

PRAYER

SCRIPTURE

Ephesians 5:31 “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.”

Genesis 2:18, 20-23 ¹⁸The Lord God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.” ²⁰So the man gave names to all the live-stock, the birds of the air and all the beasts of the field. But for Adam no suitable helper was found. ²¹So 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. ²²Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out the man, and he brought her to the man.

ICEBREAKER

Who was your best friend when you were growing up? What did you like about them?

THEME

Marriage, God’s way.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

As we began our study this week we reviewed God’s first purpose for marriage that we learned last week and that is: Marriage is designed by God to display His glory. Over the next three studies we’re going to see some more of God’s purposes for marriage. These build on one another and we saw the example of a step ladder and how we need to go to step one before step two and so forth.

Step #1: The purpose of marriage is companionship. Genesis 2:18 says: “It is not good for the man to be alone.” So God created a partner for Adam. One designed specifically for him. God had Adam in mind when he created Eve but it could also be said that God had Eve in mind when he created Adam.

1. Have you ever thought that God had someone specifically in mind for you? Do you think that should impact how you choose a spouse? How so?

We looked back at Ephesians 5:31 “and the two shall become one flesh.” We saw flesh does not just mean a body. It means a person, a unit. There has never been a family unit like

you. We were challenged with the thought that your spouse must be your best friend. The purpose of marriage is oneness—a deep oneness, a soul oneness.

2. *What do you think would be some characteristics of a marriage where the spouses are best friends?*

We saw that marriage is friendship and we were challenged not to base our relationships on attractiveness. Marriage should start with friendship, not romance; and not just attraction. A friend you can share your heart with; who understands you and you understand them. Our relationships should not be romance garnished with friendship but rather friendship garnished with romance.

3. *Spend some time discussing the differences between romance garnished with friendship and friendship garnished with romance.*

4. *If spouses aren't best friends, what do you think are some ways they can work together at becoming best friends?*

C.S. Lewis wrote a book called *Four Loves*. In the book he looks at four Greek words for love:

- Storge which means affection.
- Eros which is erotic love. Often thought of as sexual attraction.
- Philos which is friendship.
- Agape which is commitment and unconditional love.

We saw that in our culture dating often goes like this:

- Storge - two people are attracted.
- Eros - they get involved physically.
- Philos - if eros goes well they try to become friends.
- Agape - maybe ending with agape.

If the purpose of marriage is companionship we learned that means we need to shuffle the order of the different types of love. We need to start with Philos or friendship. From friendship, Storge may begin to develop. Storge may then develop into Agape which will lead to the commitment of marriage and then comes Eros.

5. *Why is it so important to begin a relationship with friendship?*

6. *If a relationship did not begin with friendship, how can a couple bring in friendship to be a priority?*

PRAYER