

SERMON FOR OCTOBER 3, 2021

TEXT: GENESIS 2: 18-25

THEME: GOD'S ANSWER TO LONELINESS

18 Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." **21** So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. **22** And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. **23** Then the man said,

"This at last is bone of my bones

and flesh of my flesh;

she shall be called Woman,

because she was taken out of Man."

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

In the name of Jesus:

Tevye's daughters in Fiddler on the Roof sings: "Matchmaker matchmaker make me a match. Find me a find, catch me a catch. Matchmaker matchmaker look through your book, and make me a perfect match." But as the song goes on, and they consider the possibilities of an arranged marriage they realize that every match isn't perfect, that playing with matches can get a girl burned, so they don't want a match at all.

We aren't big on arranged marriages in our culture. But in our Old Testament lesson for today, we see that God likes to arrange marriages, especially the first marriage. And that marriage, along with others, serve to illustrate to us the love God has for us in Jesus Christ.

God speaks in our text and says: "It is not good for man to be alone." But when we look around, loneliness is everywhere, it has become the pandemic within the Pandemic. We are more alone today than we have ever been. Human beings have always lived in communities and families, for protection and for companionship. But in the 21st century, the current pandemic has only added to our loneliness.

God knew in His infinite wisdom that loneliness was not good. When we live isolated lives we live lives turned in towards ourselves. We seek our own good and not the good of others. When we live isolated lives, we seek to keep and hoard blessings for ourselves instead of sharing from our source of plenty. When we live isolated lives, we live empty lives, lives without meaning, purpose, or fulfillment.

And so to answer this loneliness, God took one of the ribs of man and the rib that He had taken out of the man He had made into a woman. Now man would have someone to love other than himself, he would now love his wife. He would have the opportunity to love his wife as he loved himself, treating

her as he would his own body. Never seeking to harm or hurt her, but always seeking to love her, cherish her, and to do what is in her own best interests.

In return, the woman would receive the life and love from her husband. She would freely love him as she witnesses the love he has for her. Theirs would be a oneness, described by Paul in his letter to the Ephesians: **“25** Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, **26** that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, **27** 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. **28** In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. **29** For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, **30** because we are members of his body. **31** “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” **32** This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.”

Did you catch that last sentence that Paul wrote? He said: “This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.” God knew what He was doing when He married Adam and Eve in that match made from

heaven. He was giving to you and me a picture of the marriage and love between Jesus and His bride the Church!

For each of us have been united and married to Christ in the waters of our Baptism. Each of us has been placed in Christ, so that in our lives, we are never ever alone. In Baptism, we have freely received the love of Jesus, given to us as a gift when He laid down His life on Calvary's cross. He who knew no sin became sin for us. We are now friends of God because of Jesus. Jesus gave His life for us, so that we in receiving His life share His life with others. And so we live our lives, not for ourselves, nor do we live in isolation, we live together, as His Church, living with one another, living for one another, seeking what is best for each other and for those who do not know Him, so that His Church may grow and flourish, being fruitful in love toward others.

God does not want any type of division caused by sin. That is why Jesus says: What God has joined together, let not man separate. In marriage God joins two people to be one. That is why the traditional vows say such things as in sickness and in health, for richer and for poorer, in the good times and in the bad times. Because of our sinfulness, we like to bail when things get difficult. But God calls us to be faithful, not just in the marriage covenant, but in our life, faithful to Him and faithful to one another. That is why God has placed us in families. God didn't ask your permission to be placed into the

family you were born into, He gave you your family. He gave you your parents, and your siblings. Sadly, for many the greatest source of heartache often comes from friction and disagreements within the family. Families split apart, some give other family members the cold shoulder or walk away from them in times of trouble. They may even exclude members of their own family, family members who may be hard to love, to forgive, or to even enjoy their company with. But what God has joined together, let not man separate.

God has even brought us together, here at Redeemer, as members of the Body of Christ and each individual members of His family. In His Church He has united Jews and Gentiles, men and women, boys and girls, black white Hispanic and Asian, people from all different backgrounds to be members of His family because Jesus lived, died, and rose again for all. He has brought you to this congregation, to this time and this place, to not only receive God's love and forgiveness in Christ, but also to share God's love and forgiveness with fellow brothers and sisters in Christ, in this congregation, and with all who believe in Christ.

And just as we share a common bond of faith, we also share a common bond of humanity with those around us. So God has placed us in other relationships, at work, at school, with friends, to share the love that Christ has shared with you. In Baptism you have been joined together with Christ. You

are now in Christ, and the life you have been given to live is to be lived for God's purpose and to His glory. Your sins have been forgiven, buried with Christ in Baptism so that you can rise to the newness of life to live your life for others. He has buried your old sinful life to a new resurrected life, promising to be with you always, no matter what happens.

So your life, past, present, and future is secure in Christ, empowered to be faithful to Christ as He has been faithful to you.

He has poured out into your heart and life faith in Jesus and love for God, so that the single life is lived to the glory of God and in love serving others in the name of Jesus.

God has blessed each of us richly with a match made in heaven. He has sent Jesus to die and rise for us to make us His children. Jesus marries Himself to His Church and we belong to Him! All so that we can show and share with others the love Jesus has for them.

To the glory of God and in Jesus' name.

Amen