

BEGIN WITH GOD

Week 3

A study of Genesis 1–12

PERFECTION

Perfection is defined as being faultless, free from defect. In baseball, a perfect game is when a pitcher throws for nine innings and never lets a runner on base. In bowling, a perfect game is throwing all strikes reaching a score of 300. In darts, it's throwing a nine darter, etc.

While “perfection” may exist in sports, achieved by a combination of luck and skill, it doesn't really exist anywhere else. Why? Because people aren't perfect, so nothing we ever do or attempt will be perfect either. Nothing imperfect can achieve true perfection.

Today, we open with the first-created man living in Eden. And, for the first time, something in Creation is declared “not good.” So, God created Woman. It is the only time and place that humanity has ever experienced perfection—in themselves and in their surroundings. It is this perfection for which our hearts long. It's this shared ancestral memory that tells us, “Perfection can exist, it should exist, even if I've never actually experienced it.”

GENESIS 2:15–25

¹⁵ The LORD God took the man and placed him in the orchard in Eden to care for it and to maintain it.

¹⁶ Then the LORD God commanded the man, “You may freely eat fruit from every tree of the orchard, ¹⁷ but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will surely die.”

¹⁸ The LORD God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a companion for him who corresponds to him.” ¹⁹ The LORD God formed out of the ground every living animal of the field and every bird of the air. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them, and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name.

²⁰ So the man named all the animals, the birds of the air, and the living creatures of the field, but for Adam no companion who corresponded to him was found.

²¹ So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep, and while he was asleep, he took part of the man's side and closed up the place with flesh. ²² Then the LORD God made a woman from the part he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

²³ Then the man said, “This one at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; this one will be called ‘woman,’ for she was taken out of man.” ²⁴ That is why a man leaves his father and mother and unites with his wife, and they become one family. ²⁵ The man and his wife were both naked, but they were not ashamed.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Hardly anything is as explosive in today's culture as *Genesis'* teaching on gender. The words “God created them male and female” and the binary implications are infuriating to those who see gender as a “psychological experience” separate from biology.

The QR code is a great biblical discussion on gender. The video is long and doesn't really get started until 18:30. It's more than many may want. However, it is helpful to all of us in engaging the conversation in an informed way.



DISCUSSION

If you could change anything about yourself, or your personality, what would it be?

1. Where did God put the man and for what purpose? (15)

2. What commands did God give and w/ what consequences? (16-17)

3. Describe the man's response upon seeing woman. (23)

4. How did God's created companion for man help him fulfill his purpose that the other creatures could not?

5. Is there anything you're hoping for in a future spouse that's not true of you now? What needs to change?

6. Who has God brought into your life to support and challenge you?

Love is dangerous. Don't give people the control of your heart that only God should have. Make sure you know what you're looking for in a potential date. Hint, character should top the list. If you have questions, talk to your coach today.

ICEBREAKER

OBSERVATION

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

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STUDY NOTES

KING OF HEARTS

An average human heart beats 115,000 times each day, pumping over 2,000 gallons of blood. Think about the engineering involved in designing a pump that can continuously work for decades, with (under normal circumstances) no maintenance and no replacement parts. Add to that a complex neurological system to keep that pump going, adapting to the needs of the body, and dispensing oxygenated blood where it's needed most, and we begin to understand the creative mind of the Creator. Nothing designed by man even comes close.

Yet, as much as we might marvel at the physical attributes of our heart, we use that organ as a metaphor for something deeper. For example, you can share your heart, open your heart, break your heart, and experience heartache. God could have created humans as robots, to serve at his pleasure. Instead, he designed us as thinking, feeling beings—just like him.

When **God took the [Adam] and placed him in the orchard in Eden to care for it and to maintain it**, he provided Adam with an opportunity. **Then the LORD God commanded the man, "You may freely eat fruit from every tree of the orchard, but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will surely die."**

Both opportunity and command imply that Adam had a choice—to obey or not obey. But why would God put such a big decision in the hands of humans? The answer is that although God is the King of the Universe, he also wants to be King of our hearts. Not the amazingly engineered pump, but that our heart would fully love him and the good things he has for us.

GOD IS RELATIONAL

Adam had a job to do, he had a personal and amazing relationship with God, and yet, **The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone."** This should catch our attention. Our best lives and our best walks with the Lord are not done alone. Although the particular relationship God is about to establish is marriage, the overwhelming message of the Bible is that although marriage is not an essential requirement (1 Corinthians 7:7), community is (Hebrews 10:25). We cannot do life alone.

God determined to **make a companion for him**, but not just any companion would do. It needed to be one **who corresponds to him**. God made and Adam named **every living animal...and every bird of the air. No companion who corresponded to him was found.**

The companion God wanted for man was someone who would compliment, not compete. He wanted someone who would help man in life, but also in his relationship with God. Ultimately, he wanted someone like man, but different. God's designed differences had nothing to do with value, but everything to do with roles. People have gaps, and God knew from the beginning that we need others to fill those gaps.

From friends to romance, we need people who challenge us and cause us to be better than we are alone. If those in your life are passionately pursuing Christ and fighting sin in their lives, you can grow in your faith beyond what you could on your own. However, the converse is true. If your friends are running as hard as they can toward sin and Hell, then before you realize it, havoc will reign in your life.

GOD RELATES TO US SO WE RELATE TO ONE ANOTHER

Not being able to find the right companion, God performed the first recorded surgery. God made woman *from* man and *for* man. After Adam awoke, notice what it says, God **brought her to the man**. Like a bride walking the aisle, arm in arm with her father, Eve walked with God and was presented as God's great gift to Adam. Instantly, Adam recognized the gift for what it was—**"bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; this one will be called 'woman.'"** In essence, "She is like me! We are made of the same stuff."

If choosing your friends wisely is important, it pales in comparison to choosing a spouse. This begs the question, are *you* the kind of person that *you* would want to marry? Do you want your future spouse partying this Friday, sleeping around, or getting into trouble? Or, do you want your future spouse to honor Christ with their body, to practice faithfulness, and to honor commitments? Be the kind of person you want to marry. If you're not that kind of person, then why would that kind of person want you?

Unfortunately, we often judge romantic interests by externals. Trust me, there are plenty of hot men and women with unhappy spouses. Character is far more important than curves.

God designed us as relational beings. In the beginning, **the man and his wife were both naked, but they were not ashamed**. They were perfectly united with one another and with God. They knew nothing of shame, envy, embarrassment, or any of the negative feelings we experience daily. So, why do we experience these negative things: hurt, pain, shame, emptiness, fractured relationships? Sadly, we'll find those answers next Week.