



Two Great Needs in Marriage

Trouble in Paradise:

I. The way it was meant to be

1. Rule together.

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth." And God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food." And it was so. And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day. —Genesis 1:27–31

2. Be one.

Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed. —Genesis 2:24–25

3. Be equal but unique.

Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." —Genesis 2:18

II. Satan's attempt to destroy

1. Satan's obsession to be worshiped

And he [Satan] said to him [Jesus], "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." —Matthew 4:9

2. Satan's attempts to separate and deceive

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?" And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'" But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." —Genesis 3:1–5

3. Satan's craftiness to use good design for evil purposes

So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. —Genesis 3:6

III. The results of the fall

1. Shame rather than freedom

Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths. —Genesis 3:7

2. Blaming rather than defending

But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?" And he said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself." He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate." Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate." —Genesis 3:9–13

3. Competition rather than co-operation

"Your desire shall be contrary to your husband, but he shall rule over you." —Genesis 3:16b

4. Eve's misuse of "helping"

"Your desire shall be contrary to your husband . . ." —Genesis 3:16b

5. Adam's misuse of "serving"

And to Adam he said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it,' . . ." —Genesis 3:17a

IV. The grace of our Heavenly Father

1. He did not leave us in our shame.

And the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them. —Genesis 3:21

V. Trouble in our homes

1. Wife's desire to "help"

"I was just trying to help." —Wife 2:6a

2. Wife's desire to be "wanted"

"I just want to be a priority to you." —Wife 2:6b

3. Husband's desire to please

"I just want you to be happy." —Husband 2:6a

4. Husband's desire to be "enough"

"I just want you to respect me and believe in me." —Husband 2:6b

5. The contributors to decline and misery
 - A. When helping hinders
 - B. When space hinders

VI. Reestablishing Paradise

1. Understand tendencies.
 - A. Wired to “help”
 - B. Wired to “avoid failure”

2. Be willing to “do your job.”

Wives: *Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands.* —Ephesians 5:22–24

Husbands: *Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body.* —Ephesians 5:25–30

3. Embrace the priority of marriage.

“Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

—Ephesians 5:31–33

4. Realize it is first about Him, not him/her.

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

—Genesis 1:27

5. Ask yourself “Are my actions and attitudes Christlike?”

So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

—Philippians 2:1–8

6. Ask yourself “Am I more committed to obeying His word than to seeking my way?”

“You leave the commandment of God and hold to the tradition of men.” And he said to them, “You have a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God in order to establish your tradition! For Moses said, ‘Honor your father and your mother’; and, ‘Whoever reviles father or mother must surely die.’ But you say, ‘If a man tells his father or his mother, “Whatever you would have gained from me is Corban”’ (that is, given to God)—then you no longer permit him to do anything for his father or mother, thus making void the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And many such things you do.”

—Mark 7:8–13

7. Seek to cooperate with the purposes of Christ rather than the devil.

Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

—1 Peter 5:8

I am most satisfied when He is most glorified in my life.