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Title: Harmony in Marriage

Text: Genesis 1:27

Genesis 1:27 says: *“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.”* I’ve entitled this message “Harmony in Marriage.” Harmony is a music term. I don’t consider myself to be a music expert, although I enjoy my attempts at music and have served several churches as Minister of Music. More credit goes to God’s help than my ability. I’d like to think that I know about being a man because I am one. I was going to say that I know a lot about women because I married one, but I have decided not to say that. I have learned a good bit though by being married, BUT I likely have more to learn. I haven’t figured it all out yet. I’m thinking I still have a lot to learn about the opposite sex and the wonderful creature God made called “woman.”

It’s Valentine’s Day and I feel to talk about marriage. Marriage originated by God’s design. Speaking of music, your marriage ought to be a DUET, not a duel. Let me share this about music. There are three components to any kind of real music. There is melody, harmony, and rhythm. In the home there ought to be MELODY. That is, we all ought to be singing the same song. Of course, it only takes ONE to sing or play the melody. And, in the home, there should be HARMONY. We sing different parts. BUT, it takes TWO to have harmony. There is RHYTHM – we ought to sing it together. So, there should be music in marriage.

- 1. Men and Women Are Equal.** Let’s focus on HARMONY. We, in our home as husbands and wives, are to sing the same song, but we don’t sing the same part. We sing different parts. Genesis tells us in the beginning that God made us, male and female. He made us EQUAL. But, God certainly did NOT make us ALIKE. God created us MALE and FEMALE. He didn’t just create MALES. He didn’t just create FEMALES. He created both and they are DIFFERENT. Though different, the Word makes clear that men and women are equal in the sight of God. Galatians 3:28: *“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.”* He is not talking here, however, about sameness of function. He is talking here about equality of WORTH. We all don’t function alike, but we ALL have worth in God’s sight. Perhaps God could’ve made us the same, but I am glad He didn’t. I am glad God made boys and girls different. I am glad that God doesn’t want us to sing in unison. He wants us to sing in harmony. How boring it would be if Diane were like me or if I were like her? Someone was to have asked a little boy, “What is it called when two people stay married together all of their lives?” He said, “Monotony.” WRONG answer. The correct answer is “Monogamy.” But for some couples that might be a correct answer. There are many a married couple whose marriage might best be described as monotonous. The Lloyd home is NOT monotonous, BECAUSE I married a girl very, very different from me. I am glad that I did. We married young and probably didn’t give a lot of thought to finances. We soon found out after we got married that there were differences that we had not imagined. That includes psychological and emotional differences. And, those differences are as real or more real today that they were when we got married. I think I am grateful to God for all of those wonderful differences. It is those differences that bring out the excitement in marriage. And so, God made us different. True, it is also those differences that makes things challenging as well. God made us different that He might make us ONE. You may want to make note of this – Ecclesiastes 4:9: *“Two are better than one...”*. **God’s DIVINE DESIGN is to Make Us One.** Genesis 2:7: *“And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.”* So, God made Adam. Adam is a dirt ball. He is made out of the dirt, out of the dust. God makes him out of the elements of the earth and breathes into his nostrils the breath of life and he becomes a living soul. Then, go to chapter 2 and verse 18: *“And the LORD God said, ‘It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.’”* Here you have in this one verse the three reasons that God made Eve and the reasons for marriage. First of all, for **COMPANIONSHIP**. *“It is not good that the man should be alone.”* God knew that Adam needed someone like him, not another animal. Even Adam, who had face-to-face fellowship with God, was still incomplete and God said, “He needs someone as a companion.” I am grateful for the companion that God has given to me. In my opinion, there is no deeper companionship than that of husband and wife. God has honored that relationship by making it first and foremost. Secondly, for **COOPERATION**. Verse 18 says, *“I will make an helpmeet for him.”* That is – she is a helper. Now, this is a noun, not a verb. God doesn’t say, “I am going to give him help.” God says, “I am giving him a helper.” Not just a buddy, not just a friend, but someone who is a helper. Not just someone to pick fruit in the Garden of Eden, but somebody who would help him to be all that he ought to be.

Someone who would enhance his life to help him to reach his full potential. I married a girl like that. Diane is my helpmeet. She has helped me in many things. Rightfully so, this verse tells me that God put her with me to be my helpmeet. Perhaps I am your pastor because Diane is my helpmeet. Two Sundays ago I preached a sermon entitled, "The Edge of Excellence." On the way home from church, Diane said, "Good sermon, Hon." I said, "Shoot, I was aiming for excellence." Last Sunday I preached "The Edge of the Boomerang." On the way home she said, "EXCELLENT sermon, Hon." A helpmeet encourages her husband. And thirdly, for **COMPLETION**. God says, "*I will make him a helper fit for him.*" A fitting helper. "Meet" means "fit." Someone who will complete him. We laughingly call our wives "the other half," but that's really quite accurate. You see, Adam, when God made him, was like a violin without a bow. He couldn't make music – the kind of music he needed to make, until he had a wife. She was to be his **COMPLETER**, not his competitor. Women, you are to complete your husband and that doesn't mean to "finish him off." God put husbands and wives together for companionship, cooperation, and completion. So, there is a **DIVINE** design.

- 2. Men and Women Are Different.** All right, now we are going to get to the interesting part. God also made them, male and female, for a definite **DIFFERENCE**. In Genesis 1:27, God says, "*...male AND female created he them.*" I believe this unisex idea was born in hell! Men and women are made by God to be different. The longer I live, the more I see people who are trying to move Heaven and earth to try to blur those distinct differences between men and women. It is absurd! You don't even need the Bible to see that men and women are different. **The Difference Between Boys and Girls.** Psychologists have told us, and Dr. James Dobson has pointed out, that the brains of little boys and the brains of little girls are wired differently. That is, they come into this world differently. I've been told that a little boy's brain on the right side seems to take predominance. And, a little girl's brain on the left side seems to take predominance. And, that's the reason little boys seem to be more physically oriented and little girls seem to be verbally oriented. Jessica said her first word very early. I've had nephews who were slow to talk but they could swing their toy hammers. Most every experienced parent will concur that there are differences in raising boys and girls. If you don't believe me, volunteer with Dave or Starla to work with Rangers or Girls Ministries. One year we'll put you with Ranger Kids and the next with Daisies. You go to a girl's class and there they sit on chairs around a table. You come to the Ranger Kid's class, and you might be hard pressed to see them sitting. When they do, it's not for very long. It's not that one is superior to the other; they are just different. Generally, the little boys go for the trucks and the little girls go for the dolls. Sure some modern behavioral psychologists will tell you that is culturally learned. I don't believe so. It is creational. This is the way God made them. You give little girls a puzzle; they'll try to work it out. Give a little boy a puzzle and he might throw it across the room. It is just the difference in the way these little creatures are made. Now, let me show you some of the differences that God designed right here in the Bible. **A. Man – Provider / Woman – Helper.** God designed man to be the provider. And, God designed woman to be his helper. Genesis 2:15: "*And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.*" God said, "Adam, you have the responsibility to go out into the workplace. I have put you in the garden to dress it and to keep it." Then the Bible says in verse 18, that He made a woman and the woman is to help the man. She is to be a fitting helper. She is to support him so he can work. God did not give her to the man primarily as a buddy, but as a companion. Diane is very much a part of my life and a part of my ministry. There is Scriptural support that would indicate the man is generally the breadwinner. Much of our culture has the "I want bigger and better and I want it now" philosophy. Our culture almost demands that the husband AND wife work. Many a young couple with children might do better to learn to get along with less. I believe there is nothing more important to a young child than a parent's love AND time. Money and nice things come somewhere further down the list. Epicurus, who was a Greek philosopher, said this: "To whom little is not enough, nothing is enough." That's an accurate statement. **B. Man – Protector / Woman – Nurturer.** God gave the man to protect and the woman to nurture. Look at Genesis 3:16-17 and 20. Adam was to stand against all danger for Eve. Adam failed Eve when he did not stand between Eve and the serpent. God did not blame Eve primarily for the fall. God blamed Adam. The woman failed, but the man, who was the protector, was held responsible. Look at Romans 5:12: "*Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned...*" That verse does not say that the sin came through Eve, although she was first in the fall. God lays the responsibility at Adam's feet. God made him to be the protector. Men, it is your responsibility to protect your family. I'm afraid one of the greatest problems in America is not juvenile delinquency, but drop out dads. Dads need, as the protector of the family, to learn how to say, "No." They need to set limits for their children. Kids today need to hear a loving, firm, and responsible "No." A wise man will also set limits for his wife's protection. My wife is MY helpmeet and NOT

everybody else's helpmeet. Sometimes I just need to tell her to let it go – you've done enough. Scripture calls me to protect her. **C. Man – Leader / Woman – the Enhancer and Maker of Beauty.** Scriptures indicate that the husband is the head of the woman, he is the protector, he is the provider, and therefore in a home, what's the man more interested in? Many want to get better tools. What does the woman want in the home? She wants objects of beauty. It would be a mistake for you to try to stamp out your wife's desire to create beauty because that is built into her by God. She wants her surroundings to be beautiful because she is the nest builder. She has a nurturing instinct. I am going to give you some traits about men and women, BUT NOTE that these are GENERALIZATIONS. I much prefer to preach in absolutes. *"Jesus said, 'I am the way, the truth and the life and no man cometh unto the Father but by me.'"* What is the absolute? Jesus is THE WAY to the Father! That's an absolute – these are generalities. **D. Men tend to be stronger than women.** There are some women who are stronger than some men, but, as a rule, men are physically stronger than women. The Bible calls the woman in 1 Peter 3:7, *"...the weaker vessel..."* or the more fragile vessel. Why is that? What job did God give man? It was to tend the garden. It was to weed and hoe and chop and dig and carry. Also, he is to protect the woman. Now, what did God make the woman to be? Gentle and tender, to nurture. Have you ever noticed the difference? A girl or woman, when she sees a little kitten, she wants to pick it up and mother it. That's just her nature. Have you ever watched a man change a diaper? They just lay that baby down, and they change a diaper like they're putting a saddle on a horse. There is just a difference. God made us different. Maybe it's just me, but it just doesn't feel right to me to send women into combat. I'm proud of women who want to defend our freedom. They are to be commended. I respect their right to make that choice, BUT, to be honest, I don't want women going into combat. Perhaps that's the protector in me. Israel tried that back in 1948. They were so hard pressed, they put women in combat. It lasted for three weeks and then they pulled back. They found out that they were having higher casualties on both sides. The men were putting their lives in jeopardy to protect the women because that was their instinct. And they found out that their mission was failing because the men were more concerned about protecting the women than the mission. They also found out the other side, the Arab armies, were fighting harder than ever because they didn't want to say they were defeated by women. The Israelis said, "Hey, that's a bad experiment", and used the women behind the lines for support. My, perhaps NARROW, opinion is that a woman is NOT made for combat any more than she is made for professional football. Generally, the man is physically strong, the woman more fragile. That is by divine design. God made women physically different than men. Some would say – a man is built for battle; a woman is built for babies. **E. Men approach problems HEAD first / Women approach problems HEART first.** It is the difference between logical and emotional. Often it just seems that women know what's going on without knowing what's going on. We call that "woman's intuition." Why? Being a nurturer, she deals in the area of feelings and emotion. And so, because she feels and she lives emotionally, she talks emotionally. And MEN, when she speaks emotionally, don't you try to receive it logically. Don't listen to what she says, listen to what she means. The Apostle Paul says to seek earnestly the best gifts. Men, sometimes that might be the gift of interpretation. **F. Men see a Goal / Women see the People.** Because men look at problems differently, they see a goal. Men will go after it, because that is how God made them to be. I mean, the man has to be an achiever. He may not think about who may or may not get hurt in the pursuit of the goal. **G. Men tend to be oriented toward Success / Women toward Security.** A man says, "Hey, let's try it. Let's go for it. Don't worry about the obstacles." However, the woman says, "Now, wait a minute before you go for it. Don't mess everything up." For example, a man may say, "I am going to take our savings and investments and I'm going to move it to another project." That threatens the woman to pieces. Because man sees himself as the provider, he sees his work as an extension of himself. The woman sees her home as an extension of herself. If a man's work is not right, he's ill at ease. If a woman's home is not right, she's ill at ease. I read recently, if you really want to make your wife happy, don't just buy her a big present, go fix some little thing at the house. When the house is cluttered, the woman feels cluttered, because that's just the way she is. **H. Men tend to see the Big Picture / Women tend to see the Details.** Remember, these are generalities. Sometimes these are reversed for men and women. A man will think about his career. He will think about what he is going to do three or four years down the road. The woman – she is right there thinking about today and now. So, he comes in and says to her, "Guess what?" She says, "What?" He says, "I found a wonderful new project I want to invest in. We are going to sell this house, move to Florida, and start a new business. It's going to be wonderful!" She begins to cry. He says, "Why are you crying? I told you, look, we are moving to Florida. It's going to be wonderful!" This time she doesn't just cry, she yells at him. He can't figure it out. You know what she is thinking about? She is thinking, "What do you mean move? I just made dental appointments for all the kids. The kids just got braces. I'm NOT looking for

another doctor. And we AREN'T pulling the kids out of school." He's thinking FUTURE. She's thinking NOW. He's thinking – BIG PICTURE. She's thinking – DETAILS. Now, if a man is wise, he will tell his wife what he is planning and talk it over with her for her security and the children's welfare. Then, rather than have her as an adversary, he can have her as a helpmeet. **I. Men tend to be Insensitive / Women – Sensitive.** Sometimes it's a jungle out there, and a guy has got to make decisions. Sometimes a man has to face unpleasanties and competition and danger, and so God just gave the man a nature where he has a thicker shell. The woman is just more sensitive. She's more feeling. Who is it that sheds the most tears at your house? Usually the wife. **J. Men tend to be defensive / Women – Trusting.** Why is a man defensive? Because he is the protector. Therefore, if he sees a new danger, I mean, if he sees somebody coming up, a stranger or something like that, he thinks – he may be the enemy. And he is protecting his turf. The wife says, "Hey, you were rude to that person. You didn't show them hospitality." Women, on the other hand, see a stranger and say, "Hi, who are you? How are you? We live next door. I'm glad to meet you." They are just more hospitable. Women are more trusting. They trust their children. They believe the children when nobody else believes them. Many a wife foolishly believes a dead-beat husband. "You know, my husband is a good man at heart." She has a trusting nature.

- 3. Conclusion.** Well, God made us different. There is a Divine Design, and a definite difference. God made us different that He might make us one. And, you see, we are singing the same song, but we sing different parts. That's the HARMONY in marriage. That's what God intended. And – it's exciting! But, I want to tell you in the truest sense, marriage is NOT even a DUET, it is a TRIO! **A real marriage is a union of a man, a woman, and Jesus Christ.** A three-strand cord is not easily broken.