

Session 5

February 10, 2019

WHEN MARRIAGE IS QUESTIONED

Genesis 2:18-25

It's official...our world has gone totally crazy!

I awakened this morning to a news report titled, *A Married Gay Man is Running for President. That's a Big Deal*. Beneath a photo of the happy couple, the caption read, "South Bend Mayor Pete Buttigieg entered the 2020 race for president on Wednesday, announcing his intentions with a video featuring scenes of him and his husband, Chasten, cooking and playing with their dog, Buddy" (Kyle Blaine, CNN, Jan 23, 2019).

Is anyone really surprised? The headline news continues to laud those who tear at the foundational fibers of our human dignity. Although only a tiny percentage of Americans are personally involved in such things, all of us are affected. Marriage, gender, and sexual orientation are the "hot button" topics inundating our media. A major university's admissions form asks applicants to indicate their gender. The choices are: agender, androgyne, demi-gender, genderqueer, man, questioning, trans-woman, trans-man, and woman. For sexual orientation, the choices are: asexual, bisexual, gay, lesbian, pansexual, queer, questioning or unsure, same-gender loving, and straight (from *Campus Pride*, 2019). I am a 56-year-old college professor, and I can't even decipher what some of those labels even mean!

Those of us who rebel at such ridiculous categories are ridiculed. But we are *right*. God's word is not concerned about political correctness; only truth.

Male and female in relation (vv. 18-20). Genesis 1 and 2 do not present two accounts of creation, but one. Chapter 1 gives the sweeping overview, while chapter 2 goes back and fills in the details. One might be tempted to see the creation of the woman as an afterthought; a reaction to Adam being alone (v. 18). But man was created a social being by divine design. The idea of the image of God is itself relational, just as God's very essence is relational. Thus, man was never meant to be alone. Adam was in a place that met all his physical needs, but not all of his feelings and desires. So, God's design included a "helper;" not a servant, but a complement; an appropriate partner with which to share all that God had created. God's perspective in verses 18-19 is balanced by Adam's perspective in verse 20. In the midst of naming the animals, Adam met them all. But he was particularly conscious of the fact that there wasn't another creature like him physically, or for him relationally.

Male and female by creation (vv. 21-23). While Genesis 1:27 clearly introduces the genders, the emphasis there is on the image of God. Here, once again, the details are filled in. Whereas Adam was formed from the dust, Eve was fashioned from Adam's rib. Matthew Henry's commentary is appropriate: "The woman was made of a rib out of the side of Adam; not made out of his head to rule over him, nor out of his feet to be trampled upon by him, but out of his side to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected, and near his heart to be beloved." The similarities of the pair allow them to be relational. But the clear gender distinctions (see Gen. 1:27) between them allow them to be complementary. It should be noted that these gender distinctions were given by God, not chosen by man, nor coerced by culture.

Male and female for the duration (vv. 24-25). The same God who created man and woman made them so complementary as to meld them together. And so the two become one, and the institution of marriage is formed. By God's design, then, marriage is—and always has been—one man and one woman, joined together in fidelity for a lifetime. And all the craziness of this world cannot change that.