

Pastor Jim Lloyd

Date: February 19, 2023

Title: HARMONY IN MARRIAGE

Text: Genesis 1:27

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

How many have been married 10 years? Please stand up. 15 years? 20 years? 30 years? 40, 50...? That is incredible! 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. The credit goes to God's help rather 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. Wherein I'll soon be married 46 years, I am still learning new things about women. I've learned about marriage through a variety of sources. I've read many a book on marriage. I've viewed marriage videos. I've attended marriage seminars, BUT... Being married might be the greatest teacher of marriage. I can pretty much guarantee you that being married will teach you things that no book or seminar will. Having been married nearly 46 years, I can say I've learned much about marriage, but I KNOW there is more yet to be learned. 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.

We celebrated Valentine's Day this past week, and I've felt to talk about marriage. You say, "Pastor Jim, why didn't you let me know you were preaching on marriage? I'm not married and I'm not getting married." Well, if you're a man, you may learn something about women today that might be helpful – maybe even life-changing, AND... Ladies, you might learn something about men.

Marriage originated by God's design. Genesis 1:27 (ESV) – *“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.”* Pastor Jim's translation – “...husband and wife he created them.” The story is told that Eve said to Adam, “Do you love me?” Adam said, “Who else?” What does verse 28 say? *“And God BLESSED them...”*. We are in the first book, first chapter of the Bible and the FIRST thing that God blessed was the first man and woman – husband & wife – the family – that tells a bit about God's priority. The first institution God blessed was the family. Someone said, “Marriage is an institution, and love is blind. Therefore, marriage is an institution for the blind.” I don't know about that, but I DO KNOW that marriage is an EYE OPENER. Furthermore, in the Book of John, we have the first recorded miracle of Jesus. Where does the first miracle take place? At a WEDDING in Cana. A wedding is the place where man and woman become husband and wife. Again, I take that to mean that marriage and family is first and foremost in God's design.

Let me get back to HARMONY in marriage. 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, there is HARMONY, and there is 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 this music in marriage.

Before I get any further, my words today will come from the basic line – God created them male and female. I hold that that is God's plan from the beginning (Book 1 – Chapter 1). These are hard days for parents. It was hard enough to know when and what to teach our kids about the birds & the bees. Now we not only have to teach about the birds & bees, but we also have to teach them about the bees & the bees, AND... the birds & the birds. We have to tell our kids about the birds that want to be bees, AND... The bees that want to be birds. The bees that identify as birds, AND... The birds that identify as bees.

Here's the way I see it in Scripture. DISCLAIMER – This message may have more personal observation than normal. Generally, I'm very intentional about staying as close to the scripture as is possible. So, when trying to

describe women OR men, my description likely will not apply in every example; so take what is applicable and throw the rest away. I certainly don't mean to put men or women in a box. I am smart enough to know that my marriage or my spouse is probably unlike your marriage and spouse.

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. Again, there is to be HARMONY in the home. 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 Diane? Someone was to have asked a little boy what it is when two people stay married together all of their lives. He said, “MONOTONY.” WRONG answer! The correct answer was MONOGAMY, not monotony, BUT... For some couples that might be a correct answer. There are many married couples whose marriages might best be described as monotonous. The Lloyd home is NOT monotonous BECAUSE I married a girl very, very different from me. BTW – my wife is visiting family in Pennsylvania today. So, in the kindness of God, God has allowed me to preach this message without my wife being here to correct me! Further proof – there is a God! Diane and I married young and probably didn't give a lot of thought to finances. BTW – Diane asked me to marry her. In her sales pitch, Diane also told me that two could live as cheaply as one. That's only true if only one eats, AND... one doesn't wear anything, or at least, doesn't wear anything new. NO, she DIDN'T tell me that. Soon after we got married, we found 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 than they were when we got married. I think I am grateful to God for all – no most – no some of those wonderful differences. It is those differences that bring out the excitement in marriage. So, God makes us different. True, it is also those differences that make 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 says, *“Two are better than one...”*. God's DIVINE DESIGN is to Make Us One. So, there are three things today I want us to think about as we think about marriage. First of all, I want you to see GOD'S DIVINE DESIGN. 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 makes 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 2:18 – *“And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.”* Reasons for Marriage – Here you have in this one verse the three reasons that God made Eve and the reasons for marriage. First of all, for COMPANIONSHIP. God knew that Adam needed someone LIKE him, not an 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. Again, God has honored that relationship by making it first and foremost. BUT... Not only for companionship, but for COOPERATION. Verse 18 says, *“I will make him 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 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. Vanny used to say – we hired you because of Diane. (Maybe he was kidding. Maybe not.) Back some time ago, I preached a sermon entitled “The Edge of Excellence.” On the way home from church she said, “Good

sermon, Hon.” I said, “Shoot, I was aiming for excellence.” The next Sunday I preached a sermon titled “The Edge of the Boomerang.” On the way home she said, “EXCELLENT sermon, Hon.” A helpmeet encourages her husband. Thirdly, for COMPLETION. God says, “I will make him a helper fit for him.” A fitting helper. 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, really the kind of music that 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. Let me add one more – CONNECTION. (I may get into trouble here.) Let me poll the HUSBANDS here for a minute. I’m thinking I’m not the only one here. Does your wife ever ask you foolish questions? She asks you questions that she already has the answer for. She asks you questions that you have no idea what the answer is, and she should know that you don’t have the answer. For example, we had Covid just a couple weeks ago. I was cleared from quarantine, and I went to Hagerstown to pick up a purchase I had made on Facebook Marketplace. Of all the houses in this world, the pickup house is right by Donut Alley that leads to Krumpé’s Donuts. Knowing that the steps of the righteous are ordered of God, I figured that God wanted me to have donuts. I hadn’t been there in a long time. I had no idea what time it opened, but I saw cars parked there; so I parked. I walked up to the door to see if there was a sign that indicated opening time. The sign said 7pm. Okay. It was about 6:15pm and I didn’t want to wait for 45 minutes, so maybe God didn’t want me to have donuts. However, shortly after I got back to my car, they opened. I guess God DID want me to have donuts after all. I bought an assortment of donuts, ate a couple on the way home and put the box on the kitchen counter. What does my wife ask me that evening? “Did you put these donuts on the counter?” We both have had Covid. No one except the two of us has been in our house for weeks. Wouldn’t you think, if there had only been two people in the house (me and her) and SHE hadn’t been out of the house and the donuts are like extremely fresh that she could have figured out who put the donuts on the counter? My wife watches Murdoch Mysteries, Murder She Wrote, and Matlock, so if anyone could figure out who put the donuts on the counter, she should have been able to. She asked me a question that she had to know the answer to. What’s the point? I’ve talked with people all day long. I heard problem after problem. I’ve fixed things that needed attention. I just want a meal and some peace and quiet. She’ll ask, “Aren’t you going to talk.” I’ll ask, “What do you want to talk about?” She’ll say, “I don’t know.” I’ve learned (rather recently) that she doesn’t want to talk for information. She asks me questions for CONNECTION. So, there – companionship, cooperation, completion & connection is by DIVINE design. Point one – Men and women are EQUAL. Point two...

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. 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 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. (NO, I don’t have chapter and verse for that.) But it makes sense, in that, generally little boys seem to be more physically oriented AND... Little girls seem to be verbally oriented. Jessica said her first word very early. Her first word was “mom.” She was about a month old. 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 & 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 Ranger Kids 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 necessarily

buy that. 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 just show you some of the differences that God designed right here in the Bible. **A. Man, provider – Woman, helper.** First of all, God designed the man to be the PROVIDER. And... God designed the 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 Genesis 2:18 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 my ministry. There is Scriptural support that would indicate the man is generally the breadwinner (not exclusively). Much of our culture is 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 a rather accurate statement. **B. Man, protector – Woman, nurturer.** The man is the protector, and the woman is the nurturer. God gave the man to protect and the woman to nurture. Genesis 3:16-17 – *“Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life...”* And then, skip on down to Genesis 3:20 – *“And Adam called his wife’s name Eve; because she was the mother of all living.”* Here you have the husband as the protector. You have the wife as the nurturer. 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. Romans 5:12 (NIV) – *“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. Adam was responsible. God made him to be the protector. Men, it’s 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 the 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, enhancer and maker of beauty.** The Bible teaches that man is to be the leader, and the woman is to be the enhancer and the 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. Some 25 years ago we put our townhouse on the market to sell. I confess, I’m not so fond of moving. It’s a lot of work. Things get messed up and broken. One day our realtor was showing our house to a man who seemed particularly interested. He said to me something like – “I love everything about it. I like it just like it is. Will you sell me your furniture, too? My immediate thought (my MALE thought) was – “You mean I don’t have to move it. I don’t have to pay to move it. I don’t have to worry about anything getting broken. I thought, “God’s favor!” Instantly, I said, “Yes, we should be able to do that!” I thought, “We’ll buy new furniture and have it delivered. My wife will LOVE having new.” This furniture had some age on it anyway. When I told my wife, how do you think she responded? You would have thought I sold her mother! You never saw such pathetic tears. I thought she would have been thrilled to pick out new furniture. But NO,

she had what she wanted to make her house look like she wanted. I think she would have rather kept the furniture than sell the house. 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! TODAY I’ll share some GENERALITIES. I want you to look at your hands. Hold your hands up and look at them just like I am looking at mine. Pay attention to your index or pointing finger and your ring finger. Which is the LONGER one? A generalization DOES NOT hold true in EVERY circumstance, but usually in MOST circumstances. Raise your hand if your index or pointing finger is the longest. (Mostly women.) Raise your hand if your RING finger is the longest. (Mostly men.) If that doesn’t hold true for you, don’t say, “Preacher, I am messed up.” I said that’s a tendency, but NOT a rule. It doesn’t mean that you are weird or odd if it doesn’t work that way, but that I’ve found that it is generally a tendency that most men have a longer ring finger and women a longer index finger. That’s a generality. That is, it is NOT always the case. HERE ARE SOME OTHER GENERALITIES. **D. Men tend to be stronger than women.** What I am going to be giving you right now are tendencies about men and women. Men TEND to be stronger than women. Now, there are some women here who I wouldn’t want to mess with. (I guess I really wouldn’t want to mess with any women here or elsewhere.) Very early in our marriage, Diane and I saw a woman beat the tar out of her father. The woman’s little girl knocked on our door, telling us what was going on, and asked us to call the police. There are some tough women. 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. 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, 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. I have a niece who joined the army. My baby brother had a hard time with that and I’m sure I would, too. Maybe it’s me, but it just doesn’t feel right to me to send a woman to combat. I’m proud that she wanted to defend our freedom. Her bravery is to be commended. I respect her right to make that choice, BUT... TO BE HONEST, I don’t want my daughter or my nieces or your daughters going to 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. And... The casualties on both sides went up. The Israelis said, “Hey, that’s a bad experiment.” They then used the women somehow behind the lines for support. My – perhaps NARROW – opinion is that a woman is NOT made for combat anymore than she is made for professional football. Generally, the man is physically strong, the woman more fragile. That is by divine design. God made her physiognomy different than men. SOME would say a man is built for battle; a woman is built for babies. Another generality – **E. Men approach problems HEAD first – Women approach problems HEART first.** Now, neither one of these is legitimate or illegitimate any more than the length of your fingers. It is just different. It is the difference between the logical and the emotional. Often it just seems that women know what’s going on without knowing what’s going on. We call that a “woman’s intuition.” Why? Being a nurturer, she deals in the area of feelings and emotions. And so, because she feels and 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 a problem differently, they see a goal. Men will go after it because that is what 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. **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 says, “I

am going to take our savings and investments and move them to another project.” That threatens her 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 that 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, she feels cluttered, because that’s just the way she is made. If I sit down at the table, she can’t help saying something about me clearing off the table. It seems that she’s happiest when I am fixing something or picking up. Men tend to look for success, and women tend to look for security. **H. Men tend to see the big picture – Women tend to see the details.** Man will think about his career. He will think three or four years down the road, “What am I going to do?” The woman, she is 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.” He says, “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 tells him off. He can’t figure it out. You know what she is thinking about? “What do you mean MOVE? I just made dental appointments for all the kids. 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’s planning and talk it over with her, what he’s planned for her security and the children’s welfare. Then, rather than having her as an adversary, he can have her as a helpmeet. **I. Men tend to be insensitive – Women, sensitive.** See if this isn’t true. All you ladies shut your eyes. Men, answer this question. Is your wife ever just plain too sensitive? Okay men, it’s your turn. Shut your eyes. Ladies, has your man, at least a couple of times, been too insensitive? Sometimes it’s a jungle out there, and a guy has got to make decisions. Sometimes a man has to face unpleasantness and competition and danger, and so God just gave the man a nature where he has a thicker shell. And the woman is just more sensitive. She’s more about feelings. Who is it that sheds the most tears at your house? (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 their 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. Women tend to be that way. They are just trusting.

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. You see, God intends that husbands and wives sing the same song, but... We sing different parts. That’s the HARMONY in the Marriage. That’s what God intended. And it’s exciting! But, I want to tell you that 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. Let’s bow our heads in prayer. Heads are bowed, eyes are closed, no one stirring, no one looking around. “Heavenly Father, we acknowledge the priority and design that You have given marriage. We thank You that in the very first chapter of Your Word that Your first blessing was directed to husband and wife – the family. May we honor you in our marriages. May our children and our community children see in our church husbands and wives who love and adore each other. Where love is lacking, may the distractions and lies of our enemy be deemed null and void. For those whose families are suffering and in disarray, may You bring healing. It’s by Your stripes that we are healed. I hold that that promise is for more than our physical hurts. We come boldly to Your throne on behalf of homes with abuse and plead Your mercy on those who are suffering. Give wisdom and direction to the abused. Father God, I pray in the name of Jesus, where those homes that are here today and Jesus is not on the throne, that today He might be enthroned as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. In Jesus’ wonderful name I pray, Amen.”