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In Genesis, God set the foundations for life and for marriage. Time and again, as He was putting the heavens and earth in order, He saw that His handiwork was good. Yet, one thing was not good in God’s eyes—it was not good for the man He created to be alone.

*Genesis 2:18:*

*And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet [suitable] for him.*

God’s solution was to provide “an help meet,” a help suitable for Adam. A “helpmeet” or “helpmate” is a companion and helper, one who works alongside. The primary purpose of marriage is companionship. In that companionship a man and woman as husband and wife can find the sweetness of life that God intended. God designed marriage—and He meant for it to be a blessing!

*Ecclesiastes 9:9:*

*Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the sun, all the days of thy vanity: for that is thy portion in this life, and in thy labour which thou takest under the sun.*

God’s heart for a husband and his wife is that they enjoy a full-sharing relationship. And in the Christian marriage, God comes first for both the man and the woman.

*Luke 10:27:*

*...Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.*

Their relationship with God is the most important relationship to each of them. So first they each love God by doing His Word (I John 5:2,3). Their second most important relationship is with their spouse. In Genesis, God set the standard for the close-knit relationship of a husband and wife.

*Genesis 2:24:*

*Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.*

God notes how they are to interact: “they shall be one flesh.” In marriage, the man and woman are still two different people, but they are to mold their lives together so that they become as one, acting in unison or harmonious agreement. That’s what “one flesh” means. The relationship between them is open. There is nothing to hide.

God’s view of the one-flesh relationship in marriage between the man and the woman has not changed. We see this in the Gospels and the Church Epistles, which both say that the husband and his wife—the male and female—are to be one flesh.

*Matthew 19:4-6:*

*And he [Jesus] answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain [two] shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.*

*Ephesians 5:31:*

*For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.*

The one-flesh relationship is not automatic. It doesn’t just happen after the wedding ceremony is over. No, it takes a husband and wife putting their whole heart and soul into making their relationship strong and sweet. It takes being like-minded on the Word. It takes time and effort from each of them to maintain the love, respect, devotion, and romance that a marriage needs.

Communication is a key ingredient in building this one-flesh relationship. Both the man and the woman in the marriage relationship must be able to talk things over openly with one another—to speak and to listen at the right times. In these conversations, they work out their proper arrangement, and they learn how to relate

to one another. Being together without other distractions—like the cell phone, the TV, their work, or even their children—gives the couple time to hear what’s on each other’s hearts and to share their goals and aspirations, both long-term and short-term. They have the wonderful opportunity to share their adult lives with each other, living God’s Word together. Being like-minded on the Word helps them develop a one-flesh relationship.

God’s design for marriage is that a man and a woman are companions for life as husband and wife. God intended marriage to be a blessing to them. As they each keep God first and invest the effort needed to build a full-sharing relationship with their spouse—by molding their lives together on God’s Word and openly communicating with one another—they can enjoy the life God intended for them. That’s a sweet life!

*For more information, visit [www.theway.org](http://www.theway.org)*

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