

Text: Genesis 1-3

Title: “A Match Made in Heaven”

HOME/HOPE VIDEO

The only power that can overcome a million weaknesses and hurts in our homes ... the only hope we have of forgiving and being forgiven ... is in the love of God through the Cross of Jesus Christ. That's the thread that will run through a new series I'm beginning today entitled “Home/Hope.” Open your Bibles to Genesis 1. While you're turning, men I want to encourage you to pick up your ticket for the Men's Steak Night on April 30. Our speaker Dr. Bob Reccord has spoken to men's groups all over the nation. You will be challenged and helped. Make this investment in your skills as a husband and as a dad.

Today along with the Scripture I'm going to use a diagram that we have used before, but with a different application. Several weeks ago we introduced you to a way of sharing the Gospel using three circles. It explains why we need Christ in our lives. This morning I want to use it to show you why we need Christ in our homes. So look at the diagram on your note sheet.

1. WRITE “GOD'S GOOD DESIGN.”

Genesis 1:1 - In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

That tells us that the universe that we inhabit ... the earth and time where we live out our lives, including family ... were created and ordered by a sovereign, good Creator God. We see God deliberately, purposefully and perfectly going about His work of Creation. Day 1 God created light. Day 2 God created the sky. Day 3 God created land, seas and vegetation. Day 4 God created the sun, moon and stars. Day 5 God created fish and birds. Then Day 6 was a big day. He created all the living creatures on the land, species by species. And all of it was good in God's sight ... perfect. Remember that.

Genesis 1:26 - Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.”

Genesis 1:27 - So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

So God gathered up some dirt from the ground and formed the man. And when God did that He formed all of Him, not just some parts. God created Adam with all of his parts and all of his desires to go with those parts. And God sent Adam out into the Garden with an assignment.

Genesis 1:28 - God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”

So Adam goes out and begins to manage the animals and plants God created. He works in the Garden God created. Everything worked perfectly. This is before sin had entered the world. God has designed the whole thing to function according to His perfect plan. And still before sin entered the world...

Genesis 2:18 - The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."

Adam has been naming all the animals and observing what God already knew ... that by the very nature of things there was not one of them suitable (corresponding) to him. This is the wisdom of God in creation. He put Adam to sleep, did a little surgery and removed a rib.

Genesis 2:22 - Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

So God made a woman out of Adam. He shaped and formed her differently. He filled Adam with the hormone testosterone; He filled Eve with a different hormone called estrogen. Again, this is before sin entered the world. God didn't create part of Eve and then Satan crept in and added some parts. It's all good.

So Adam woke up and sees Eve for the first time, and he breaks out in a song. Up to that point he's been naming the animals ... cows, mules, dogs, sharks ... but when he sees Eve he starts to sing.

Genesis 2:23 - The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man."

"This is it at last." Maybe this is where Etta James got her song, "At last, my love has come along." Seriously, that's what Adam literally said. And it says that Adam named her "woman," which means "out of man" or literally, "mine." It's like he started singing Taylor Swift's song "Mine." And God's creation is perfect.

Genesis 2:24-25 - For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh. The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.

So we have the very first marriage. God created it this way ... a man and a woman. That's marriage. If you believe the Bible is God's Word then you have to believe God's definition of marriage. It's between a man and a woman. Church, get ready. Unless God chooses to intervene, the laws of our land will soon define marriage in different terms than how the Bible defines marriage. Young people, you will face enormous pressure to conform to this. But we must remain strong in our conviction that God perfectly formed the marriage and His design is a marriage of a man and a woman, not two women, not two men.

Now it says that they were both naked and felt no shame. There was nothing to fear, nothing to hide, and everything to enjoy in God's good, perfect design. They could become one physically in the perfect design of God and it is for their joy and God's glory. There were no games, just complete

trust and vulnerability. There were no hurt feelings, no playing with each other's emotions, just pure joy and glorifying God.

So God gave them the beautiful gift of sex and from that He gave them children. God intentionally designed the whole universe, including marriage and parenting, and it was all good. Why? It was so that all of creation would give Him glory. God created you to give Him glory. Single person, you have a longing in your heart for a husband or a wife and children because God created you for His glory.

But then Genesis 3 happens. You see, God has established His Creation by His wisdom ... which is the only right way for things to go. And as long as human beings lived according to that wisdom they would enjoy the harmonious life God envisioned for His creatures. But Adam and Eve chose not to live according to God's wisdom ... they sinned. And with the arrival of sin, the wonderful created order of God was destroyed and now it is broken.

2. WRITE "BROKENNESS."

Then write "sin" over that arrow that goes from "God's Good Creation" to "Brokenness."

So Adam and Eve chose to disobey God's wisdom and they ate of the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, a tree that God had expressly forbidden them to eat from. And the immediate result was the beautiful Garden was ruined. Sin destroyed Adam and Eve's relationship with God. And sin poisoned every other relationship starting with the relationship between Adam and Eve. The relationship between the man and the woman was designed by God to be joyful and harmonious. But sin caused everything to be confusing and sometimes extremely painful ... broken.

This was not God's original design ... it's a perversion of God's design. It doesn't mean that God's design was flawed. It means that God's design was twisted. But the original design is still good. The beautiful and perfect music of God in marriage was distorted. There are traces of the original beauty (music), but something's off-key.

ILLUSTRATION – Years ago I performed a wedding and the couple had a girl sing, "I Will Be Here" by Wayne Watson. It came time for that song to be sung and the accompaniment started and the girl began to sing, but something was wrong. I had never heard it sung like this. The longer she sang it became apparent that she was off key. The background music was great, but her singing was off-key. She stopped and started two more times and she still couldn't get it right. So I said, "OK, we're going to just go on. This is a good lesson to learn on the first day of your marriage. Sometimes things don't go the way we plan and we just have to move forward." I said a few more sentences then suddenly the music started again and the girl started singing, and this time it was in the right key. So I let her finish her song. She deserved a chance to get it right.

You see, the background music was right, but the person singing was way off. And that's what sin has done to the good creation of God in marriage. And that's why we have marriage problems. Later in Genesis we'll see that Adam and Eve have children. And one of them murders the other one ... parenting and child-raising problems. Why? Sin created brokenness in God's good creation.

But in Genesis God immediately puts into place a plan to redeem and restore what sin had broken. And that would ultimately be fulfilled through the love and grace of Jesus Christ. This is what the Bible calls the Good News or Gospel.

3. WRITE “THE GOOD NEWS!”

2 Corinthians 5:19 - that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.

And in doing this God was solving our biggest problem ... our broken relationship with Himself. But He was also making it possible for us to be reconciled to others. Most of us know the Gospel ... that Jesus died for our sins and rose again so that we can have a new life and be transformed on our way to heaven. But did you know that that message is not just the way to the life God envisions for *you* ... it’s the way to the life God envisions for your *family*. You see, family problems (dating, marriage, parenting) are, at the root, people problems. And God’s solution for people problems is the Good News of Jesus Christ. So there’s Good News for your home, no matter how bad things are.

Write the words “repent and believe” over the next arrow. That’s the way we find God’s restoration of our lives. So I experience reconciliation with God through the love that Jesus shows me. Whatever sin I am guilty of, when I run to Christ by faith I find love and acceptance. We come as we are to Jesus. He doesn’t love some “future version” of us. He doesn’t love us hoping that we will become something better; He loves us just as we are so He can make us better. The Good News is that we can be truly deeply, known and still be truly, deeply loved.

Just think about how this kind of love can transform a marriage or a child. When we love with the love that God has shown us in Christ we are not loving a “future version” of our mates or our children. We are not loving them for what we hope they will become. We love them for who they are right now.

The problem is that we all have some pretty unrealistic expectations for our relationships, our marriages and our parenting. So here’s what the Gospel teaches us to expect in our families:

EXPECTATION #1 - YOU ARE LIVING OUT YOUR HOME LIFE IN A BROKEN WORLD.

These three circles show us the story of our need for redemption and God’s plan for our redemption. The reason we have problems as husbands and wives, moms and dads and children, is because we are living out our home life inside this story. You have problems, but so does every couple and family sitting around you. We live in a broken world. Singles, you plan to get married, you need to know that this is where you will live out that relationship.

EXPECTATION #2 - GOD IS USING YOUR FAMILY TO SHAPE YOU.

God uses trials and testing to shape us into the likeness of His Son Jesus Christ. Many trials come in our relationships at home. Has it occurred to you that God allows you to be hurt, to be offended, to

be put out and inconvenienced, to be annoyed by differences because He is using those things strengthen your faith and to show you the next thing.

EXPECTATION #3 - YOU ARE A SINNER MARRIED TO A SINNER.

You see, this is what keeps us from being surprised by the trials we experience in our family relationships. Your family was broken by sin just like Adam and Eve's family was broken by sin. But here's the Good News:

EXPECTATION #4 - GOD IS WILLING AND ABLE TO TRANSFORM YOUR FAMILY.

Write the words "recover and pursue" over that last arrow. When we repent and believe the Gospel, God is willing and able to restore your marriage and help you to pursue God's original, good design. The Good News is that God is committed to this process. He is committed to our inward transformation into the likeness of Jesus. He is committed to making us the husbands and wives and parents and children He created us to be in the beginning.

And the best part is that He is able to transform your family. That's right! God not only wants to change our homes, He can do it. We may want to, but we don't know how or we can't make the changes. God can. So put your trust in Him.