



## Lesson 2 The Essence of Marriage

*Note:* Before getting into this lesson, do the homework from lesson 1. With the family tree segment, it's probably best to ask them to just tell you 2-3 insights which they gained. Spend 5 minutes on it or so.

### Introduction:

#### **Romans 8:1**

*Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.*

I stand before God as \_\_\_\_\_ **innocent** \_\_\_\_\_ !

My spouse stands before God as \_\_\_\_\_ **innocent** \_\_\_\_\_ !

Now I want to say \_\_\_\_\_ **thank you** \_\_\_\_\_ !

*Note:* Most of the lessons will begin and end with a gospel-focused passage to remind us of our status in Christ. That provides motivation to listen to what God says and put it into practice.

### What is marriage?

#### **Genesis 2:18-24**

*The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."<sup>19</sup> Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds 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.<sup>20</sup> So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds of the air and all the beasts of the field. But for Adam no suitable helper was found.<sup>21</sup> So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and closed up the place with flesh.<sup>22</sup> Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.<sup>23</sup> The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man."<sup>24</sup> For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.*

1. God declares it's not good for the man to be alone. For what reasons are you interested to hear that it was God who said that?

Everything in Genesis 1 has been "good" or even "very good." "Not good" thunders off the page at us! Knowing that God has said this reminds us that it's the for-sure truth.

2. God then sent Adam to name the animals. For what reasons might God have done that?

Most likely to awaken a need in him. "Hey! I'm all alone down here! Everything else has a mate!" God's often works by first showing us our need, then filling it.

3. God then creates that "helper" for Adam. How did he do it?

Removed the rib, used that as the building block for Eve, whom he "made." Adam had been "formed." The difference in words tips us off to the good-news reality that men and women are different, each having different strengths and weaknesses. Both "made" and "formed" are awesome words, communicating excellence and skill and artistry.

4. Notice, God brought Adam and Eve together. What is the lesson for us?

While God gives us freedom of choice in picking a spouse, *after* I'm married, I can legitimately say "God brought me to this man/woman." If there had been a better spouse for me, God would have led me to that person, and if there had been a better spouse than me, God would have brought that person to my spouse. True, we sinners can abuse that, but if we treat each other in God-pleasing ways, it's wonderful comfort to know that God has brought us together. And in challenging situations, it can also be a great comfort or encouragement.

5. How did Adam greet Eve, his wife?

This is now! The Hebrew is an interjection, showing excitement and joy!

6. In verse 24 we hear the three ingredients of marriage, principles that will set a firm foundation under a marriage:

- 1) Both the man and the woman commit to leaving behind or refocusing all other relationships for the good of the marriage.
- 2) Both the man and the woman commit to joining as a unit.
- 3) Both the man and the woman commit to a lifetime of growing in unity.

*The essence of marriage is \_\_\_ commitment \_\_\_!*

The essence of marriage *isn't* love. Yes, love is a fruit of a good marriage, and husbands are urged to love their wives, and all believers are urged to love each other, so love is important. But the essence is commitment.

## For Discussion:

1. Decide on 2-3 reasons it's helpful for both the husband and the wife to realize what the essence of marriage is.

Feelings of romantic love often ebb and flow. If I don't feel all that "in love" with my spouse, that doesn't mean the marriage is over. No, the marriage was established by the commitment each spouse has made. Knowing that I've committed also helps to remind me to love my spouse, which helps the marriage to grow strong. When both husband and wife take the commitment seriously, it allows both husband and wife to rest secure in their marriage, a blessing both for each of them, and for their children if God blesses them with children.

2. In each marriage, there are challenges for both the husband and the wife to be fully committed to each other. Husband/wife—decide on at least one (or 2-3) things which will be a challenge for you as you strive to commit fully to your spouse. (Think only about yourself!)

Answers will vary. Some possible answers: my extended family may try to pull my attention to them. Work issues may pull me away from my marriage commitment. Perhaps some hobby or recreational activity takes up too much of my time, getting in the way of my marriage commitment. Etc.

## Conclusion:

### Romans 8:1

*Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.*

I stand before God as \_\_\_\_\_ **innocent** \_\_\_\_\_ !

My spouse stands before God as \_\_\_\_\_ **innocent** \_\_\_\_\_ !

Now I want to say \_\_\_\_\_ **"thank you"** \_\_\_\_\_ !

## Assignments:

1. Watch at least three of these Marriage Moments.

<https://vimeo.com/460296847>

<https://vimeo.com/460320795>

<https://vimeo.com/460322007>

<https://vimeo.com/460323173>

<https://vimeo.com/460324431>

2. Thinking about both the reading and the videos, come to the next session with 2-3 thoughts that you found helpful/challenging/interesting, or about which you had questions.