



LOVING JESUS, LOVING PEOPLE, PLOWING A COUNTER-CULTURE

TEXT: Genesis 2

MAIN IDEA: Marriage is a covenant established by God that brings about human flourishing.

LEADERS:

- We are kicking off Lent this year with a night of worship. Everyone is welcome to sing to the Lord with us on Wednesday, February 22, at 7:30 pm in Totowa.
- Our middle and high school students are going ice skating on Saturday, February 18 at 4 pm. The cost is \$14 per student (this includes skate rental if you need it), and sign-ups are on the digital bulletin.
- There will be a chili cookoff on Sunday, February 26, at the Ringwood campus. Whether you want to bring a pot of your own A-game chili, or just eat and stand in judgment over other people's hard work, you're invited. RSVP on the digital bulletin.
- We once again have the awesome opportunity to provide meals over at Servant's Heart.
 - This ministry provides an introductory trade education that equips young adults with skills to build houses so that they can serve the community in the name of Jesus in north Jersey.
 - Our groups have the opportunity to provide meals for about 30 people at Servant Heart's Paterson location. Meals should be there by 7:45 pm.
 - There are plenty of dates that need to be filled.
 - Sign up at <https://www.servantsheartnj.org/wpmeals/>.

GETTING STARTED:

- Watch this week's Community Extras Video.
- **Icebreaker:** What's the best pizza you've ever had?
- **Opener:** What did you take away from the sermon this week?

For the final week of our series on creation, we are looking at God's creation of marriage. Having a healthy, biblical understanding of this beautiful gift from God is important for everyone, whether married or unmarried.

THE GOODNESS OF MARRIAGE

Read: Genesis 2:18–22.

💡 Why is it “not good for man (or woman) to be alone”? What are some examples of the ways that loneliness and solitude have hurt people?

💡 While marriage is a tremendous gift, it is also biblically obvious that people who are not married are perfectly capable of flourishing as fulfilled disciples of Christ, as both Jesus and the apostle Paul were never married. How can singles experience the blessing of intimacy and close personal fellowship in a way that honors God and satisfies their hearts?



- 🧠 What are some common threads of the most fulfilling relationships you've had?

THE MAN AND THE WOMAN

🧠 In the sermon, Ryan explained how the phrase translated, “a helper fit for him,” contains elements of being like, but also opposite or different than, one another. In what meaningful ways are men and women like one another, and in what meaningful ways are they different?

- 🧠 What are some common cultural errors regarding the sameness and difference between men and women?

- 🧠 How have you experienced blessing from being in a close relationship with someone who is different from you?

- 🧠 How would you respond to someone who thinks that the biblical depiction of woman's creation makes females inherently inferior to men?

CONTRACT VS. COVENANT

Read Genesis 2:23–24.

- 🧠 Consider the biblical descriptions of the marriage relationship in these verses: “bone of my bone;” “flesh of my flesh;” “leave his father and mother;” and “hold fast to his wife.” In light of these, how does a married person's life look different than a single person's?

- 🧠 What is the practical implication that Paul draws from this passage in Genesis when he references it in Ephesians 5:28–31?

- 🧠 Explain the differences between a contractual view of marriage and a covenantal view.

COVENANTAL INTIMACY

Read Genesis 2:25.

- 🧠 How does the image of being “naked yet unashamed” shape our view of intimacy?

- 🧠 What are some of the biggest obstacles to true intimacy, both within a marriage and in relationships in general?

- 🧠 Why is the process of confession of sin and forgiveness essential to every human relationship, especially marriage, and especially as it relates to intimacy?



🧠 In the building of intimacy, what is the role of the confessor, and what is the role of the one being confessed to?

🧠 In Ephesians 5:31–32, Paul says that marriage is a “profound mystery” that “refers to Christ and the church.” What does this mean?

PRAYER TIME

Praise God for what he has given you in this season of life, either your marriage or your singleness.

Pray for God to help you to honor what he has created, either with your marriage or in your singleness.

Pray for someone whom you know whose marriage is struggling. In a group setting, it’s probably best not to use names.