This is My body which is broken for you.” And you're going, “What are You talking about?” He said, “I'm talking about good news. This is My flesh that is given to you.”

It shouldn't surprise us that you come to the end of Isaiah 52, and He goes, “Ok, you're going to be astonished at what's going to happen here.”

(Isaiah 52:14) "Just as many were astonished at you, My people,  
So His (the Messiah) appearance was marred more than any man  
And His form more than the sons of men."

(Isaiah 52:15) "Thus He will sprinkle many nations,  
Kings will shut their mouths on account of Him;  
For what had not been told them they will see,  
And what they had not heard they will understand."

(Isaiah 53:1) "Who has believed our message?  
And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?"

(Isaiah 53:2) For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot,  
And like a root out of parched ground;  
He has no stately form or majesty  
That we should look upon Him,  
Nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him.

(Isaiah 53:3) He was despised and forsaken of men,  
A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;  
And like one from whom men hide their face  
He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.

(Isaiah 53:4) Surely our griefs He Himself bore,  
And our sorrows He carried..."

I mean, this is the good news, right?

(Isaiah 53:10) "But the LORD was pleased  
To crush Him..."

That's part of the good news for us. Well, how does how does it put in verse 10?

"The LORD was pleased  
To crush Him, putting Him to grief;  
If He would render Himself as a guilt offering,  
He will see His offspring..."

Life will come from His flesh being sacrificed.

(Isaiah 53:11) "... My Servant, will justify the many,  
As He will bear their iniquities."

How wonderful that is. He was oppressed and afflicted like a lamb or sheep led to the slaughter. What a great passage this is. It begins to describe the graciousness of God in this sacrifice, but more than that, a relationship that is being built; the relationship that's being built is through the tearing of the flesh. Thus, the good news. The two are equated and I would say, inextricably tied together, because what you're dealing with is the reason for leaving and cleaving. It goes back to this simple statement, "For the two will become one flesh." Now, that's actually the reason why it's saying to leave and cleave. Now, we're going to expand upon that in just a minute, but I do feel like I need to go into a little bit of pragmatism with this because we are dealing with the whole covenant thing of marriage. Anytime you have a marriage involved, you have parents involved too, usually in some way, sometimes for the good, sometimes for the worse.

The question is, where is the role of the parents? The best place to go to, and once again, we're going to we're going to take a little detour, but I think it's only proper, appropriate that we do this since it says, "Leave your mother and father," right?

So, if you turn with me to 1 Corinthians 7, Paul deals with this in a very interesting way. In this particular passage, it's clear that Paul is concerned for the Corinthians because many of them are trying to find a way out of their particular condition. Many don't like the condition that they're in. They don't like the circumstance that they're in. They've become Christians. Some are thinking, "Now that I'm a Christian, can I get rid of my spouse because they're not a Christian? They're giving me trouble," so to speak, or something like that. Paul says, "Just stay where you are. Who knows? You can sanctify the household by remaining, but stay, don't leave." So, he touches upon that.

Here again, I don't want to go through the whole passage, but if you look in 1 Corinthians 7:14, "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified through his wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified through her believing husband; for otherwise your children are unclean, but now they are holy.

(1 Corinthians 7:15) Yet if the unbelieving one leaves, let him leave..."

You can't make somebody stay, right? So, it's an interesting passage, because he's having to deal with people that are trying to find a way to leave their particular circumstance. He ultimately says this in verse 20,

"Each man must remain in that condition in which he was called."

Then, he gives an interesting example,



(1 Corinthians 7:21) “Were you called while a slave? Do not worry about it; but if you are able also to become free, rather do that.”

He’s trying to get them to quiet down a little bit and quit trying to find the loopholes and the escape. It's almost like the Pharisees saying, “Can we divorce her for any reason?”

So, as it goes on, he then deals with a father that has a daughter, and in the context, a virgin daughter. Once again, just to just to clarify this particular passage, because there’s a lot of confusion about it, but it almost seems as if Paul's saying, “I don't want you to get married.” But that wouldn't be true, because that would be Paul going against the fundamental truths of Genesis, “It’s not good for man to be alone.” And that was God saying that. It was God's idea for them to marry and what God joins together. So, it's not Paul against marriage, it's Paul against marriage at a time in which there's distress.

(1 Corinthians 7:26) “I think then that this is good in view of the present distress, that it is good for a man to remain as he is.”

So, what's the context? It's a time of distress. In other words, if there was war going on or something like that, I think it's best not to get married right now. You're just going to create more sorrow and more difficulties during this time. So, that's the context of that. Here again, I won't go into a lot of depth on that particular issue, but if you will drop on down a little bit further, as he begins to talk about the father that has this virgin daughter,

(1 Corinthians 7:35) “This I say for your own benefit; not to put a restraint upon you, but to promote what is appropriate and to secure undistracted devotion to the Lord.

(1 Corinthians 7:36) But if any man thinks that he is acting unbecomingly toward his virgin daughter, if she is past her youth, and if it must be so, let him do what he wishes, he does not sin; let her marry.”

Now, we're going to go on, he is also going to give him the sense of, “But if you want to hold her back, that's up to you.” He's not giving the father this kind of carte blanche power, and I think it's very important to realize that because I know that there are parents that are still hanging on maybe to their 40-year-old daughter or something like that. Let her go. In this particular passage there is a clause in the text, and you need to understand what he's saying. The clause is if she should be of full age. Now, according to the Greeks at that particular time, that was age 20. I'm not saying that there's a particular age. I would say that the father or that the girl would know when she's come to that point, but the point of the passage is that she perceives herself to be ready. If you back up to verse 36, at the very beginning, it would be inappropriate for the father to act unbecomingly toward his full aged daughter. Now, the question is, what would acting unbecomingly be? Well here again, according to the Jewish

sages, and I don't want to go too much into the history thing, but the legitimate reason that a father could only hold back his daughter would be if he felt there was harm involved. But if in fact she was of age and she desired, it would be unbecoming for him to hold her back from the marriage.

If you look in 1 Corinthians 7:1,

“Now concerning the things about which you wrote, it is good for a man not to touch a woman.

(1 Corinthians 7:2) But because of immoralities, each man is to have his own wife, and each woman is to have her own husband.”

Then you drop on down to verse 9,

(1 Corinthians 7:9) “But if they do not have self-control, let them marry; for it is better to marry than to burn with passion.”

The point is that many a father has actually caused their children to sin by virtue of trying to control their kids. Look, I know that parents feel responsible. I get it. I understand you feel responsible, but you can't control who your kid likes, and you can't control who your kid wants to get married to. I mean, God joins together and it's their decision. You have to remember at the very center of the garden was choice, and choice is that place in which you love somebody because you give them that choice. For a father to then hold back a child to the degree that they're causing them to stumble would be acting unbecomingly. So, the text is if she should be a full age, to detain her would cause her to sin, and that's the foundational passage.

It goes on to say in verse 37,

“But he who stands firm in his heart, being under no constraint, but has authority over his own will, and has decided this in his own heart, to keep his own virgin daughter, he will do well.

(1 Corinthians 7:38) So then both he who gives his own virgin daughter in marriage does well, and he who does not give her in marriage will do better.”

Once again, the clause is if she be of age. So up to a point, he has the responsibility to protect her, but then beyond that, when it comes to her decision, he needs to let her go. Otherwise, he's acting unbecomingly in this.

It then goes on and says,

(1 Corinthians 7:39) “A wife is bound as long as her husband lives...”

Of course, it's demonstrating the superior relationship, and that's one of the key things of this passage in Genesis. The superior relationship of the husband and wife, even over the child and the parent. It's a superior relationship because for this reason you leave your mother and

father, and you cleave too. The emphasis, of course, within the passage is that's done because God is wanting the two to become one flesh.

Then, it comes to the end of Genesis 2,

(Genesis 2:25) “And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.”

So, he now begins to give reason why there is no shame in the relationship. In case you missed it, the reason there is no shame is because the two are one flesh. Now, all of this is to give us this picture of our relationship with God. It's saying that there has to be a separation in order to have this exclusive relationship with God. Now, marriage is there to convey just how intense this relationship.

Here again, in case you missed it in Ephesians 5, we'll go through it and read it again, but if you look, it shouldn't surprise you that Ephesians 5 will actually quote the same text 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.”

So, in the passage that we're looking at, Ephesians 5:22, as it begins to talk about wives being subject to their own husbands as unto the Lord, it's very clear that they're not subject to their fathers. It's very clear they're not any longer subject to their parents.

(Ephesians 5:23) “For the husband is the head of the wife...”

Who's the head of the wife? The husband is.

“...as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body.”

And that's the key point.

(Ephesians 5:24) “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.”

Once again, the whole concept of giving of his flesh for his wife.

(Ephesians 5:26) “So that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word.”

People use this particular section. I've heard guys use it that “My wife has this submit to me.” And I said, “Yeah, but you understand why she is submitting to you? It's because you've sanctified her by virtue of your sacrificing for her. So, by your sacrifice, she wants to submit to you.” Now, it doesn't mean that she shouldn't regardless, she should continue to submit no

matter what, but the point is that his role is to be sacrificial because what he's doing literally is living out the word, and that's what cleanses her. "What cleanses my wife? What makes her want to submit herself to me with all of her heart?" "Uh, because you washed her." "And how did I wash her?" "Because you lived out the word."

Now, how does this pan out with the body of Christ? It's good that Scripture actually gives Scripture to kind of give us a guideline. Otherwise, we'd be all over the place, but if you go with me to John 2, isn't it interesting that it's a wedding that He goes to? It is interesting that it's a wedding that He's going to. Look, there's clearly an emphasis in the passage that the world is misappropriating funds. They're misappropriating what they've been given. So, because of this, we all kind of come up short and nobody really knows how to celebrate because of the fact that the world has misrepresented God. So, that's kind of the emphasis of Chapter 2 as well, but you don't want to miss what's happening in the relationship with Jesus and His mother, because His mother is now coming in and she's trying to get Him to think as a mother would, "You need to do what I'm telling You to do." And Jesus goes, "Woman," He actually refers to as "woman." Now, what He's doing in the text is He's separating, and the question may be in all of our minds, "Yeah, but He's not getting married." And I would say that's true, except He is, and He's getting married to the church. So, He's separating from the parents and He's actually bringing His bride home with Him. He's going to bring the men together with Him, and now He's joining with the church. He is now going to give His flesh for the church. The key point is that He's separating Himself from that relationship with His mother.

(John 2:3) "When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to Him, "They have no wine."

(John 2:4) And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does that have to do with us? ..."

He's demonstrating the breaking away from, and why are you breaking away? To become one flesh. That's the reason you break away, to become one flesh. So, it's the breaking away for that reason. I mean, you want the blessing of the parent, there's no doubt about it, but in the text, that's not the emphasis. The emphasis is you're forming a relationship and God is demonstrating this, and this is what He did for us. He breaks away from His family that He might become Savior of the world. So, you see Jesus doing this. The reason why this is all so very important is because Scripture, through the venue of marriage, is trying to demonstrate to us just how important this relationship is. This is a demonstration of fidelity; it's a demonstration of devotion; it's a demonstration of stick-to-itiveness. I mean, "In sickness and in health, for better or for worse," this is forming a relationship that is the tightest of all relationships. Why is it important that we learn this? It is literally the practice ground for our relationship with God. That's why in James it'll say that when you start hugging the world, you're hugging the world in front of God, and you become an adulterer. You can't love the world. If you don't have that concept in the spousal relationship, you're going to have a hard

time grasping what He's talking about. So, the relationship of the husband and wife is that which really prepares us for this in-depth devotion, and we literally will become one flesh with Him by giving our bodies. As the two become one flesh, both give of their bodies, of themselves. So, as Romans 12 says, "present your bodies a living sacrifice."

There is a reason why it's put the way it is in 1 Corinthians 6, if you turn there with me. Of course, chapter 5 had come before that, in which there was clear immorality that was being involved. Then, you're taking brother to court, and you're saying, "What does it have to do with the immorality?" Well, what it has to do is that you're being selfish and you're not sacrificing yourself for the body of Christ. If you drop on down in Chapter 6,

(1 Corinthians 6:12) "All things are lawful for me, but not all things are profitable. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be mastered by anything."

(1 Corinthians 6:13) "Food is for the stomach and the stomach is for food, but God will do away with both of them. Yet the body is not for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body."

This is a very interesting point. Once again, I don't want to go into this, but the whole belief of Gnosticism that had so turned much of the church in turmoil, was that the Spirit and the flesh are separate. You see it in church all the time, and quite frankly, people live in this way. You come to church, you get inspirited, but you then go and live any way you want to. So, you have this kind of this duplicitous thing of the flesh and the Spirit in the sense that they're not conjoined; they're separate. Now, there are many passages that refer to the flesh as being that which draws us away. Clearly, you and I, according to Scripture, should not be living according to the flesh. However, that does not mean that the flesh is discarded in our faith; just the opposite, that the flesh is actually led by the Spirit, and that's the difference. The problem with the world is that the world allows the flesh to lead the Spirit. You wake up on a given day and you go, "You know, I just don't feel like going to church." So, you know why you're not going to church? Because your flesh doesn't feel like going to church. So now, it's your flesh leading your Spirit, but James will say something like "Consider it all joy when you encounter various trials." And you're going, "Yeah, but I don't feel like it." He goes, "I don't care." Philipians will say, "Rejoice in the Lord always, and again, I say, rejoice." "I don't feel like rejoicing." It doesn't matter. Your Spirit should lead your flesh, and you submit your flesh, you lay down your flesh for the relationship. In order for the relationship to become one, both have to lay down their flesh. Jesus, on the cross, laid down His flesh. His side was split open. His love for the church was born, but now, "I laid down My life for you. Are you ready to lay down your life, present your body a living sacrifice?" This is why to think of a marriage as something where fidelity and the devotion is an optional thing, is blasphemous. Jesus says to the Pharisees, "From the

beginning it was not so." One flesh, which literally is saying, "Inseparable, impossible; what God has joined you cannot break. The two flesh have become one."

So, it reads this way,

(1 Corinthians 6:13) "...Yet the body is not for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body."

Are we talking about the body or is this just like some euphoric thing? I mean, are we talking metaphysical or are we talking physical?

(1 Corinthians 6:14) "Now God has not only raised the Lord..."

What's he talking about? Raising just the Spirit? His body.

"God has not only raised the Lord, but will also raise us up through His power."

He's talking about raising up your flesh, right? Now, the fact that you're going to be resurrected will be the very reason that He's going to give for you not to commit immorality in your body.

(1 Corinthians 6:15) "Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take away the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? ..."

"Oh, he's talking spiritually." Ok, let's keep reading.

(1 Corinthians 6:16) "Or do you not know that the one who joins himself to a prostitute is one body with her? For He says, "THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH."

(1 Corinthians 6:17) But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him."

The passage is telling us that it's the Spirit that comes into the relationship, but it's the flesh that consummates the joining. It's a very important principle, and if you miss it, you're going to misunderstand your spiritual walk.

(1 Corinthians 6:18) "Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body."

(1 Corinthians 6:19) Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?"

(1 Corinthians 6:20) For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body."

Once again, a key point. What's the point? The point is that you come to Christ, you make a commitment with your Spirit; you confess Him as Lord. It's not consummated till you give your body. The joining comes from giving of yourself. Look, let me give you 1 John, and there are many ways that I can explain this.

While we're on our way to 1 John, just look with me in Philippians 1. It's on the way. So, we can stop off. Paul writes this in Philippians 1:19,

“For I know that this will turn out for my deliverance through your prayers and the provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,

(Philippians 1:20) according to my earnest expectation and hope, that I will not be put to shame in anything...”

“Shame,” that's interesting, isn't it, that he would bring up shame? “They were naked and not ashamed.” What makes them ashamed? What makes them ashamed is the separation of the one body. The concern of Paul was that Christ would come and find him in the arms of another; loving someone else. So, the way he puts it is,

“According to my earnest expectation and hope, that I will not be put to shame in anything, but that with all boldness, Christ will even now, as always, be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death.”

If I give my body to something else, if I were to give my body to someone else would be an adulterous act. How shameful, when you consider, that would be. How wonderful it is that he's not ashamed to be called, well, I think that Hebrews puts it the best. Hebrews is kind of on the way too.

(Hebrews 2:9) “But we do see Him who was made for a little while lower than the angels, namely, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, so that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone.

(Hebrews 2:10) For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the author of their salvation through sufferings.

(Hebrews 2:11) For both He who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are all...”

Actually, it doesn't read, “from one Father,” because “Father” is not in the text. It literally reads, “for both He who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are all from One.”

“... for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren.”

He's going to emphasize that again in Hebrews 11. It says this in verse 16, as he's talking about Abraham and those that are of faith,

(Hebrews 11:16) “But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God...”

Now the point is, in this text of Hebrews 11, they're all giving of themselves in a very tangible way. Noah built an ark. It doesn't say, "And Noah contemplated, meditated, dreamed about." It says he built an ark. Scripture is telling us, as James will, that if in fact you have no works in your faith, it's nonexistent; that the flesh has to be in tune with the Spirit to consummate the decision you made. You said, "I will be true to You till death." Now, you've got to be real about it. The things that you do in your life and the things that you do in your relationship is that which proves this.

So, 1 John 2, we've got to read verse 15 just to set the stage.

(1 John 2:15) "Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

(1 John 2:16) For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh..."

When he's talking about the "lust of flesh," that's your flesh having a relationship with something in the world other than God; that's you using your flesh to glorify someone else or something else rather than God. Whether by life or by death, our flesh should be loyal to God because we're giving ourselves. You go, "Why is that so important?" The marriage relationship demonstrates, if in fact you have any sense of loyalty or any sense of relationship at all, you'll be literally, totally crushed if in fact somebody abandons you. In fact, according to Scripture, it was such a heinous crime it was equal to murder. There was literally capital punishment. I know that we're under grace, but the fact of the matter is that it's capital punishment for a reason, because it literally creates more pain than death itself. It does. Somebody dies and you still feel that they loved you, but somebody abandons you and they've torn out their heart. They've done that.

The reason why we have prophetic books like Hosea is that it shows you the depth of hurt that you caused God. We would not be able to perceive, we would say, "What's He so upset about?" But God has created the relationship so that we might comprehend in some small way the pain that we cause Him, if in fact were disloyal to Him. It's there to cause us to be more vigilant in our relationship with Him.

Hebrews 13 says, "Let the marriage bed be undefiled." Do you want to know another verse right there in 13? Jesus said, "Have I not said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you.'" Why do you think He puts the two things in that text? He's showing the connection between the husband-and-wife relationship and the relationship between Christ and us. So, in 1 John 2 you begin to see in particular this call of the need for the relationship between us and the body of Christ.

It goes on in Chapter 3, and of course it starts off and says,



(1 John 3:1) “See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and such we are...”

And it has yet to be seen what we're going to be.

He states this, as you go on within the passage, in verse 10,

“By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness...”

What does he mean, “practice righteousness”? That would be in the flesh. How do we know that? Well, I'm glad you asked.

(1 John 3:14) “We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love abides in death.”

Now, how many times have we heard people go, “I love the church. I love God's people. I love, whatever.” John will go, “Prove it.”

(1 John 3:15) “Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.”

That would be the Spirit of God in him. It'd be impossible. It's impossible for you to hate the brethren and say you're Christian. The Spirit of God would never hate a brother.

(1 John 3:16) “We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.”

(1 John 3:17) But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need...”

I mean, James would say you can't walk up to him and say, “Be warm, be filled, be clothed” because that would be gnostic. A gnostic would say, “You know what, it's just about good and wonderful words. Just say some nice words to somebody.” He goes, “No, no. The flesh will consummate the relationship.” You've made the commitment. That's the covenant. The consummation is the flesh.

“...whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him?”

(1 John 3:18) Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.”

If you look with me at the end of John 17, it's the prayer of Christ, and the prayer of Christ is that the church would be sanctified. Here again, we oftentimes read these words, and I'm not sure we make the full connection of it. So, maybe through this text of Genesis we can see this in a different light.

(John 17:23) "I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me."

(John 17:22) "The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one."

Ok, so, there's clarity here that He wants us to be united with Him, no doubt about that. So, if you back up, what is it that unites us with Him?

(John 17:17) "Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth."

Let me just emphasize this, "and the Word became flesh." What is it that made God's love real? He died on the cross for you. That's what made it real. Greater love has no man than this than one lay down his life. That's what this flesh was for. This flesh is to unite. That's the purpose of this flesh. Whether by life or by death, that I would glorify God in this body, because that's what this body is for, is to unite in a very clear real way with God. So, I present my body a living sacrifice because that consummates my relationship. Me just talking about the fact that, "Oh, I believe, I believe, I believe," is not enough. It doesn't consummate the relationship. What joins us together with Christ is the giving of ourselves. It's the reality of what we said. So, the passage goes, "You've got to sanctify them in truth." In other words, what they say has to be true. It sounds kind of bizarre.

"...Your word is truth."

(John 17:18) "As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world."

(John 17:19) "For their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth."

How does He sanctify Himself? He gives His body. I mean, we're not talking about, once again, a lot of just metaphysical stuff. We're talking about real. Here again, this is the sinister thing of the false cult that was infiltrating the church. "You could just say it. You don't have to do it. You can say words to your wife, but you don't have to be loyal. You don't have to be devoted. You don't have to care. You don't even really have to love her. You just have to put up with her." And I'll tell you, we've had a lot of TV shows that just not only show the whole upside-down things that they call marriage but have so distorted marriage that there is no sacrifice. It's just take, take, take from both sides.

Here's the point I want to get at, if you go back to 1 John 4, we know that if in fact you're going to be true, you actually have to demonstrate love, right?

(1 John 3:18) "Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth."

(1 John 3:19) "We will know by this that we are of the truth..."

How do we know we're of the truth? We don't just say it, we live it. We've consummated the relationship with our flesh.

So, if you'll drop on down to 1 John 4:1,

"Beloved, do not believe every spirit..."

Because there are a lot of people saying that this is just a spiritual thing, and God goes, "This is a marriage, and I'm expecting when I see you, that I'm not ashamed of you, and I'm expecting you're not ashamed of Me coming." Jude says that when He comes, we can stand before Him blameless. What does that mean? We're not with anybody else. We're not embracing anything else. We're not loving anything else. We just love Him. What is He going to be looking for when He comes? Well, Luke tells us when the son of man comes, will He find faithfulness? It would have to be in the context of fidelity with our bodies. "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Spirit?" The Spirit of God cries out, "Abba! Father!" It's the flesh that sees it through. He uses our flesh and glorifies God in our bodies.

(1 John 4:1) "... test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world."

(1 John 4:2) By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God."

That's the good news. The good news is that God's not a bunch of hot air. God came in the flesh to give His life for you. This consummates the relationship, and how important it is.

(1 John 4:3) "and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the spirit of the antichrist..."

Why is it so important that it has to be the flesh? Once again, the world is trying to separate this sense of genuineness, of truth. Once you take your flesh out of the picture and you say, "It's just something we meditate on," then you take truth out of it, because truth is that which goes into the realm of substance, and it will always act out in your flesh. So, it's very significant in Genesis to see the joining together through the flesh, because what it's really saying is you're laying down your life, you're giving your life, you're sacrificing yourself as you saw Him do for you, and out of that comes the relationship. That's why it's so important that we walk in that love, which as 1 Corinthians 13 says is very, very tangible when you think about it.

**Closing Prayer:**

Father, we give You thanks for Your word and we give You thanks for this example that we have in the Old Testament of what a relationship is all about. How wonderful it is that You are drawing this magnificent picture of the relationship of all relationships is being with You, and how You have called us to come near to You as You have come near to us, and You have called upon us to take up our cross and follow You. As we get real with this, we consummate the relationship, and we become joined together with You. We give You thanks for this in Jesus' name. Amen.