

Marriage and Other Institutions from Creation

Marriage is a crucial institution for the survival of every culture and civilization. From it flows the nuclear family of husband-father and wife-mother and their offspring. It is the prototype of self-government. If the family unit is undermined society crumbles into a jungle filled with brute beasts in which life is short, nasty, and frightening.

We often say that two institutions came out of Eden, marriage and the Sabbath, and then we study these institutions in isolation.

There were at least six institutions that came out of Eden and I propose that we study the subject of marriage in its relationship to the other institutions that we received from Eden.

My reason for doing so is grounded in the concept that none of these institutions were designed to exist alone and therefore cannot be fully understood, appreciated, or preserved in isolation.

This accompanying chart lists the different institutions that came out of Eden: The principle of self-government, the principle of constitutional government, the right to exercise dominion and control over nature, the institution of physical labor and occupations, the Sabbath institution, and finally marriage.

The color coordination in the chart helps to demonstrate how all these institutions interrelate with each other.

Let us go through the process by which the marriage institution was created. As we do so we will see how marriage inter-relates with the other institutions.

Delayed Gratification: Gen. 2: 18-20

The first thing we notice is that God delayed in providing a wife for Adam. This is a remarkable thing. Even in his state of innocence in a sinless world, Adam had to first realize his need for a companion before one was provided.

We often say that absence makes the heart grow funder. But Eve's value was created in her initial absence. We can understand God's plan of delayed gratification in a post-Edenic world of sin, strife, and selfishness in which we neglect or abuse our spouses.

When we, as single, hormone-driven teenagers, find ourselves unable to find a soul mate, we should consider that the delay can help us to learn to "value and cherish" him or her when God does finally provide one. This is also true for second and third or more,

soul mates. If we did not properly value the first one, God may keep us waiting for the second.

We can speculate that maybe God should have withheld Eve for a day or two or even weeks, and Adam might have taken better care of her and not let her wander into the zone of danger.

Moving on, how did Adam discover that something was missing in his life? God wisely asked him to give names to all the teeming creatures on the newly created earth. It was in this fascinating task that he discovered that every living creature had a mate, even some plants needed a mate to pollinate.

Somewhere during this exercise, Adam must have turned to God and said, "How come everything has a companion and I do not have one?"

Was that how Adam was mentally and emotionally prepared to value a companion when it was finally given? Was the need for a companion generated by logical reasoning? Only in part.

There is that little phrase called *Lo Tov* in Genesis 2:18: "It was not good for man to be alone." This statement implies that man's very nature was so created that he was *designed* to desire and relate to a companion. Our hormonal and psychological makeup was so crafted that we are made whole in the presence of a spouse.

I could imagine that When Adam first saw Eve, things stirred in him that he never knew existed. But let us move on, we have much ground to cover.

Equality: The use of the Rib. Gen. 2: 21-22

God used a rib for a variety of reasons: It signaled equality, a partnership, not subservience, exploitation, or henpecking.

He did not use a bone from the head so that women would claim superiority. Nor a bone from the foot so that men could trample women. We must remember this fact not only in our relationships with our wives but women in the workplace and society in general. Many nations still treat women as second-class citizens.

Incidentally, the word for "rib" in Hebrew is Tzala. It is translated Thalath in Chaldean and represents the "goddess of the rib." In Latin the Roman god of marriage is Thalassius.

Now why would the ancients worship the god and goddess of the rib, and use the same term as in the Bible to signify marriage? Does that not tell us something about the origin of the human race that was once common knowledge among the nations? Is it

not a memorial of the creation story of the formation of Eve from a rib taken from Adam? Even in their religious idolatry, the ancient world testified of the truth.

Eve was a Separate Creation

What is also significant here, is not that God used a rib, but what he did with the rib. He fashioned it, or as it says in the original language, he “built” a woman out of the rib. Eve was *another* creation, a *new* creation from the earth via the rib of Adam.

It is fundamentally important to understand that Eve was built into a *unique* individual; she was her own person. She had property in her person. Thus, she was endowed with the same set of rights, duties, and responsibilities Adam was endowed with. Her rights came from God and not from Adam, and therefore she, like Adam, was directly and foremost accountable to God, before they were mutually accountable to each other. Eve, and women in general, were not to be treated as slaves, objects to be exploited, or doormats.

These rights of women and their offspring can only be recognized, appreciated, and preserved if we acknowledge another institution that came out of Eden - Constitutional Government. When Adam was alone he had no conception of human government. But once Eve was brought into the picture, with the prospect of offspring, the need for human government sprang into existence. What form that government would take was crucial.

Constitutional Government

The essence of Constitutional government is that human governments are limited and their conduct is restrained, by a contract (written or unwritten) that delineates the rights and privileges of the citizens. Constitutional government can take many forms. We in America are familiar with a Constitutional Republic. Adam's government was a Constitutional patriarchy.

However, the uniqueness of a Constitutional government based on the Creation Model is that the rights of the subjects are established by the *Creator*. The concept of a personal creation by a Personal Creator presupposes that there is a higher, divine law, that should shape the Constitution, laws, and institutions of nations.

So then two contracts existed in Eden. A contract between God and man, and a contract between man and man that reflects the values of the first. A Constitutional government based on the creation model is the best protection for our rights. Those rights are but are not limited to the right to life, liberty, and the right to the property of your intellect and labor.

It is the recognition of these rights that preserves the woman in society and the marriage union. Made in the image of God, just as was Adam, she has individuality and is no man's chattel. There are many cultures and forms of government that do not

recognize that these rights are also vested in women. In these cultures, a marriage cannot reflect God's ideal. Nor can it protect the women in these cultures and forms of government. Marriage in those countries is often a prison sentence.

Lessons for America

Our founding fathers disliked a democracy for it gives unlimited power to the majority, thus no one's rights, let alone a woman's rights, are protected.

The role of law in a government based on the Creation Model is to protect the rights of the individual while coordinating the rights between individuals.

The role of law is not to *make* man good; for after the Fall, man became incapable of doing good outside of the grace of Christ; Nor is the role of law to compel man to worship. Because man is accountable to God, man and his relationship with his God is outside the bounds of government action.

In this creation model man was "created" free, not "born" free. That word created makes all the difference. It was the difference between the American Declaration of Independence and the French Declaration of the Rights of Man.

In our Declaration we specifically acknowledged that man was created and was endowed by his Creator with certain rights; therefore, these rights are inalienable. Our Constitution was based on the Creation Model and it is God's Higher Law that made our rights inalienable. They were not inalienable because our paper Constitution said so.

In the French Republican Model, it was the state that drew up man's rights. For that very reason, they were insecure and alienable. You see, what the government gives it can take away. The French went through 6 constitutions in as many years in their Revolution. And the guillotine testified to how insecure men's rights were.

Where a government does not acknowledge God or concedes that its laws must conform to the moral code of a Higher Law, the state tends to become a god. The result is political and religious tyranny in the end. Examples are socialism and communism.

Back to Marriage

Unity in Diversity

Eve was her own individual but was designed to be capable of *unity* with Adam. Yet it was her choice to enter into that unity. Marriage is not a form of bondage. It must be a voluntary association or it does not reflect what God had in mind when he said "They shall become one flesh." Thus, the marriage union was designed to give man an insight into the voluntary unity of the triune Godhead. Force in marriage breaks the bond of voluntary unity and it ceases to reflect the heavenly model.

The Value of Commitment.

How do two people become one flesh? It was easy for Adam to answer this question for they literally were one flesh. How do two strangers become one flesh? This is not primarily about sexual unity, although that act may help us understand the special closeness God was trying to describe. It has everything to do with commitment. The surgery God performed on Adam was to illustrate the total commitment God wished Adam and Eve had for each other. They were committed to staying together. They were committed to love, protect, and cherish each other.

Marriage was to be a permanent bond between them. It was the permanency that only commitment could provide that was the crucial thing. The one flesh from the surgical procedure was only an outward manifestation of the inner commitment they were supposed to have for each other.

Unless each of you is prepared to state right here and now that you will fully commit yourself to your spouse, you are not fit to be tied in marriage. Unless you are prepared to sacrifice your desires for the other the marriage institution will not work.

Remember I am not talking about beaconing a doormat. I am talking about the voluntary union that is reflected in the Triune Godhead. That is our model. The members of the Godhead are committed to each other. There is unity in their diversity. But also a freedom in their unity. Force vitiates unity. It has no place in the voluntary unity of marriage.

Only commitment can provide the eternal security that marriage needs. A person, especially one that has been abandoned, brings a lot of baggage to the marriage bond. It may be the hurt feelings of a divorce that rips the heart and flesh off us. It may be the loss of a father at a young age. These experiences can make us feel vulnerable, naked, and fearful.

It is this sense of insecurity that can eat away at a marriage or prevent it from generating true unity of heart and flesh. But this is where the knowledge of a spouse's commitment can provide deep reassurance that heals those wounds.

Leaving Parents et al.

For that marital unity to be achieved, man must leave his parents and cleave to his wife. And vice versa. You must, of course, first find a wife. There is a funny movie called Failure to Launch. It highlights the tendency in modern society for the child to remain with his parents way past a mature age.

A mother-in-law can be a spoiler. Often well-meaning, she intrudes into a special relationship that God designed to be occupied only by a husband and wife.

God ordained that a couple must grow by their own experiences. He gives us children when we are young and capable of hard work.

Marriage facilitates family worship and that worship helps to cement unity in the family. Especially Sabbath worship. Since the Sabbath was designed to remind us of our Creator and of our responsibilities to Him, it promotes a Christ-centered life. That leads us to another vital institution that came out of Eden.

The Sabbath Institution

The Sabbath Institution and the marriage institution have this in common: They are both dependent on relationships without which man cannot be happy. Man's need for earthly companionship matches his need for divine companionship. Marriage can only flourish where Christ is the center of the home. A Christ-centered life facilitates a Christ-centered marriage.

A woman needs more than a commitment from her spouse. Often commitment becomes mere words on parchment and long-forgotten now empty vows. The best assurance we can give to a spouse that our commitment is genuine is Christ working in our lives sanctifying us. It is only through his power that we can keep our wedding vows. Thus, keeping the Sabbath becomes a sign that God is in us sanctifying us. Ezekiel 20 12. Because we were born into sin, a Christ-centered life is something each of us needs and something our marriages need.

Of course, the Spirit of God is abroad, and even people who do not personally know Christ can have a Spirit-centered life and Spirit-centered marriage. Even so, a Spirit-centered life is only possible because of Christ's self-sacrifice for all men. Christ sets the ideal we must strive for.

Because Christ must be the central focus of both marriage partners, being equally yoked is essential. A little, seemingly insignificant, difference, can become important with time. But religious differences need not become deal breakers. Both Judas and Peter misunderstood the mission of Christ. But the latter's overwhelming love for Christ created loyalty.

Adam knew nothing about Eve when he married her. It was an arranged marriage. In some respects, a blind date, but without the high risks? It was his total commitment, symbolized by the one flesh rib-surgery, that gave the marriage enduring power.

Today we reverse the process. We feel we must discover everything about the person before we commit. Lots of arranged marriages work out. Isaac and Rebecca is a good example. A powerful commitment can take us through the discovery process. There is an intuitive factor involved too. God is the ultimate matchmaker.

The Institution of Labor and Marriage:

Marriage was designed to exist alongside the Institution of Labor and Occupations. In fact, the institution of labor was created before marriage, when God Adam to "tend the

garden,” Gen. 2:15. In his perfect state, God designed man to labor. Man was not to enjoy idleness in a world of plenty. His labor set value to the gifts of God.

As designed by God, labor was honorable and dignified. It builds character, patience, and intelligence. Labor opened the door to the scientific investigation of the garden and nature in general. It was the blueprint for establishing the institution of science. It was in the soil that man first learned his first lessons in chemistry, physics, and microbiology. It motivated his respect for and desire to preserve his environment.

Unfortunately, in the course of civilization after the Fall of man, labor fell into disrepute when Pythagoras and Plato promoted the idea that matter was evil. Turning their backs on the Biblical record of how evil came into existence, that it was a willful violation of God's law, men tried to account for the existence of evil and came up with the gnostic idea that man's soul was good by nature but his body was evil

Imputing evil to the material environment tended to discourage physical labor, for it was seen as working with evil matter. Thus, the working classes were despised. It was a mark of superiority to not work with the hands but with the mind and intellect only. This created a host of cultural problems we cannot delve into right now.

Labor develops the virtue of service to others. God works to sustain the universe, so we must work to sustain others besides ourselves. Intelligent labor provides happiness to man. We build our self-worth through work well done. Laboring of course develops a variety of skills. This builds self-esteem and self-worth.

Labor of course necessitates a Sabbath rest and it strengthens the Institution of the Sabbath. Let us see how labor relates to marriage:

Labor provides support for the family. A major deal breaker for couples is financial problems in marriage. So much so that prospective spouses are demanding to see a partner's credit history! This is unprecedented!

Labor enriches marriage for it promotes individual growth. Another major deal breaker in marriage is when one individual outgrows the other. Unless they both grow they have less and less in common.

Solomon said that mind sharpens mind. God designed us to be interesting to our partners. We have to bring something of interest to the table. We find happiness in labor and our individual pursuits. Another deal breaker is when one individual in the marriage looks to the other for the source of their happiness. That may be faltering at first but eventually, the partner becomes a dead weight.

God designed us to find happiness in our relationship with him and how we relate to the gifts he has given us. When our cup is full we have something to share with our spouses.

Marriage and the Institution of Dominion and Ownership

Intellectual labor provides similar benefits to physical labor. Let us look at this institution of Dominion and Ownership and see how it benefits marriage. We start with the concept that the Creator owns his creation. This is the foundation of private property. The Creator God is distinct from and outside of his creation. When he made man in his image he also made him distinct from the surrounding matter.

In the socialistic/evolutionary worldview in which we now live, man is seen as part of a cosmic pantheistic World Soul. Neither God nor man can be said to be distinct from the universe. Since neither God nor man can be distinguished from the universe neither possess individuality and neither have the right to possess or claim any property as belonging to them exclusively. This is one justification for the evolutionary/socialist war against private property.

Moreover, God gave man dominion or control of nature. He delegated his right of ownership to man, but man must be a good steward and be accountable to God. This is the foundation of private ownership of property on earth. Man exercises dominion and control over nature by investigating nature and discovering the laws God implanted in nature to guide its operations. Man can harness these forces and use them for his benefit. Thus, we have computers and jet airplanes.

Because it is possible to get knowledge from nature, science is possible. Science is merely the systematic gathering and assessment of data from nature. The rule outlined in Isaiah 28: 9, 10, is to gather all the relevant facts on a given subject and draw conclusions about how nature operates in a given area. The facts must be the benchmark by which we validate all our theories.

The intellectual work produces the right to our intellectual property. All this intellectual labor also suggests the need for a Sabbath rest. Sabbath reminds us that nature is neither eternal nor autonomous but is under the control of its Creator.

All of these concepts can enrich the marriage institution. It provides the intellectual exercise for us to keep growing and so always be interesting to our spouses. When one grows and the other stagnates mentally and spiritually, we grow apart. This intellectual imbalance is a deal breaker in marriage. Moreover, the pursuit of intellectual knowledge, like the pursuit of physical skills is a source of happiness our Creator gave us.

Another deal breaker in marriage is when one spouse looks entirely to the other to brighten their lives and provide them with happiness. After a while, you become a dead

weight. We have to individually bring something to the table. We share the wealth of our happiness and so increase the net worth of happiness in the marriage. Intellectual activity dispels boredom and enhances self-worth. Intellectual labor can also produce inventions that lighten our workload in marriage.

Marriage and Self-Government

The final concept is that self-government is the foundation of marriage. People think that all you need to establish a marriage is a good spouse. This is partly true. Without self-govern, all you have is a slave, a harem, or a house divided. Let us therefore look at the institution of self-government.

Man was made for self-government. He was made in the image of God with the faculty of reason. The faculty of reason is a key to self-government. Without reason, you are a vegetable, slave, or a mad man.

Sanctified reason must rule the passions. Without the Holy Spirit guiding our reason we can misuse reason. Un-sanctified reason can be used to make man autonomous, and independent of God. When we do this our conclusions and opinions contradict reality and we turn and abandon reason. The philosophers from Jacques Rousseau to Emmanuel Kant and George Hegel went down this path and soon abandoned reason for feelings as the guide to life. While our lives must be guided by reason not by feelings, every act of pure reason carries with itself affirmations that enhance our well-being.

Being made in the image of God sets man's value. Low self-esteem is a hindrance to a healthy marriage relationship. Being made in the image of God also sets his purpose in life and his destiny: he was made to enjoy eternal fellowship in his Creator and to enjoy his gifts. Today, under the Marxist and Hegelian evolutionary model, people do not know who they are, where they are going, and what the purpose of their lives is.

Moreover, God's Sovereignty sets man's moral codes. The will of his creator is his law. Man does not make up his own rules as he goes along. The first key to self-government is to allow the Creator to govern our lives. Obedience to God's moral code protects the marriage bond. Honesty, integrity, kindness, and sexual fidelity protect the institution of marriage. The Marxist/Hegelian evolutionary model of man does not provide for a moral code that could protect the purity of marriage.

Man was also created free. That is, he was made distinct from the machinery of nature. He is not a cog in the machinery of nature. He is not a victim of his environment. Thus, man is accountable for his actions. God expects him to use his reason to control his passions, his emotions, his appetite, and all his actions.

The concept that reason rules passion is another key to self-government. Today the prevailing philosophy is that feelings should be the guide of our actions. This is a recipe for wrecking your life and your marriage. Control of the passions safeguards marriage. How many lives and marriages are ruined by a spouse out of control? Mental and physical abuse is a deal breaker in marriage. It cannot be repeated too strongly that self-government is the foundation of a marriage.

Summary:

But let us reflect on how the institution of self-government inter-relates to the other institutions:

The Sabbath reminds us that Christ our redeemer living in us by his Spirit is the key to self-government. Self-government is only possible in a republican form of government that upholds equality, freedom, and individuality. Physical Labor builds character. The discipline of patient persevering work helps to build self-control. Intellectual work also helps to facilitate individual growth and self-esteem, all of which can assist in self-government. Often people who lash out at others do so from poor self-esteem and a sense of inadequate personal worth. Bullies are often self-hating.

When you look at the chronology of creation in Genesis 2, we see that in creating man in his image, God in his wisdom created the principles of self-government, Constitutional government, the right to exercise dominion over nature, the Sabbath, and physical labor in the garden, ALL before he created the marriage institution. I wager that marriage cannot permanently flourish in the absence of these other institutions for they were made to safeguard and enhance the marriage experience.