

## GOOD TO GREAT FAMILIES

### "GOOD TO GREAT MARRIAGES"

#### GENESIS 2:18-25

### This Week's Core Competency

**Personal God** – I believe God is involved in and cares for my daily life. Psalm 121:1, 2

*I lift up my eyes to the mountains-  
where does my help come from?*

*2 My help comes from the LORD,  
the Maker of heaven and earth.*

God is a person. One theologian explains, "He is an individual being, with self-consciousness and will, capable of feeling, choosing, and having a reciprocal relationship with other personal and social beings . . . He is depicted as having all of the capacities associated with personality: he knows, he feels, he wills, he acts" (Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 1269, 70). Another adds, "He interacts with us as a person, and we can relate to him as persons. We can pray to him, worship him, obey him, and love him, and he can speak to us, rejoice in us and love us" (Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 167). Obviously, neither inanimate objects nor the forces of nature, not even animals exhibit these traits.

Most of the traits mentioned by these two scholars are evident in the story of the creation of woman recorded in Genesis 2:25. After creating

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*She shall be called "Ishsha" because she was taken out of "Ish."*

– Adam

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the man, placing him in the Garden, and giving him the commandment, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die," the LORD God determined that the man's aloneness was "not good." Something was missing. This kind of evaluation, not to mention the issuing of a command, implies that God is a person. He has a plan and something is missing that is essential to the accomplishment of that plan. Following his assessment of the situation, God reveals his intention to solve the problem by making a "helper suitable" for the man. But before he does, he decides to teach the man a lesson. The man is apparently unaware of his aloneness and its implications for mandate accomplishment. The man could not be fruitful, fill the earth, and subdue it all by himself. So God designed an exercise intended to lead him to the conclusion that he was missing a "counterpartner" without whom he was incomplete. But God didn't stop there. He cared enough about the man to provide the woman for him. The whole creative process as described in verses 21-22 showcases God's care and concern for Adam as does the provision of marriage in verses 24-25, which makes it possible for future men and women to partner individually with each other in fulfilling the divine mandate by being joined together to establish a home and raise children who will one day establish families of their own.

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## For Discussion

Carol is a Christian with three married daughters so she knows a lot about weddings; Sasha is a coworker who is making wedding plans. Sasha's family is Catholic although she doesn't seem to be particularly religious. Her fiance's family is Muslim although he, too, is not particularly religious. They plan on having a ceremony that does not offend either side of the family. Sasha has asked Carol to be part of her wedding by helping conduct the rehearsal and reading a poem called "The Art of Marriage" during the ceremony. She asked Carol if her pastor might be willing to officiate at the wedding. What would you do if you were Carol and why would you do it?

## day 1 ENCOUNTER – read God's word to put yourself in touch with him.

### Genesis 2:18-25

18 The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."

19 Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds in the sky. 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 gave names to all the livestock, the birds in the sky and all the wild animals.

But for Adam no suitable helper was found. 21 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 then closed up the place with flesh. 22 Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

23 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."

24 That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh.

25 Adam and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.

### Cf another translation

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 a new family.

25 The man and his wife were both naked, but they were not ashamed. (NET)

## EXAMINE – what the passage says before you decide what it means.

- \* Underline "not good" in v. 18.
- \* Bracket "the man" in vv. 18-23.
- \* Highlight "helper suitable" in v. 18 and "suitable helper" in v. 20.
- \* Box "but" indicating *contrast* in v. 20.

- \* Bracket "Adam" in v. 20.
- \* Angle bracket "bone of my bones" in v. 23.
- \* Circle "woman" and "man" in v. 23.
- \* Double underline "one flesh" in v. 24.
- \* Circle "naked" in v. 25.

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## day 2

**EXPLORE** – the answer to these questions to better understand what the passage means.

Consult the explanation of the message and the notes to follow if you need help.

1. Reflect on God's *purpose* for humankind (1:28), and then explain *why* it was "not good" for the man to be alone.
2. Would you say verse 18 is about the relationship between *the sexes* or between *spouses*? Explain.
3. Put what the phrase "helper suitable" means in your own words.
4. What has the man's naming of the animals got to do with God's making of the woman?
5. Explain the *contrast* in v. 20.
6. What's implied by the fact that the woman was made from one of the man's ribs?
7. Explain the *significance* of the word play in verse 23.
8. Verse 24 begins, "For this reason." For what *reason*?
9. **Discussion:** Talk about the significance of husband and wife becoming "one flesh" once married.

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# day 3

## EXAMINE – an explanation of the message to better understand the meaning of the passage.

Genesis 2:18-25 tells us how the LORD God created woman. Reading it in light of its context will help us understand it better. The passage belongs to a much longer section, which begins in 2:4 and ends in 4:26—one of ten in Genesis that all begin with the words: "This is the account of" (2:4; 5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10; 11:27; 25:12; 25:19; 36:1 [9]; 37:2). This long section contains three narratives: the garden story (2:5-3:24); the murder of Abel (4:1-16); and the story of Cain's family (4:17-26). The garden story contains the story of the creation of the man (2:5-17) and the woman (vv. 18-25), as well as the story of the fall (3:1-24) (see Gordon J. Wenham, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 1, *Genesis 1-15*, 49).

The woman's creation takes place in the garden (cf., 2:15-17). The man is there as are the "beasts of the field" and the "birds of the air" that God had already made (2:19). While 1:27 simply states "God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; *male and female* he created them," 2:7-23 unfolds the sequence of events leading up to her creation. The LORD God first "formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being" (v. 7), then having "planted a garden in the east, in Eden," the LORD God "put the man he had formed" there (v. 8). But something was not right. The man was alone, and that was "not good" although the man apparently did not realize it at first. The man's aloneness was not good because the man by himself could not carry out humankind's mandate to "be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it" (1:28). Obviously the "male" alone could not reproduce, and consequently, neither could the "male" alone subdue the earth. As yet there was no humankind, male and female, to serve as God's vice-regents, nor would there be unless God proceeded to make a "helper suitable" for the man.

The meaning and significance of the two Hebrew words translated "helper suitable" has been the subject of much debate. Of the two, the first word is easier to define. One author writes, "The word 'helper' is common enough as a description of someone who comes to the aid of or provides a service for someone. It carries no implications regarding the relationship or relative status of the individuals involved. In fact, the noun form of the word found in this verse as used elsewhere refers almost exclusively to God as the One who helps his people" (John H. Walton, *The NIV Application*

*Commentary: Genesis*, 176). So the term *itself* is neither a demeaning term nor one that implies subordination.

The second word translated "suitable for him" (NIV) is much harder to define. The same author has this to say about the word. "Since helping generally has to do with mutual undertaking of a task and the prepositions lead us to understand some level of association, I would choose a translation such as 'partner' or 'counterpart.' The former better reflects the 'helper' part of the combination, while the latter better reflects the compound word. If we could make up words, 'counterpartner' would be a great one" (177). Another author comes to a similar conclusion. After carefully considering possible English translations in seven Jewish sources, he settles on the sense a "helper equal to him" (Michael L. Rosenzweig, "A Helper Equal to Him," *Judaism* 35 [summer 1986]:280). Taken together these words suggest on the one hand that the woman was not created to be the man's junior partner. Put crassly, women were not created to be men's personal assistants. But on the other hand, neither was the woman created to be the man's senior partner. The man and the woman, the males and females of humankind, were created equal partners in the task God had given (1:28).

Following the exercise of giving names "to all the livestock, the birds of the air and all the beasts of the field" (vv. 19, 20), intended to convince Adam that his aloneness, signifying humankind's incompleteness, was not good, God created the "suitable helper" required for humankind to fulfill his mandate. The Creator began by anesthetizing Adam and surgically removing a piece of the man's side. After carefully closing his incision in the donor, scripture simply says, "the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man" (v. 22). The man's at-first-sight reaction to the woman confirmed that the two were made for each other. "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh," he declared. One writer explains the significance of the man's jubilation this way: "'Bone of my bones' is the Hebrew expression which corresponds to our idiom 'blood relations'. Here is the closest human kinship, which 'sets man and woman on an equal footing as regards their humanity, yet sets them apart from the animals'" (David Atkinson, *The Message of Genesis 1-11*, TBST, 70, 71). Then Adam announced, "She shall be

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called "woman" for she was taken out of man." The common "humankindness" of the male and the female is evident in his play words: "She shall be called Ishshah, because she was taken out of Ish." To summarize: "The removal of a piece of the man in order to create the woman implies that from now on neither is complete without the other. The man needs the woman for his wholeness, and the woman needs the man for hers. Each is equal in need in relation to the other. Nothing could make clearer the complementarity and equality of the sexes" (71). As 1:27 says, "God created man . . . male and female he created them."

Because men and women both bear the image of God, and both share in the divine mandate given to humankind (1:28), and both provide what is missing in each other (2:18), and because of the relationship between the sexes (vv. 18-23), it makes perfect sense that they should be individually joined together in marriage (vv. 24,

25). Verse 24 begins by saying, "For this reason," referring to the relationship between men and women, and then goes on to say, "a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife." The purpose behind his leaving and cleaving is implicit in the mandate. Men and women are united as husbands and wives so that together they might "be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it" (1:28). In other words, the divine mandate is accomplished as couples marry, have children, and establish new family units. This does not imply that every man and every woman must marry any more than it implies that every married couple must have children. However, it does imply that any man and any woman who want to establish a new home, and build a new family together ought to marry. This, in turn, suggests God designed marriage for people, religious and irreligious alike. Marriage isn't for Christians only.

### *The Message of the Passage*

*God created men and women to be partners in fulfilling humankind's divine mandate as they are joined in marriage and have children who will one day establish their own separate families.*

day **4** **EMBRACE** – how God spoke to you in his word.

Our desire is to not be merely hearers of the word, but doers of the word as James suggests in James 1:22. Try some of the challenges below to apply what you have learned this week.

• **Journal your thoughts on the passage:**

–Write about what God wants you to know . . .

–Write about how God wants you to feel . . .

–Write about what God wants you to do . . .

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# notes **N** STUDY – the commentaries to answer the questions.

- v. 18 **not good** "Against the sevenfold refrain of 'and God saw that it was (very) good' in chap. 1, the divine observation that something was not right with man's situation is startling. It alerts the reader to the importance of companionship for man. He needs a 'helper matching him' (18, 20)" (Wenham, 68).
- v. 18 **the man** Heb. 'adam. "The Hebrew for man [*adam*] sounds like and may be related to the Hebrew for ground [*adamah*]; it is also the name Adam [see Gen. 2:20]" (NIV margin t7).
- v. 18 **helper suitable** Contrary to those who argue that "helper" implies subordination—thereby indicating that Eve was not Adam's equal (see Raymond C. Ortlund, Jr., "Male and Female Equality and Male Headship," in *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, 97)—God is frequently called "helper" (cf. Ex 18:4; Dt 33:7; 1Sa 7:12; Ps 20:2; 46:1), which explains why one commentator claims, "to be an *ezer* [helper] is to have a Godlike quality" (Michael L. Rosenzweig, "A Helper Equal to Him," *Judaism* 35 [summer 1986]:280). "This phrase has sometimes been grossly misused, and treated as a charter for male domination over women. The Hebrew phrase includes two words *ezer kenegdo*. The first of these, translated 'helper', implies someone who assists and encourages. 'Help' provides support for what is lacking in the one who needs help. It is a word that is used several times in the Old Testament for the help which comes from God. The 'helper' is then qualified by *kenegdo*, which seems to be related to the verb meaning 'to be plain or visible'. A related noun refers to an 'eminent' person. So perhaps 'helper fit for him' means 'a helper matching his eminence' or perhaps 'his distinctiveness'. It certainly points to one who is fit to stand before the man, opposite him, as his counterpart, companion and complement. There is no sense of inferiority, subordination or servitude implied here—rather it is one who is 'like him', but 'like opposite him' (to give a literal rendering)" (Atkinson, 68, 69). After examining seven different English translations of the phrase, Rosenzweig concludes, "the more neutral translation is a good compromise, having satisfied four of the seven and that '*ezer k'negado*' probably means a 'helper equal to him'" (279). Another scholar offers a novel solution to the translation problem: "If we could make up words, 'counterpartner' would be a great one" (Walton, 177).
- v. 20 **gave names** "The text does not mean that Adam named every individual animal. He apparently gave names to the different kinds God brought before him. This exercise demonstrated Adam's authority over the animals and the dissimilarity between humans and animals. He became aware of his own need for a companion as he named the animals" (Thomas L. Constable, "Notes on Genesis," 2013 ed., 45, [www.soniclight.com](http://www.soniclight.com)).
- v. 20 **Adam** Or "the man" (NIV margin i20); cf., NRSV, NJB. The word appears without the definite article for the first time suggesting its use as a proper name. "Translations of the Bible differ as to where they make the change from 'man' to 'Adam' (e.g., NASB and NIV translate 'Adam' here, while NEB and NRSV continue to use 'the man'; the KJV uses 'Adam' twice in v. 19)" (The NET Bible, tn60 on Ge 2:20).
- v. 22 **rib** Or "side" (NIV margin j21; NET). The Heb. term 'indicates the area of the ribs but includes the flesh and muscle as well' (Walton, 177).
- v. 23 **bone of my bones** "Whereas English speaks of blood relationships, Hebrew spoke of relatives as one's 'flesh and bone' . . . This formula sets man and woman on an equal footing as regards their humanity, yet sets them apart from the animals (vv 19-20; cf. 1:26-28)" (Wenham, 70); cf., Genesis 29:14 where Laban refers to Jacob this way.
- v. 23 **woman, man** A play on similar sounding words called paronomasia. "The word 'woman' (Heb. *ishah*) sounds similar to the Hebrew word translated 'man' (*ish*) [although they come from different root words]. This similarity reflects the close union between the two" (Constable, 46). "Adam is not so much naming the woman as he is discerning her close relationship to him and referring to her accordingly" (The NET Bible, sn68 on Ge 2:23).
- v. 24 **will leave** Cf., "leaves" (NIV 2011). "If God is the speaker then the verse must be in the future tense; but if the narrator (the view more consistent with usage), then it would be translate in the present tense" (Ross, 127). "In traditional societies like Israel where honoring parents is the highest human obligation next to honoring God, this remark about forsaking them is very striking" (Wenham, 71).
- v. 24 **be united** "And sticks to his wife.' This phrase suggests both passion and permanence should characterize marriage" (71).
- v. 24 **one flesh** The Hebrew word implies more than just a sexual union. "Just as blood relations are one's flesh and bone, so marriage creates a similar kinship relationship between man and wife" (71). "The expression 'one flesh' seems to indicate that they become, as it were, 'kin,' at least legally (a new family unit is created) or metaphorically" (The NET Bible, tn74 on Ge 2:25).
- v. 25 **naked** "There is no fear of exploitation, no sense of vulnerability. But after the entrance of sin into the race, nakedness takes on a negative sense. It is then usually connected with the sense of vulnerability, shame, exploitation, and exposure (such as the idea of "uncovering nakedness" either in sexual exploitation or in captivity in war) (the NET Bible, sn75 on Ge 2:25).
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## Family Talk

Encouragement from one parent's heart to another

Special note to parents: From April 7 to May 26, your children will be learning about families in the Old Testament in our series, Family Road Trip. During this series we will be on a journey to discover important biblical principles we can apply to our families today. Please note that the scriptures kids will be studying are different than the ones in the adult *Scrolls*. Beginning in Genesis 6, we read that people on the earth had turned their backs on God. They did what was right in their own eyes without acknowledging Him. In His justice, God dealt with their rebellion. However, one man found favor in God's eyes. Noah and his family were spared destruction because Noah was a righteous man. Because Noah walked with God, his wife and children were saved when God's wrath consumed the earth. This story is such a challenge to me as a parent. My walk with the Lord impacts my family. When my husband and I are seeking the Lord, our kids have a model to follow in their own journey with Him. It is such a blessing to see them, as teenagers, making their own decisions to obey and honor God in their lives. Parents, let's recommit to walk closely with the Lord. Let's follow Noah's example and live set apart from a corrupt world. Our kids are watching to know how to do it for themselves! I'm feeling blessed to be on the journey with you!

### What Does The Bible Say

Weekly Verse: Ge 6: 5-17; 9: 12-17

1. According to Genesis 6:5, why was God angry with people?
2. How does the Bible describe Noah in Genesis 6:8-9?
3. What promise did God make Noah in Genesis 9:15?

### What Do You Think

1. What does Noah "walked with God" mean? (Gen. 6:9)
2. How do you think Noah felt when God told him to build the ark?
3. Noah obeyed God even though he didn't fully understand what God was doing. Can you think of a time when you obeyed and God blessed you for it?

### What R U Going To Do

Our core competency today is Personal God. Noah's family was saved because of his personal relationship with God. Spend some time this week letting each family member share their personal story of walking with God and then celebrate what He is doing!

## MEMORY TIME

### Core Comp

Personal God- I believe God cares about everything in my life.

### Memory Verse

Genesis 6:8 - "But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD."

## KIDPIX COUPON

I memorized CC \_\_\_\_ and Verse \_\_\_\_\_. Family completed **Say** \_\_\_\_\_ **Think** \_\_\_\_\_ **Do** \_\_\_\_\_

Child's name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_ Parent's signature \_\_\_\_\_

Earn tokens by completing the Bible study portion of this page.  
Questions: Kids@pantego.org

# 30 CORE COMPETENCIES

## 10 CORE BELIEFS

### **Trinity** *2 Corinthians 13:14*

I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

### **Salvation By Grace** *Ephesians 2:8-9*

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

### **Authority of the Bible** *2 Timothy 3:16-17*

I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

### **Personal God** *Psalms 121:1-2*

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

### **Identity in Christ** *John 1:12*

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

### **Church** *Ephesians 4:15-16*

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

### **Humanity** *John 3:16*

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

### **Compassion** *Psalms 82:3-4*

I believe God calls all Christians to show compassion to those in need.

### **Eternity** *John 14:1-4*

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

### **Stewardship** *1 Timothy 6:17-19*

I believe that everything I am or own belongs to God.

## 10 CORE PRACTICES

### **Worship** *Psalms 95:1-7*

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

### **Prayer** *Psalms 66:16-20*

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

### **Bible Study** *Hebrews 4:12*

I read the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

### **Single-mindedness** *Matthew 6:33*

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

### **Spiritual Gifts** *Romans 12:4-6*

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

### **Biblical Community** *Acts 2:44-47*

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

### **Giving Away My Time** *Colossians 3:17*

I give away my time to fulfill God's purposes.

### **Giving Away My Money**

*2 Corinthians 8:7*

I give away my money to fulfill God's purposes.

### **Giving Away My Faith** *Ephesians*

*6:19-20*

I give away my faith to fulfill God's purposes.

### **Giving Away My Life** *Romans 12:1*

I give away my life to fulfill God's purposes.

## 10 CORE VIRTUES

### **Joy** *John 15:11*

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

### **Peace** *Philippians 4:6-7*

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself, and others.

### **Faithfulness** *Proverbs 3:3-4*

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

### **Self-Control** *Titus 2:11-13*

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

### **Humility** *Philippians 2:3, 4*

I choose to esteem others above myself.

### **Love** *1 John 4:10-12*

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

### **Patience** *Proverbs 14:29*

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

### **Kindness/Goodness** *1 Thess. 5:15*

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others.

### **Gentleness** *Philippians 4:5*

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

### **Hope** *Hebrews 6:19-20*

I can cope with the hardships of life and with death because of the hope I have in Jesus Christ.

## About the Authors

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**Wendy Hollabaugh** (B.S.W. University of Texas at Arlington) is the Children's Minister at Pantego Bible Church. Wendy has over ten years of experience in Children's Ministry. She has a passion for leading families to connect with God and each other. She enjoys creating compelling environments where kids fall in love with God and His Truth. Wendy and her husband, Greg, are also involved in their own personal youth ministry as they are training their three teenagers, Hannah, Aaron and Noah.



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The mission of THE SCROLLS is to help you develop the beliefs, practices, and virtues of a follower of Jesus Christ called The 30 Core Competencies through your own active reading of the Bible. Send any questions or comments you may have about this lesson to Tom Bulick. His e-mail address is [tbulick@pantego.org](mailto:tbulick@pantego.org).