

## Back to the Beginning: Genesis Session 13 Review and Study Guide

This session of our \*Back to the Beginning\* Bible study series builds on Genesis 2's account of the formation of woman and the foundational marriage verse, then connects it to key New Testament passages where Jesus and Paul reference it. We'll explore themes of marriage, divorce, sexual immorality, and the profound mystery of Christ and the church. Use your Bible, any provided notes, and engage personally with the material. Whether you study ahead or reflect during our time together, let's seek to appreciate God's design for human relationships and how it points to spiritual truths.

### \*\*Lesson Objectives\*\*

- Review Genesis 2:22–25, including the formation of Eve and the marriage principle of leaving, cleaving, and becoming one flesh.
- Examine New Testament applications of Genesis 2:24 in teachings on divorce, immorality, and marriage.
- Understand cultural and spiritual implications, such as leaving parents, gender roles, and the rejection of God's creation order.
- Explore how marriage reflects Christ's relationship with the church.
- Preview Genesis 3's temptation scene to set up the Fall.

### \*\*Part 1: Review of Genesis 2:22–25 – The Formation of Woman and Marriage\*\*

Genesis 2:22–25 describes God forming woman from Adam's rib during his deep sleep and bringing her to him. Adam responds with joy: "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman, for she was taken out of man." This follows Adam naming the animals, highlighting no suitable helper among them—naming reflects dominion and organization over creation.

Verse 24 states: "Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh." Though written by Moses centuries later (with no parents yet in Eden), it explains God's design for marriage: leaving parental ties, cleaving in commitment, and uniting as one. Note the emphasis on the man leaving—possibly to

establish leadership and break emotional dependencies, as men may revert to childlike roles at home. Culturally, families often built additions to homes, but the principle stresses a new primary bond. The verse ends with Adam and Eve naked and unashamed, symbolizing innocence before the Fall.

### **\*\*Reflection Questions\*\***

- Why is naming significant in Genesis, and how does it relate to human dominion over creation?
- What does "leaving and cleaving" imply for modern marriages, especially regarding parental influence?

### **\*\*Part 2: New Testament Connections – Matthew 19 and Mark 10 on Divorce\*\***

In Matthew 19:3–12, Pharisees test Jesus: "Is it lawful to divorce one's wife for any cause?" Jesus appeals to Scripture: "Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female?" Quoting Genesis 2:24, He adds, "The two shall become one flesh... What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate." Divorce tears apart what God unites, like violently rending flesh.

They counter with Moses' allowance (Deuteronomy 24:1–4), but Jesus explains it was due to "hardness of heart"—not God's original intent. He states: "Whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another commits adultery." The disciples react: "It is better not to marry!" Mark 10:2–12 parallels this, adding that a woman divorcing her husband and remarrying also commits adultery.

This counters cultural laxity (then and now, like no-fault divorce) and affirms God's creation order against distortions like transgender ideologies, which defy "male and female" (Genesis 1:27).

### **\*\*Reflection Questions\*\***

- How does Jesus' appeal to "the beginning" prioritize God's design over cultural accommodations?

- What does this teach about the seriousness of divorce and its impact on families?

### **\*\*Part 3: 1 Corinthians 6 on Sexual Immorality\*\***

In 1 Corinthians 6:12–20, Paul addresses immorality in Corinth: "All things are lawful for me, but not all things build up." He contrasts food (temporary) with the body: "The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body." God will raise our bodies as He raised Christ.

Key truth: "Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ?" Joining with a prostitute makes one body with her, quoting Genesis 2:24: "The two shall become one flesh." Even outside formal marriage, sexual union creates a profound bond—thus, immorality unites Christ's members with sin. "Flee sexual immorality," as it sins against one's own body, the temple of the Holy Spirit. "You are not your own; you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body."

This applies broadly: Use eyes, hands, and feet to honor God, avoiding anything degrading (e.g., violent or immoral media).

### **\*\*Reflection Questions\*\***

- How does viewing our bodies as "members of Christ" change our approach to morality?
- Why does Paul use marriage language for immorality, and what does it reveal about sexual union?

### **\*\*Part 4: Ephesians 5 on Marriage as a Picture of Christ and the Church\*\***

Ephesians 5:25–33 instructs: "Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her." Christ sanctifies the church through "washing with water by the word," presenting her spotless and holy. Husbands should love wives as their own bodies—nourishing and cherishing, as no one hates his own flesh.

Quoting Genesis 2:24: "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." Paul reveals: "This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church." Marriage depicts Christ's sacrificial love and the church's response. A poor marriage distorts this picture, like an abusive father hindering views of God as Father. Strong marriages testify to Christ's relationship with believers.

This makes the mystery of Christ and His church even more profound because the words "For this reason" follow immediately after the explanation of Christ and the church. In other words, the reason a man should leave mother and father and join his wife is because it is specifically a picture that must be preserved.

**\*\*Reflection Questions\*\***

- How can husbands "wash" wives with the word, and what benefits does it bring?
- If marriage reflects Christ and the church, how should this shape our relationships and witness?

**\*\*Part 5: Introduction to Genesis 3 – The Temptation and Fall\*\***

Genesis 3:1 introduces the serpent: "more crafty than any beast of the field." He approaches Eve: "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?" This sows doubt about God's word and goodness. Why Eve? Possibly as the "weaker vessel" (1 Peter 3:7—not flawed, but distinct), more emotional, or because she wasn't present for God's original command (Genesis 2:16–17)—learning it secondhand from Adam.

This sets up the Fall: Review the dialogue, Eve's response, and consequences for next session.

**\*\*Reflection Questions\*\***

- What tactic does the serpent use, and how does it mirror modern doubts about God's word?

- Why might the serpent target Eve, and what does this suggest about temptation strategies?

### **\*\*Study Exercises\*\***

- Trace references to Genesis 2:24 across the New Testament (e.g., Matthew 19:5, Mark 10:8, 1 Corinthians 6:16, Ephesians 5:31) and note how each applies it.

- Research "one flesh" in cross-references; how does it relate to unity in marriage and with Christ?

- Reflect personally: How does God's design for marriage challenge cultural views on gender, divorce, or morality?

### **\*\*Conclusion and Next Steps\*\***

Genesis 2's marriage foundation echoes through the New Testament, revealing God's intent for unity, holiness, and a picture of redemption. This same God calls us to honor Him in body and relationships. For next week:

- Review Genesis 3 and the questions on temptation and the Fall.

- Study the notes personally for deeper insight.

- Consider how your relationships reflect (or could better reflect) Christ and the church.