

Building A Godly Family

by Zac Poonen

This sermon emphasizes the importance of marriage and the journey towards perfection as seen in Genesis chapters 1 and 2. It highlights God's original design for perfection, the impact of sin, and the restoration through the Holy Spirit's work. The sermon also delves into the significance of marriage, the roles of husbands and wives, and the need for mutual respect and love within the marital relationship to raise godly children and build a strong family foundation.

Scripture: Genesis 1:31, Genesis 2:18, Ephesians 5:25, 1 Peter 3:7, Malachi 2:15, Acts 13:36, Hebrews 2:13, 1 Samuel 2:30

Topics: "God's Design for Marriage", "Restoration through the Holy Spirit"

Description

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Transcript

So, this is a meeting primarily for married couples. So, we were seeing in Genesis chapter 1, based on that theme, forgetting the past and pressing towards perfection. So, there are a number of things we learn in Genesis chapter 1. We can say, it's an introduction to the whole Bible.

One is, that when God creates something, it's perfect. One is, that when God creates something, it's perfect. The next thing we learn is, the devil is immediately coming to spoil it.

Through pride, rebellion against authority, being discontent with one's situation. And that affected the earth. The earth was spoiled.

But immediately God acted and the Holy Spirit began to move. And God brought it back to perfection. But not in one day.

Little by little by little by little. Till finally, man was made in the image of God. And God said, it is very good.

So, that is the message of the whole Bible. That God created man perfect. And the devil came and spoiled him.

And the Holy Spirit began to move. And God gave his word. And first of all, he brought light on the first day.

And he brought light into our hearts. Little by little he is working to make us perfect. And in the final day, we become like him.

And in the seventh day, God rested. So, finally in the book of Revelation, we read about coming to rest. In the perfect kingdom of God.

But the other thing we learn in Genesis chapter 1 and chapter 2 is the importance of marriage. That when God made man, see what it says in verse 27 of Genesis 1. God created man in his own image. In the image of God he created him.

What did he create? Man. Man. But then it says, male and female he created them.

So, first he speaks as if it is one. Man. Then he said, actually male and female.

So, that means they are supposed to be one. See, God could have made two separate statues of mud. Or out of mud, the shape of a man and the shape of a woman.

Or out of mud, the shape of a man and the shape of a woman. He could have breathed in this one, breathed in that one. And said, okay, now you are husband and wife.

But then they would not know that they were supposed to be one. Then they will say they were two and they were asked to become one. But that's not how God did it.

He made man and took a rib out of man and made the woman. That's what we read in Genesis chapter 2. He first made man from the dust. And he did some work through him.

It says he brought all the animals, verse 19, to him to ask him to give them a name. Chapter 2, verse 19. Chapter 2, verse 19.

That one verse tells me what a brilliant mind God gave to Adam. All the cattle, all the birds, all the beasts. Giving a name to every one of them.

Think if you were asked to do that. If I am asked to do that. By the time I come to the 10th or 15th name, I will say, what name shall I give now? By the time I come to 50, I won't remember whether I gave that earlier to some other animal.

By the time I come to 50, I won't remember whether I gave that earlier to some other animal. There were hundreds, thousands of cattle, animals and birds. He gave a name to every one of them very quickly.

It all happened in the 6th day. Chapter 1, verse 18. It's not good for man to be alone.

For 5 days, God said, it is good, it is good, it is good, it is good. Have you noticed that? Verse 4. Chapter 1, verse 4. First day, God saw the light was good. Then, verse 10.

The dry land on the earth, God saw it was good. And then, verse 12. The earth brought forth, he saw it was good.

And then, verse 18. The sun and the moon, God saw it was good. And then, verse 21.

All the sea monsters and living creatures in the sea, God saw it was good. And then, all the beasts of the earth, verse 25, God saw that was good. Did you count that? Six times, God said, it is good, it is good, it is good, it is good.

The only day, when he did not say good, was the second day. Because in the second day, it says he separated the heaven from the earth. When the devil was cast out, he was cast out from the third heaven to the second heaven.

So, the devil, Ephesians 6 says, is in the heavenlies today. He is not in hell. He is roaming around the earth.

But from the heavenlies he comes down. So, that's why, when God separated the heavens, he did not say it was good. Because the devil was dwelling there.

But otherwise, six times he said, it is good, it is good, it is good, it is good. Six times he said, it is good, it is good, it is good. Then, he said, it is not good.

He said, it is not good. He said, it is not good. It is not good for man to be alone.

In the first matter, God said, it is not good. It is not good for man to be alone. And that's what we say even in the church in terms of fellowship.

It's not good for a Christian, born again Christian, to live by himself alone. He must seek fellowship. And sometimes, you can sit in a church and be alone, without fellowship.

There are many people in CFC Bangalore who come like visitors, they are born again, but they have no fellowship. Right from the beginning, God said, it is not good for a man to be alone without fellowship. But here, God said, I have to make him a helper, verse 18, suitable for him.

The wife is created to be a helper to the man. See, right from the beginning, God didn't make the man to be the helper for the woman, but the woman to be the helper for the man. And that is why in 1 Timothy 2, 12 and 13 and on, it says, that is why the man must be the leader in a church.

Because Adam was created first and not Eve. But first doesn't mean the wife has to become a slave. No, helper.

Who is the other person called a helper in the Bible? First is Eve. And here is the second person who is called a helper. In John 14, Jesus said, this is the last day before he went to the cross.

After breaking bread and washing people's feet, he said in verse John 14, 16, I will ask the father and he will give you another helper. Same word. Helper.

Who is this helper? Verse 17, the spirit of truth, the holy spirit whom the world cannot receive. So the first person called a helper was the wife. The second person called a helper is the holy spirit.

So don't despise your wife saying, oh she is only a helper. Then you are despising the holy spirit saying he is also only a helper. Do you know that you cannot live the Christian life without the holy spirit? And you cannot live the Christian married life without recognizing your wife as your helper.

That's the first thing you learn from Genesis 1 and 2. See in 1 Peter 3 Peter was a married man so he knows about married life. And he says to the husbands there is a tendency for husbands to look down on their wives. What can you do? You just look after the home and I am doing all the major work.

That's not the way a husband and wife should live. You know how it is in Indian homes. Many Indian homes the husband does not give equal respect to his wife.

Now I don't know about Kannada but I will tell you something about Malayalam. In Malayalam many husbands call their wives Eddie. Is that a word? I don't know.

Maybe you are more respectful in Kannada. I don't know. Eddie is not a respectful term.

It's like you call a servant. And they call the wife Eddie. In CFC churches in Kerala I said none of you must call your wife Eddie.

Call them by some loving name. In English there is darling, honey, sweetheart, so many good words. Find some good word to call her by.

Not Eddie. After the meeting one man came to me and said brother you don't understand. Eddie is an expression of love.

I said then why don't you allow your wife to lovingly call you Eddie. No no no you can't do that because that's what we call servants. See it's a very subtle way in which we despise a woman.

You see in so many villages in India if somebody comes to the house the wife will always be in another room won't even come to the sitting room. Only a man has come I can understand that. What if the husband and wife have come? And when they sit at the table that husband and wife will sit.

But the man's wife will be in the kitchen. They can't sit together. These are all wrong.

This is all unchristian. The wife is to be a helper. So in 1 Peter 3 he says husband verse 7 live with your wife in an understanding way.

What must a wife understand about his what must a husband understand about his wife? It's written there that she is a weaker person being a woman. So if you are travelling and you who is going to carry the suitcase the husband or the wife? You go to the villages the wife is carrying the suitcase on the head. The husband is walking like a Maharaja in front.

I think more sensible people they'll carry the suitcase because the wife is weaker. I hope all of you carry the heavier suitcase. The wife can carry the lighter one that's okay.

She's a weaker vessel physically emotionally also. Not spiritually. Spiritually she can be equal to you.

And some wives are more spiritual than their husbands. But physically the woman is weaker than the man. Emotionally also she's weaker.

She'll cry easily. See why is that? Because God has made a woman to be a mother. A mother must be very sensitive to the needs of the baby.

That's why God has made her different from the man. So if a baby cries, the husband scratches it, I don't know why he's crying. But the wife immediately knows, yeah I know why he's crying.

Because she's emotionally made like that to understand. Because of that she cries easily also. So don't think you're superior.

She's made like that because she has to be a mother. You're not made like that as a man because you're not to be a mother. So what you must understand verse 7 is to recognize that she's weaker.

The second thing verse 7 you must understand is that you must show her honor as an equal heir of the grace of life. That means you're both sitting on the throne. I told a married man once, do you want your wife to treat you like a king? I want to ask all of you husbands, would you like your wife to treat you like a king? All of you will say yes.

I said I'll show you a simple way. You treat her like a queen. Then you will automatically be the king.

But do you treat your wife like a queen or do you treat her like a servant? This is not Zak Poonen speaking, this is the Holy Spirit in verse 7 here. Joint heir, that means sitting at the same level two thrones are the same level. And it says if you don't understand this, you husbands, when you pray, verse 7, God will not hear your prayer.

I am absolutely convinced that God does not hear the prayer of many men because they do not treat their wife as an equal heir. There are many conditions for answered prayer. One, there must be no sin in your heart.

Psalms 66, 18 says that if you regard sin in your heart, God will not hear you. Second is faith. If you have faith in God, God will not hear you.

Hebrews 11, 6 without faith it is impossible to please God. And James chapter 1, verse 4 to 6 that if you don't believe, don't expect that God will ever answer your prayer. What is the first one? No sin in your conscience.

Second, you must pray in faith Third, you must honor your wife as an equal heir. That is 1 Peter 3, These are the three reasons why prayers are not answered. So, if you pray and you are not getting an answer, you check up which of these three reasons is the reason for your prayer.

So, there you see these are all in scripture. The devil doesn't want you to know it because he doesn't want any of your prayers to be answered. I'll tell you for myself.

If I prayed 10 prayers on 10 different subjects, I don't want 9 of them to be answered, I want all 10 of them to be answered. I won't be happy if 90% is answered. I want all my prayers to be answered.

So, I make sure there's no sin in my conscience. I make sure I pray in faith that God is a loving father who loves me. I'm not saying he should do as I say.

I'm not saying that he should do exactly like I say. No, I always conclude my prayer with like Jesus prayed in Gethsemane but not as I will but as thou will. Yeah, but my prayers are always answered.

See, answer to prayer is like the traffic lights. When I pray, God may say like red light, no. Or like the yellow light, wait.

Or green light, yes. All three are answers. Supposing a 10 year old boy goes to his father, Daddy, please buy a motorcycle for me.

10 years old. Daddy says, no. My question is, did the daddy answer his request or did he answer his prayer? Yes, the answer was no.

So, if he kept quiet, then he did not answer. So, sometimes when God says no, we say God did not answer. No is also an answer.

Remember that. Don't say because God said no, it means he did not answer. If your conscience is clear, you pray in faith and you honor your wife as an equal heir.

Every prayer of yours will be answered. But the answer may be no, or wait, or yes. Like the red light and the yellow light and the green light.

And why does sometimes the traffic light is red? Because you are good to save you from an accident. How many people have gone against the red light and been killed? So, when God says no, that is also for your good to save you from destroying yourself. So, don't ever say when God says no, that he did not answer my prayer.

So, God made man to be a helper to the man. And that's why he took a rib from the man. See, the rib is on the side here.

He didn't take a bone from the head. Because if it is taken from the head that means she has to rule over the man. He didn't take a bone from the feet.

Then the man has to rule over the woman. Where did he take the bone from? From the side near the heart. Why? Because he wanted the wife to always be near the husband's heart.

Is your wife near your heart? That is not just for, you know, Hollywood movies. No, it is in the Bible that a husband and wife must love one another. I want to ask all of you a question.

Have you read Song of Solomon? That is the song that a husband sings to his wife and the wife to the husband. And I would encourage you to read it. In the New Testament it is also a picture of Christ and the church.

But in the Old Testament, before they knew about Christ and the church, it was husband and wife. And you see both of them are admiring one another. They are really saying nice things to each other.

Let me ask you. When was the last time that you said something nice to your wife about her? Or the last time you said something nice to your husband about him. No, we don't say such things in India, right? Oh, we are Christians.

We don't say such things. That's all in the movies. It's not in the movies.

It's in Song of Solomon. If you don't believe me, read it. How the husband admires his wife.

And the wife admires her husband. And that deepens their love for one another. I believe a man must really look at his wife as the most beautiful woman in the world for him.

There was a time in Ezekiel's life, when God was going to take away his wife. Ezekiel 24. God, Ezekiel's wife was going to die.

And God warned Ezekiel about it. But notice how he said it. He didn't say, Ezekiel, your wife is going to die.

That's not how he said it. See, Ezekiel 24, verse 16. I am going to take away from you the desire of your eyes with a blow.

What does he call Ezekiel's wife? The desire of your eyes. That is in the Bible. Ezekiel was a prophet.

But he had such a good relationship with his wife, that his eyes were not for another woman. The desire of his eyes was always his wife. I don't think Ezekiel's wife was the most beautiful woman in the world.

She would not have won a contest for beauty. But in Ezekiel's eyes, she was the most beautiful woman in the world. And that's how you must look at your wife.

That you don't have any eyes for anybody else. That is how you can have a happy relationship in your marriage. What is the most important thing that a woman wants from her husband? Ephesians 5, verse 25.

Ephesians 5, 25. Husbands, love your wives. It's a picture of Christ and the church we read in verse 23.

Did Jesus ever tell his church, tell us that he loves us? Yes. And you must tell your wife that you love her. That is not a cinema thing.

It is in the word of God. The most important thing that your wife needs to know is this. She must be absolutely sure that you love her.

And that you don't have eyes for any other woman in the world but her. I showed you all that from scripture. But some husbands never tell their wives I love you.

I heard a story once. A husband and wife married for some 30 years. And she asked her husband, why don't you ever tell me that you love me? I told you that 30 years ago when I married you.

Why do I have to tell you again? It's like a woman saying, I gave you my body for sex 30 years ago. Why do you want it after that? Why do you want so frequently my body? A woman also frequently wants not your body but an expression of your love. And if you have never done it till today, start doing it from today.

Your wife will be surprised. What happened? Did you see some cinema? No. I heard brother Zack.

I didn't go to any cinema. I read the bible. And it's something you must tell your wife very often.

I married to my wife for 50 years. On June 19th we completed 50 years of very happy married life. But I still tell her that I love her.

To me that is not cinema. It is the bible. It is as important as any other commandment in the bible.

Now all the wives are very happy with what I am saying. I know that. So now I want to tell your wife something also.

What does your husband require most from you? You say my body. Wrong. No.

What your husband requires most from you is respect. You must always treat your husband with respect. It's not my idea.

Ephesians 5.33 The last part. The wife must see to it that she respects her husband. Not afraid as if he is some dictator trying to run your life.

So two questions. What does your wife expect from you most of all? An expression of your love and some signs of your love. Not just words of love.

That is necessary. But also actions of love. Jesus spoke words of love to us and showed actions of love to us also.

By denying himself. And you must deny yourself to show your love for your wife. What does a wife show towards her husband? Respect.

You are my God appointed head. Your wives must respect your husbands and let them know that you respect them. So this is very important.

If you don't follow these rules then you are not following what God has written in his word. See, supposing you buy a washing machine or any electronic gadget. You are not following the instruction booklet.

Or a smart phone. There will be a little instruction booklet which to press, what button to press and etc. You will follow that.

Don't put your phone inside the water to wash it. It's a simple rule. But if you say it's dirty and you scrub it with soap and water, that's the end of your phone.

You follow the instructions in the booklet. That is how to handle your phone. How to handle your wife.

How to handle your husband. Where is the instruction booklet? Here. This book is an instruction booklet.

How to, just like more important than handling your phone, how to handle your wife or your husband. We are so careful to follow exactly what is written about how to use the phone. We even ask other people, brother, can you tell me how to use the phone here? Because I spent 10,000 rupees to buy this.

What about your wife? How much does she cost? Less than that? Do you want to follow the instructions so that you have a happy marriage? See, so many phones are spoiled washing machines are spoiled because they don't follow the instructions. So many marriages are spoiled because they don't follow the instructions. What is that? Wives respect your husbands.

Husbands love your wives. Live as equal heirs. Let the husband be the head of the wife.

See, the head does two things to the body. It tells what to do. The head decides where to go.

And that is how a husband also leads his wife. Guidance in life. In life we walk together.

But the husband must be the leader to direct which way we go. And remember, she's taken from the side, so she must be near your heart. When you live like this, and you have, in the New Testament, what I've said is all from the Old Testament.

Song of Solomon, Genesis chapter 2, but then we looked at Ephesians 5, New Testament, where the example is given as of Christ and the church. In a husband and wife relationship, the only way to remain really happy together is if you have Jesus Christ in the middle. So you look at your wife through Christ.

You look at your husband through Christ. In other words, it's like always having Jesus there between you. I always tell husband and wife like this.

When you talk to your wife, remember, Jesus is in your home. He is standing there between you and your wife. Supposing Jesus was physically there, how would you speak to your wife? I think you'll speak very respectfully.

Always remember Jesus is there. Let that become a permanent memory in your mind. Between me and my wife, Christ is there.

And wife, between you and your husband, Christ is there. See, even if an ordinary brother comes to visit your house from your church, I don't think you will yell at each other, husband and wife. Why is that? Out of respect for this brother in the church.

For example, supposing husband and wife are having a fight, yelling and shouting at each other. Christian husband and wife. Let's say CFC husband and wife.

All yelling at each other. And suddenly the bell rings. Somebody's come to the door.

The fight has stopped. And one brother comes in. And the husband and wife are now nicely talking to each other.

Then that brother goes away. Then the second round starts of the fight. Why? Because now only Jesus is here.

Who cares for Jesus? Till now this brother was here. Oh, the elder brother was here. Then I must speak respectfully.

But he's gone now. Now only Jesus is in the house and who cares for him? Tell me, is it true or not? We can put on the wall, Jesus is the head of this house. He is not.

It's all imagination. It's the devil there most of the time and not Jesus Christ. Brothers and sisters, we must change that.

The Lord wants to be with us always till the end of the world. See Matthew 28 verse 20. Lo, I am with you always even to the end of the age.

Matthew 28 verse 20, the last sentence. I want to be with you all the time. That was not possible in the Old Testament.

Old Testament they can fight with each other because Jesus is not there, Holy Spirit is not there. But now, now Jesus, the Holy Spirit are there. Ask God to make this real to you in your home.

And always put Jesus first and your wife second. Your Jesus first and your husband second. Sometimes people ask me this.

Brother, if my husband is not converted and he asks me to tell a lie, what should I do? You should say, my dear husband, I love you very much. I don't want to disobey you. But Jesus Christ is Lord and he is above both of us.

And he says, don't tell lies. So, I'm sorry, I cannot obey you. I cannot tell a lie.

Why do you say that? Because Christ is first in your life and not your husband. So, when you put Christ first, he will be between you. And then he will hold you together like that.

I saw an advertisement once for this glue called araldite. There's a glue that people use for sticking metals and so many things called araldite. I saw a picture of two things stuck with araldite.

And two elephants are trying to pull both apart. And it cannot separate it. They are saying, araldite is so strong, two elephants pull it, it will not separate.

I thought what a beautiful picture of Jesus Christ being in the middle of a husband and wife. And father-in-law, mother-in-law pulling this side, father-in-law, mother-in-law pulling this side. You know how much mother-in-laws and father-in-laws try to separate husband and wife.

Especially mother-in-law. How they try to pull. But Christ is in the middle.

Even if they are as strong as an elephant, your mother-in-law will not be able to pull you away. Some mothers-in-law are very strong. Almost like elephants.

But they can't pull. If Christ is in the middle, that is the secret of a happy life. Then you can bring up your children in a godly way.

Why did God make you both one? See Malachi and chapter 3. Sorry, chapter 2. Here is another title given to a wife. He is called in verse 14, the wife of your youth. Chapter 2, verse 14.

What does that mean? That means even though my wife and I, we are all in our 70s. I must look at my wife as if she is 21 years old. See, I saw my wife first when she was 21 years old.

I must look at her now like she is 21 years old. Not like she is in her 70s. That is the wife of your youth.

Always look at your wife like she is a young wife whom you married. Then it says here, why did God make you one? Verse 15. So that you can have godly children.

Verse 16. 15. He wants a godly children.

That's why he made you one. Children anybody can have. Godly children.

That's why he united you. So, if you have not produced godly children, something is wrong with your marriage. The foundation for godly children is that husband and wife are one with each other with Christ in the middle.

Children must see the wife respecting the husband. Submitting to the husband. And the children must see the husband caring for the wife.

As the head, I told you the head does two things. One tells the body what to do. But the second thing the head does, it cares for the body.

If my hand accidentally hits somewhere and gets cut. Immediately the head knows. The other hand comes and takes some medicine and put some band-aid or something there.

Who tells this other hand to do that? The head. Not after five minutes. Immediately.

My hand is injured. That is how a husband must be. When your wife is hurt about something you know it.

Let me see how I can help her now. So that is how children see that. And they grow up to be godly.

A husband and wife can make their home like a little heaven on earth. If you follow the instructions in the book. Then your children will see that.

And they will say we want to follow this Jesus that has made our father and mother so happy. If the children don't see that in the husband and wife they will go astray. So it is so important that husband and wife have a good relationship for bringing up godly children.

Otherwise the purpose of your marriage will be destroyed. God has taught me and my wife some amazing truths of the new covenant from the bible. We were young.

I was 35 when I understood all that. My youngest son was not even born at that time. But we said as we grew up that the next generation must also preach these same truths.

What happens when my wife and I die and go to be with the lord? We have not produced another generation to carry on the same truths. Then we have failed. Then we did it in our generation and that's it.

In the old testament it was like that. See you read in Acts chapter 13 Acts chapter 13 Acts 13 verse 36 David served his own generation and then he died. He died.

And his son Solomon just went astray and went after idols. And he married 300 wives. What David learned to serve God in his own generation he did not produce in his children.

But Paul he says in 2nd Timothy chapter 2 and verse 2 he says to Timothy what you have heard from me entrust to other faithful men who will be able to teach other faithful men. So Timothy you are 2nd generation. You are going to preach what I preached but you must teach a 3rd generation and they must teach a 4th generation.

So Paul didn't die and say okay my children will be like Solomon they will all go astray. So we have a responsibility to produce another generation who are gripped by these same truths. And for that you must teach your children the value of the church from the time they are 2 years old.

And by your life at home and the quality of fellowship they see see when CFC began for 6 years it was meeting in our house. And our children were small. My oldest son was about 6 years old.

And the others were 2 and 6 months. The 4th one was not even born. But as the church developed in our house my little children began to participate in it.

Not by sharing the word of God. Arranging the chairs folding up the chairs after the meeting putting it away and helping mother to clean up the place after the meeting. They did little things and they were so happy to have the church in our house.

After 6 years when we built a building and we had to move there more people came. The saddest people were our children. They said why are they going away? Because they loved the church so much.

And they grew up in the midst of the church and their best friends till today their best friends are in the church. Bring up your children like that. That their best friends are not in the school but in the church.

Not all those who are clever like them in the school but those who love Jesus like them in the church. If you have these values you can build a godly family that one day when you stand before the Lord you will be able to say these words in Hebrews chapter 2. Look at these beautiful words. One day when Jesus comes back and you stand before him you should be able to say Hebrews chapter 2 verse 13 last part Lord here I am and the children whom you gave me not one of them has gone to hell.

Lord here I am I am saved by your grace and here all the two children or four children whatever you gave me are here. I brought them with me into your kingdom. I hope all of you will be able to say that in the day Christ comes back and the way to do that is to bring them to the church now.

Don't let them be lazy. They don't have to come to every meeting. I used to tell my children one meeting in a week you must definitely come even if you got examination.

Sunday morning you come even if you got exam on Monday. After the meeting you can go back and study. You don't have to come for the Wednesday meeting.

If you got examination you stay at home. But one meeting in a week you must come. And you will not fail in the examination because you came for the meeting.

You will do better in the examination by coming to the meeting. Because God says you honor me I'll honor you. It's one of the verses I taught my children from the beginning.

1 Samuel chapter 2 verse 30. Please remember that verse. Very easy to remember.

Can you remember this? One two three zero. One two three zero. One Samuel two three four five six seven eleven twenty twenty one two three four five six seven eight Write your laws into our mind and heart, praying in Jesus' name, Amen.

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