

Genesis History (Adam & Eve): **A Honeymoon in Paradise**

Note: *This is a verbatim transcript of the live broadcast. It is presented as spoken.*

Today we're going to continue studying in the first book of the Bible, Genesis. In the last few weeks we talked about just the first three verses of chapter 2 dealing with the subject of the seventh day. And I think we covered that very thoroughly. Now there's a little window of time between the rest of chapter 2 and chapter 3. You know what happens in chapter 3 is the fall. Sin is introduced into the world, and we'll get to that. But I'd like to especially remind you that there was a time, we don't know how long it was, when paradise reigned on earth. Now just think about that for a little while. What it must have been like to live in this world when there was no sin, no suffering, no guilt, no shame, no death, no disease. Everything was exactly as God willed and as He planned.

There was nothing but good, good, very good. The world was a paradise. And the first creatures were living in harmony with each other. But it didn't last very long. Some people have wondered and speculated, how long did the world last between the time God completed the creation and until sin entered. We can only speculate it was less than a year. May have been a few weeks or months. But it wasn't very long. My guess is that the devil used that blitzkrieg method of trying to catch this innocent first couple early on before they were really prepared. And another reason, there is actually some logic to it, God told Adam and Eve to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. Well they hadn't done any multiplying yet, so it probably—and obviously they were in perfect health—it probably was not very long. Which is sad when you think about it.

But today we're going to talk a little bit about Genesis part 6 dealing with a Honeymoon in Paradise. And turn with me if you would please, in your Bibles, to the book of Genesis chapter 2. Genesis chapter 2. Now we've learned of course the first verse, the heavens and the earth were finished. But then God backs up and He gives a little more detail in the particulars of the creation. Now right from the very beginning of the Bible the Lord establishes for how He communicates with us that's used all through the other prophecies and Bible writings. The writers of the Bible do not always give the information in a chronological order. As a matter of fact, if you've just plain read the books of the Bible how many of you have discovered it's not written chronologically? The books of Nehemiah and Ezra really ought to be, you know, toward the end with the minor prophets. And when you read some of the books dealing with first and second Chronicles, some of the major prophets ought to be put back in their time periods. And the book of Jonah and the Judges, and sometimes they're not arranged perfectly in chronological order. The Hebrew mind did not always work that way. Think something like a newspaper.

When you open up a newspaper where does your eye first go? To the headlines, right? That's why it's in bold, stark print. You get the big picture, what the big stories are, and then as you go to the fine print you'll find more detail on those respective stories. Genesis chapter 1 is the headlines. Verse 1 is the headline of headlines. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Then it gives you detail and it sort of maps out the seven days, or six days of creation and then the seventh day, which is the day of rest. Then it backs up and it gives us more detail in chapter 2 to fill in some gaps. And it especially deals with things that have changed. The Lord wants us to know the way it used to be.

And so let's go now, chapter 2 verse 4. "This is the history," and of course that's the title for our series. Genesis His Story. "This is the history of the heavens and the earth when they were created in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens. Before any plant of the field was in the earth, before any herb of the field had grown." In other words if we go back before God created, there wasn't even a plant or an herb. "For the Lord God had not caused it to rain on the earth." Things were different then than they are now. "And there was no man to till the ground." Now He's not saying there was no man by the time we get to chapter 2, He's saying in the beginning man did not need to burrow into the earth and plow up the ground to get it to yield its produce. The garden, and the work of man in the beginning, was not like it is today. As a matter of fact, after the curse God said, "Because you've done this thing in the sweat of your brow," you will try to eek out your sustenance from the ground. But the Lord explains,

“But a mist, a gentle mist, went up from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground.”

Now, evidently things were different back then than they are now. One reason we know that is by the time of Noah it still had never rained. And it says, “The Lord God,” verse 7, tells about, now it’s backing up and giving more detail. The headlines are God made man in His own image, now the details. Verse 7, “The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground. And He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. And man became a living being.” Now nostrils there doesn’t mean that the Lord blew in man’s nose. Nostrils there can mean his wind cavities. And it could be that God gave man a kiss of life and kissed him on the lips. And that would still meet the definition in Hebrew. Artificial resuscitation is what we call it. You remember when that boy died and Elisha put his mouth on the boy’s mouth and his eyes on the boy’s eyes? That could be a reference. And he breathed life back into that boy as he was praying. He could have done a little prayer and works there together, we don’t know. And so here the Lord breathes into man the breath of life.

That word breath of life is a word I don’t want you to forget. Because it’s an important thing to understand later when we talk about the spirit of life. And I don’t speak Hebrew but it sounds something like neshama. And it means a puff. The Lord gave him a push of wind. And it means vital breath, divine inspiration, a blast of breath, and it can also be translated spirit. Now when you get to Ecclesiastes and it says when a person dies the body returns to the earth to dust as it was and the spirit returns to God who gave it is the same word you find back here in Genesis. The breath that puff of life returns to God who gave it. Some people get mixed up and they think a little ghost hops out of us when we die and goes back to God. But the Bible says here when God breathed the breath of God into Adam then he became a soul.

It doesn’t say that God ever gave him a soul. A soul was the combination of the body that you’ve got and the breath of life. And after God had formed Adam from the dust of the ground—that’s why at funerals we say dust you are and unto dust you’ll return. Ashes to ashes, dust to dust. If you were to try to sell human bodies for what their chemical worth is, you might get about 50 cents. Nothing personal, but unless you can sell different organs to science, I’m talking about the compounds that make up our bodies. We’re largely water and calcium, carbon, we’re just made out of the elements of earth. Sometimes we need to keep perspective and remember what we are. Amen? Sometimes we think we’re more than we really are. And He spoke and breathed His vital life power into man and man came to life.

Now I believe Adam, when God made him, He made him full grown. And people often ask, “Did he have a belly button?” Probably not. Why would he need one? He was created, all the others were born. Can you picture that? The only man without a belly button. Eve probably didn’t have one either. Why would she need one? And so God breathed into man and man was made. Not only was he made fully formed, man was preprogrammed with intelligence. Adam did not have to learn how to crawl. He did not have to learn how to talk. He was... Any of you buy a computer, you know, right from the factory? Adam came from the box preprogrammed with intelligence, he had coordination, he had reasoning powers, he had speech, he could communicate. And he was infinitely brighter than anyone alive on the world today. God, as a gift, preprogrammed him with a certain degree of intelligence. And he had then a lot of extra room on his hard drive to store and to learn new things about God. But Adam was created with a degree of intelligence.

And then we go on and we learn... Go back here now to Genesis and it tells us a little more about the environment. In verse 8, “And God planted a garden eastward in Eden. And there He put the man whom He had formed.” Now Eden could have been not just the garden but the continent. “And eastward,” on this continent, “God planted a beautiful garden. And there He put the man whom He had formed.” You know, God is a gardener. You remember when Jesus rose from the dead and Mary was weeping there by the tomb and she saw the shadow of someone nearby and she turned. And she said, “Sir, if you’ve taken Him away tell me where you’ve laid Him and I’ll take care of His body.” She supposing Him to be the gardener. And she didn’t know how right she really was. Because if all things made were made by the Word—who’s the Word? Jesus—then who was it that planted the garden eastward in Eden? Jesus is the

gardener. A man is never closer to God than when he's in the garden. You and I were originally designed to be gardeners. I'll talk more about that in just a minute.

The Lord loves the things that He makes in His creation, and the plants and the vegetation in particular. "And out of the ground," I'm in verse 9 now. He put the man in the garden, "And out of the ground the Lord God made every tree to grow that as pleasant to the sight and good for food." There was an enormous amount of beautiful symmetrical trees. And the produce and the fruits were lush and abundant. Above and beyond anything that we know today. You know, we only know about the ones that survived the flood. There could be three times as many different species of plants and fruits and vegetables and flowers that became extinct because of the flood. And you just think about all the beautiful kinds of food that we have today. The Bible says, "And every tree which is in the fruit the yielding seed to you it shall be for meat." So there was just an abundance of beautiful fruit.

And then he goes on and says there was a special tree. "Now the tree of life was also in the midst of the garden and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." In the middle of this continent that the Lord had made on the planet was a beautiful garden, on the east side. And in the middle of the garden there was a beautiful meeting area. And these enormous trees... Now try and picture for a minute a couple of very prominent, beautiful trees. Think about the redwoods. Any of you been to redwood camp meeting? If you haven't been, I suggest you go. It's really something. Even if you don't go for the inspiration of the speakers, driving through what they call the Avenue of the Giants and through the Founders Grove is really something that is very inspiring. And you go out there and you stand. I remember Mark Finley and I met one day and we went for a walk through the redwoods there. And we said, "Hey, we've just got to pray. This is like a cathedral." And you look up almost as far as you can see, 300 feet up, are these trees.

Picture a couple of trees in the middle of this beautiful garden. It's been orchestrated by God. The Lord has done the landscaping. Picture the most beautiful parks in the world. They're nothing compared to the way God naturally landscaped this garden. In the middle of that beautiful garden, with all the colors and symmetry and balance, are these two majestic trees. And there's like a meeting place for God by the tree of life. I think that's where they met the Lord in a special way. And picture a tree that's three times as tall as any redwood. And four times as wide as any balboa tree. And each one of the leaves could be bigger than a human. And it's got this beautiful sparkling fruit on it. Now this fruit is not just to sustain life. Of course, you know, the other trees were for that. This fruit has the ability to give some missing enzyme to the cells of our bodies that would prevent the degeneration that causes death. It gives eternal life. And here they are, in the middle of the garden. This beautiful bark, beautiful branches, beautiful symmetry, beautiful fruit. There's a fragrance and it's lush. And it's real.

Now why I think it was so big? When you read in Revelation, it tells us about the New Jerusalem and it describes the tree of life again. And it says, "On either side of the river is the tree," singular, "of life." How can you have a tree on both sides of a river? Well I heard one theory that I like. And that is that this is a very big tree. And that underneath the river, the roots of the tree grow together. Above the river, the branches of the tree grow together. This week the Amazing Facts officers and a team went out to eat at a restaurant as we did some work and they had a ficus tree. And you've seen those ficus trees that they've got when they're real little they braid them. And then as they grow up they grow together. And I don't know how God did it, but I don't have any doubt that He can do it. That above the river is this tree and the branches grow together, and the roots grow together, and the river runs through it. And it's a big river too. Because this river irrigates the whole planet. And so I want you to have this picture of paradise in your mind. And friends, keep in mind I don't have a very good imagination. I can't imagine how beautiful it must have been.

The human language is too feeble to describe it. Even if you had the most eloquent orator here today, he could not describe it. So you stretch your imagination as far as you can to try to picture what it is you think that garden looked like. Then keep in mind that what God has prepared for the redeemed is going to be an upgrade. It's not going to be less than what He had for Adam and Eve, it's going to be better

still. Amen? "The eye has not seen, the ear has not heard, neither has even entered into the heart of man the things that God has prepared for those that love Him."

And there was the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Now this is where a lot of people get a wrinkle in their thinking and they choke. If God is love, and if everything was so good, and if everything was so pure, why did He put this dark tree that had this influence right there in the middle of the garden? Why would He do that? What does it mean, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil? Well first of all, it can be rendered the tree of the knowledge of good contaminated with evil. God intended that everything was to be good, good, very good. But there's one tree there that if the person eats from that tree, it's going to contaminate their good with evil. And so, it's not like God is saying that good and evil is okay. You know what you need to remember is that what makes the devil especially dangerous is the devil commingles good with evil. The devil is not just evil. Of course we know he is the essence of evil. But what I mean by that is that's not the only tool in his box.

The devil is never more effective than when he disguises the evil with good. No good is more dangerous than when it is polluted with evil. Poison is much more dangerous when you take the poison out of the brown bottle with the skull and crossbones and the big red letters that say Poison. You pour one drop in a glass of orange juice. Then you've got the combination of good and evil and it's much more deadly. And so when the Lord says there was this tree of the knowledge of good corrupted with evil, they weren't to eat from that tree, gives you a little different perspective doesn't it? And the Lord told man, "As long as you obey Me, you'll be okay. Don't eat from that forbidden tree." It was a test of obedience. Everything else they're free to eat. Everything else they're free to use. It tells you something about human nature, where the one thing that you say, "Don't touch," automatically what do we gravitate towards in our sinful nature? If you take a child into a toy store and you walk up and down the aisles and you finally come to one spot in the aisle and say, "Whatever you do, don't look at this toy." What are they going to look at? If I say, "Whatever you do right now, I don't want you to think of a green monkey."

What did you just think of? And so, man automatically had to have the one thing that was forbidden, in spite of the fact God had given them so much good. You know what else that tells us about our natures? People often ask, "If God is love then why is there sin? Why is there suffering? Why did this bad thing happen? Why did that bad thing happen?" We're so quick to question God's goodness and we completely neglect and overlook all the good that He surrounds us with. You know why it's so easy to spot bad when it happens? Because there's so much good in the world. In spite of the sin, in spite of the suffering, in spite of the injustice, have you ever counted your blessings? Do you know how much good there is? God is so good and He still showers with so many good things. It makes the bad things stand out in bold relief because there is so much good. Well, they had forgotten that.

And it tells us now there's a river. Verse 10, "That went out of the Garden of Eden to water the garden. And from it it parted four river heads." Now from the garden, deep down within the earth, there was this tremendous river that was gushing up out of the internal realms or caverns of the earth. And as it comes out of the garden it parts. Now often you've got different rivers that come out of different mountain sources. But here the whole earth is being irrigated from one spot, from this river. And evidently it runs out to the freshwater oceans, and then it soaks back into the caverns of the earth, and it springs up again through that garden. I don't know how springs work. It may be from the heat down by the core of the earth. One thing I do know. Up at our property which is on a mountaintop, there's a spring that comes out of the ground. And we had a drought about 15 years ago in Northern California where the wells down in Covelo were drying up. But the spring that we have up on top of the mountain kept running. And I had friends who live down the hill who their wells and their springs dried up.

They were driving their trucks with barrels up to our house, up on top of a hill, and filling their barrels. And they'd scratch their head and say, "Why is water running out of the top of the mountain here, when the wells are running dry down in the valley?" I don't know how God does that. But He still does it today. And somehow God had worked it out where there was this beautiful ecosystem where this one gushing river parted into four rivers, ran off into this uniform ocean, went down into the caverns of the earth,

and then through the thermal dynamics of the heat it gushed back up again. I don't question God could do that because He does it still today. And this is how He irrigated the planet. And that water must have been very sweet. Amen?

And then He names them. "The name of the first is Pishon. It is the one that encompasses the whole land of Havalah where there is gold." Now let me stop here and say something. Where was the Garden of Eden? What part of the world that we think of today? Middle East, Baghdad, Euphrates River, we don't know. After the flood, I believe that the survivors started naming some of the rivers after familiar names just out of nostalgia. But the surface of the world was radically changed by the flood. So for someone to put their finger down on Mesopotamia and say, "This is where the Garden of Eden was," that's really stretching it, friends. We don't know. We don't know exactly where these rivers were. Most of them certainly aren't the way they were then. If the mountain tops were covered with water, you don't think that the river channels may have been rerouted a little bit? So we're not exactly sure where it was. But it tells us so we in our minds can go back to that time when things were so beautiful. "It encompasses the land of Havalah where there is gold and the gold of that land is good."

Back then before the flood, the earth was strewn with precious stones and gold. They didn't have to dig down into the much and the mire to try and get the gold out. Nuggets were lying on the surface. Blocks of silver and boulders of precious metal and gems were everywhere. And I know it's hard for us to imagine, but the Bible says it is difficult to imagine. And there was delium, this resin that produces a myrrh-like fragrance. And it tells us that there was onyx stone, precious stones are there. "The name of the second river is Gishon." Now the name Gishon means springing water. So we have reason to believe that it was a spring, artesian. "It is the one that encompasses the whole land of Kush. The name of the third is Hidikel. And it is the one that goes toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth is the river Euphrates." Which is one of the prominent, large rivers of the Bible. When Abraham crossed the Euphrates he was known as a Hebrew, one who crossed over. Euphrates was one of the borders for the Promised Land. And it may have been in that vicinity. But I'm sure that it's been changed drastically.

"Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to tend and to keep it." Now what does that mean? Did God take man and put man in a condominium? Did He put him in a city? Did God put man in a cave? Where did He put him? In a garden. Where is the most natural place for man to abide? Surrounded with the creations of God. And there is a beautiful relationship that God designed from the beginning between the intelligent creatures and the mammals, and the vegetation. There's a beautiful symbiotic cycle of life that exists. They inhale what we exhale. You know what the waste of a tree is? Fruit. And I believe that God had this cycle before the flood where the waste of the humans and the other creatures became the nourishment—we do that in the world today, don't we? We use the manure and the different things from the animals to give the vegetation nitrogen and the things that make them lively and green. Nothing was foul or unpleasant in the Garden of Eden. But I do believe that there was this cycle where we lived off the plants and they lived off us and nothing died. And it was a beautiful relationship.

You know, never is a man closer to God than in his garden. Adam was a horticulturist. And you may have heard me say this once, some of you missed it so I'll say it again. I heard that this prison warden began to look over the list of the different occupations from the many people over years and years that had been in his prison. And I really don't remember whether it was Alcatraz or Folsom Prison, or what prison it was. But as he looked over he realized he had people from just about every vocation. He had auto mechanics there, and there were doctors, and lawyers, and there were dentists, and you just name it. I'd better be careful because I'll start naming everybody here and your occupation. But they were all in those prisons. Politicians...I wanted to get that one in. And he thought about it and he thought, "You know, there's no horticulturists here." He didn't have any gardeners. And they discovered that when they engaged the prisoners in gardening they became more passive, more peaceful. God designed man to be a horticulturist.

Have I been giving you updates? Karen planted an avocado seed. Any of you do that? You know, you

don't want to throw anything away so you save your avocado seeds. If you make a lot of guacamole, you don't have any room to live anymore. So Karen poked the toothpicks in it and she sprouted it. And it just keeps on growing. And yesterday it outgrew its pot. We've got this virtual sequoia now that's coming out of this little bitty cup. And so I transplanted it into a more respectable pot. We're going to have to cut a hole in the roof pretty soon so that our avocado tree can go up through. But, you know, there's something about getting your fingers in the soil, and working with the plants, and trying to encourage them to live and to thrive. It feels very natural. I think God designed us this way. This maybe is more apparent to me because I grew up in New York City. And the first time in my life that I went to a summer camp and I got around plants and things, I was just absolutely dazzled with the life and the diversity in the plant kingdom that God had designed.

"And the Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to tend it and to keep it." Now you know what else this tells us, God did not take the man and set him on a throne. He didn't put him behind a desk with a pager, and give him a phone where he could fax messages to all his servants and the animals. Man was given practical work to do. Work is part of God's plan. Let me hear you say, "Amen." That's why we're here today. We're resting from our labor. Not only was man to rest on the Sabbath, six days he was to labor. What was God's work? God is the creator and sustainer. Man was made in the image of God. Man's work was to also create. Now to dress and to keep the garden... You know what I think one of Adam's first jobs was, he made himself a dwelling. Through training the vines and the trees, I believe that he made himself a living mansion. And when he went into the kitchen, do you think he opened the refrigerator? He went into this living wall of ferns and leaves and vines, and it was the grape section of the kitchen. He had trained the different things.

He didn't have to use a machete. They weren't plowing up the ground with rototillers. I think it was a very gentle process. Where he would take the little tentacles of the plants and he would train them. He would direct them. He would guide them. So that they would be beautiful, and symmetrical, and productive. And man, I believe, lived in a mansion that was formed out of precious stones and plants. The Bible tells us that this is part of God's original plan, and we will do that again. Speaking of the new earth the Lord says we will, "build houses and inhabit them." You think we're going to be cutting down Douglas fir and milling them up into two by fours? If the city of God is made out of minerals, precious stones, pearls, I think that our homes will be made out of minerals and living vines. It says, "They'll plant vineyards and eat the fruit of them." And there's a beautiful relationship between the materials that God used and his environment.

So man was given work to do. The Bible tells us that we should work. And whatever work we should do, we should do it as unto the Lord. "Whatever your hand finds to do, do it heartily as unto the Lord and not unto men." Man is not just to work for himself, but he is to work for others. Acts 20, listen to what Paul says here in verse 33—now I didn't put this on the screen so you can look this up and read it with me, or write it down—Paul says, "I've coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. Yes you yourselves know that with these hands I have provided for my necessities and for those who were with me." Paul says that he was working not only for what his needs were, but for the needs of others. Work is part of God's perfect plan. Not only now but even before sin. God did not design that man should be lazy and indolent. What do you think the sin of Sodom was? People always think of the sin of Sodom as sexual immorality and perversion. That was the sin. But you know what led to that sin? "An abundance of idleness," Ezekiel tells us. And idleness, you've heard the expression, is the devil's workshop. What verse is that? Not in the Bible, but it's true. Idleness is the devil's workshop. Man is to stay busy. A lot of people, especially children... This day and age we think children are to be indulged.

If they're not given any activity, and they ought to be given activity according to their ability, they can just get into trouble. They say, "I'm bored." How many of you hear your kids say, "I'm bored." And it's a protest. "You're supposed to entertain me. Oh no, here it comes. I'm getting bored. Quick—what should we do now? Where's the video game? Turn on the TV. Change the channel. I'm bored." And you know, we've got this mentality today that we're just to entertain everybody all the time. And I believe a person cannot be happy unless they learn how to love work. Work is a blessing. It doesn't come naturally. A lot

of good things don't come naturally anymore. It needs to be taught. And it needs to be taught by example. I was out working in the yard yesterday. Karen kicked Stephen out and said, "Go out there and help your dad." And I gave him something to do. And he took a saw and he was out there helping me saw. We're trying to do some spring cleaning in the backyard. We're pruning some limbs. I knew it would be easier for me to saw the limb.

As a matter of fact, how many of you that are parents get frustrated watching your kids do a job you've asked them to do because you know you could do it in half the time? Being a good parent is bidding your time and letting them do it anyway. Because that's how they learn, right? And so Stephen's up there and he's trying to saw down this branch and the saw keeps slipping out of the notch. And he keeps making new notches. But you know, that's how you learn. And finally he got it down. And he had a sense of fulfillment. He was rewarded that he was able to accomplish something. We're to work for ourselves and for others. Ephesians 4:28, "Let him who stole, steal no longer. But rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good that he..." may have a large bank account and stock portfolio. No. "That he may have something to give to him who has need." Now here Paul is telling the person who works not just to work for our own selfish benefit. But Christians are to work that we can have something to give. You know I like the Wesleyan philosophy about work. He says you should earn all you can, save all you can, and give all you can. And there needs to be that balance of knowing how to have enough to take care of your needs, having a little bit in savings, but principally we should also work that we might give to others too. Amen? And so work was part of God's original design.

I want to read a quote or two from the book Patriarchs and Prophets that deals with the Garden of Eden. The author there says, "To the dwellers in Eden was committed the care of the garden, to dress and to keep it. Their occupation was not wearisome, but pleasant and invigorating. God appointed labor as a blessing to man, to occupy his mind, to strengthen his body and to develop his faculties. In mental and physical activity, Adam found one of the highest pleasures of his holy existence." Any of you, at the end of the day, any of you men especially, when you've built something, and at the end of the day you can stand back and look at something you have created you feel a great sense of joy and satisfaction. You know what I'm talking about? When you stand back and... Just little things. Karen got a little scratch in the car. And she said, "Doug, can you help me fix it?" I went out there and I tried to get the stuff off the shelf and labored with it a little bit and I think it looked really good. And I stood back and I said, you know, "That's much better." This was satisfying for me.

To feel like I could accomplish something. It didn't make me unhappy, it made me happy to be productive. To feel like you've made something, you've done something. Man is a creator, because God made man in His own image. And we ought to be engaged in work. And you ought to be able to look back as God did at the end of six days and say, "This is good. I've done something." Not just men, but women too. Sometimes the work of women and the work of men are a little different. But either way, we are designed to create. And it should be a blessing. The highest pleasure of his holy existence. "And when, as a result of his disobedience, he was driven from his beautiful home, and forced to struggle with the stubborn soil to gain his daily bread, that very labor, although widely different from his pleasant occupation in the garden, was a safeguard against temptation and a source of happiness." Still work is a safeguard and a source of happiness. "Those who think work is a curse, attended though it be with weariness and pain, are cherishing an error.

The rich often look down with contempt upon the working classes. But this is wholly at variance with God's purpose in creating man. What are the possessions of even the most wealthy in comparison with the heritage given to the Lordly Adam. Yet Adam was not to be idle. Our creator, who understands what is for man's happiness, appointed Adam his work. True joy of life is found only by the working men and women." That's a short sentence, but it's very profound. True joy in life is found only by working men and women.

What about retirement? I mean, doesn't the time come when you should just stop working because you've paid your dues and... You know, get yourself a boat and a hammock and a pina colada and just

relax because you're retired. I think though a time may come when you retire from the same intensity, I believe as long as God gives you strength and health you should keep working. As a matter of fact, I've seen in my short life that people seem to live about as long as they think they're needed. You know what I mean? As soon as people cease to be active they don't last long. My father, he's in his 80's now. He doesn't need to work. He's got everything he needs. He still goes to work five days a week. That's why he's in his 80's. In spite the fact that he smoked and drank for years, still drinks, I think one reason he's lived so long is because of work. You feel like you've got a purpose, you have a job to do, people seem to live as long as they have something to do. Work is a blessing. I don't think I finished this. "The angels are diligent workers. They are the ministers of God to the children of men. The creator has prepared no place for the stagnating practice of indolence." God wants his people to be productive and busy. Amen? So there was work.

Now we've found out a little bit about the vegetation. We've found out about man and the trees. There were also animals. And the Bible says that He put him in the garden to dress and to keep it. And then he goes on to say, let me see here, I want to read verses 16 and 17, "And the Lord God commanded the man saying, 'Of every tree in the garden you may freely eat. But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat it you shall die.'" Now God was not saying that that forbidden fruit had cyanide in it and it would kill him. The fruit itself was not harmful. What was harmful was disobedience. That's what God was saying. You're not going to die because the food is toxic. Because when Eve looked at it, it says it was pleasant to look at, the fragrance was nice, good for food. But it was disobeying that made it deadly. Obeying the Word of God is very important.

And then verse 18, "And the Lord God said, 'It is not good that man should be alone. Now I will make a helper,'" comparable to him, or a helpmeet, ""for him."" A compatible helpmate. Now of course, God's getting ready to make what? Woman. Some women are indignant that God would call them helpers for man. That's actually a complement. God calls Himself a helper for man. The Bible says the Lord is our helper. It is not derogatory, it is not an insult, when it says, "I will make a helper for him." Furthermore, when God says it is not good for man to be alone, this is not simply saying that man needs to be married. God is telling us that man is a social creature. Humans were designed to be social creatures. Probably the one you're looking at and listening to now is Exhibit A in knowing what He's talking about. I would guess that there are not very many of you who are watching or listening who have gone as long as I've gone without any human contact. Have you ever lived like a hermit, no radio, no telephone, no CB, no pager, no computer, no human, no human voice, no human picture, no input, for days? And you begin to realize the dimension that our social interaction plays. And I've heard people say, "I don't need anybody." Uh-huh. You put that person in solitary confinement and you begin to find out after a while we do need each other.

Someone once said no man is an island. That doesn't mean everybody has to be married. As a matter of fact I should probably talk about that very quickly. I do believe it's God's plan, when He said it's not good for man to be alone, I think He not only meant man but He's using the word inclusively there saying mankind. Not only was it important for us to have social relationships, but marriage is part of His plan. But there are exceptions. You, for instance, read that some people have the gift of singleness or celibacy. It's not always a curse. Some people may feel like it's a curse. Sometimes it's a blessing. I can tell you being married to the wrong person is more of a curse than being married to nobody. You want to make sure... And I'm saying that not by experience, I'm saying that by virtue of counseling so many different people.

I want to quickly put that little statement in there. Phew, see how I got out of that real quick? But I'll tell you, it's sad. Some people say, "I've got to be married. I've got to be married." And they marry the first person that slows down and they're miserable. You want to pray that you're doing God's will. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 7:7, "For I wish that all men were even as I myself." He said my personal preference is that we could be more effective serving the Lord if we weren't cumbered with marriage. That was Paul's attitude. Part of it was because Christians were being persecuted. It was illegal. "But to each one his own gift." Notice what he calls it? A gift. "A gift from God. One in this manner, another in that." There are

some people who have been given a gift of singleness or celibacy. I think sometimes in churches we forget that and we do everything in the context of the typical marriage and family. And there's a lot of people in the church that are single. A show of hands—don't be embarrassed—those of you that are single, raise your hands.

Hold them up, hold them up. There's some options, look right there. Don't forget, we're going to have that finding your mate seminar later today, you don't want to miss that. I put that in just for you, Pastor Art. But I also wanted to say something because there are people that stay single for the good part of their lives. One of my dear friends, Dr. Simpson, died 90 something years old. Never married. Adopted and raised two kids, she never married. She never felt like she was an incomplete person. Very fulfilled life. And so I'd just like to add that. Because I've had some of the singles say, "Doug, everything's always delivered in the context of marriage. And it's like if you're single, you're some kind of mutant out there somewhere." And God's Word doesn't teach that.

When He says it's not good for man to be alone, primarily we are social creatures. It doesn't mean that we all need to be mated. But that is, of course, someone named Batchelor can talk to you about, right? It means that we need to know how to get along with each other. Part of the plan of salvation is to learn how to love. Think about it. When God first made Adam, Adam was incomplete. God designed it that way so he would recognize this yearning. There was a vacuum there. "And out of the ground," verse 19, "the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every bird of the air, and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam called each living creature, that was his name." Now I want to quickly mention something here. Notice it says, "Out of the ground God formed man." "Out of the ground the Lord the trees." "Out of the ground the Lord formed every beast." You know, everything you see around you came out of the ground? Carpet came out of the ground, gasoline came out of the ground. TV set came out of the ground. Electricity. Everything. I tell people when they're thinking about buying land I say, "Buy some good land, good location. It's out of production so you want to get it while you can." Land is a very valuable thing, if you can get yourself a good piece of land. Everything, you and me, comes from the earth. Amen?

And then He brings all these animals to Adam. Now, some people say, "Doug, aha. You cannot believe the Bible. I mean, here you've got Adam is made on the sixth day. And God says to Adam, "I want you to name and chronicle all the millions of different kinds of animals and bugs and fish in the world today." No, I don't think that's how God did it. Sure now, if I was to try to name all of the different kinds of dogs... You know how many different breeds of dogs there are? Adam looked at two dogs. All the dogs and all the variety of dogs, how many hundreds of kinds of dogs are there? They all came from two dogs. Right? And in the genes of those two dogs he had all the potential for all the varieties that we have. What did those first two dogs look like? Might have been Siberian Huskies. I don't know what they looked like. But they were dogs.

He didn't have to name all the different kinds of Siamese cats and Persian cats. They were two cats. And so when Adam named the animals, he was naming the broad categories. He might have said marsupials, mammals. No, he probably said giraffe, cattle. And they were the basic animals. And it didn't take 50 hours to do that. But God did it long enough for him to know that the cow had a bull, and the sow had a boar, and they all had their partners. But he was missing a companion. And in that context, God is so smart, God increased the yearning of Adam to a peak where he would become acutely aware that he did not have a mental, social, intellectual, peer anywhere on the planet. Even though he loved the creation, the vegetation, he was a zoologist, he was a horticulturist, but he didn't have a friend on earth. And God said, "I've got to put you to sleep."

The Bible tells us that after He peaked Adam's acute vacuum knowing that something was missing, "The Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam. And as he slept..." I heard one pastor say that when people are thinking about marriage, they would do well to go to sleep too. Some people. "And as he slept, He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh in its place." Now you know, the blood comes from the bones. And a baby's ribs produce blood. But as you get older your ribs don't produce blood. But

Adam was still a baby, wasn't he? And his bones were still producing blood. His ribs including. "And the rib the Lord had taken from the man, he made into a woman. And He brought her to the man." So as Adam wakes up, he rubs his side. There's no scar. God closed it up and I think He did it without needing sutures. There was probably no scar.

There might have been a line, a little zipper. I don't know how the Lord did it. He may have left something so Adam would know. Our Lord has a scar on His side, doesn't He? And it says He brought her. In other words, Adam wakes up, he gets the sleep out of his eyes, and he says, "I haven't ever slept that well before." And the Lord brought her. This was God performing a wedding. There was a formal introduction. She was married. The angels were the witnesses. Talk about having good music at your wedding. Can you imagine having the angels sing for you? Can you imagine the first time your bride comes down the isle is the first time you see her? Here comes Eve. Talk about wearing a nice wedding dress, she's got a robe of light. And Adam goes, "Wow!" The Lord is the best man bringing her down the isle. He brought her. What a wedding that must have been. Can you imagine that? Animals are all gathered around honking and singing. It must have really been something. The whole creation is rejoicing together as the Lord brings her to Adam. And Adam makes a little speech.

He says, "Now this is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh. We are one flesh. She shall be called Woman." And actually, this is one of the places where a transliteration isn't any different. It reads this way in Hebrew. It's a play on the word man and woman, just like in English man and woman. Woman means she came from the womb of man. And I still think it's something that the first woman came out of man and every other man came out of woman. But that was the only time it happened the other way around. And some people get all tweaked when they think about it, but Adam married his sister. They had the same father and mother, didn't they? And here she comes out of man. She shall be called woman.

And the Bible says, "Therefore a man," verse 24, and this is not Adam continuing to speak, now God is commenting, "Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and be joined to his wife. And they shall become one flesh." They become one, they are joined. They begin a new family unit. And then it concludes by saying, "They were both naked, the man and his wife, and they were not ashamed." Now I'll spend more time talking about marriage and that relationship later on. Because we don't want to just address marriage and the honeymoon in the garden. Because most of us don't live in the garden, do we? We're going to talk about marriage in the context of after the fall, which is where we live in our marriages. But I want you to just think about this for a second. They were both naked, the man and his wife, and they were not ashamed. Before sin, there was no guilt.

There was no shame. They had perfect harmony, perfect love, perfect relationship in their marriage. There were no arguments. There was a perfect harmony between the creatures and the man. The lion and the lamb laid down together. The man, I believe, was to some extent able to communicate with the animals. And oh I wish we could be transported back. Someday we will, to that time when there was a paradise in the Garden of Eden. Talk about planning the perfect honeymoon. You want everything to be right, you know. You don't want anything distracting. Talk about what it must have been like to be in, I mean it beats Tahiti. There's nowhere you could go in the world that could beat the honeymoon that Adam had with Eve. And what day did God make Adam? What day did God have Adam name the animals? Same day. Because it says he made male and female on the sixth day, and he only made the woman after Adam realized something was missing. So what day was their honeymoon? Sabbath was their honeymoon. Their first day together in paradise, and who did they spend time with on their honeymoon?

Do you think they put “Do not disturb” on the door of their little fern arbor and say, “God, it’s the honeymoon. Don’t bother us.” Or did they spend the honeymoon with God? And that’s the way every honeymoon ought to begin. Amen? Every wedding ought to begin spending the time with God. Some people think it’s incompatible to have marital intimacy and try and get God involved. Oh no. You can’t have real marital intimacy and fulfillment without God. He needs to be the very essence of what it’s all about.

You know the part of the story I wanted to leave you with is that someday God is going to fulfill His plan. When you read about the first two chapters of the Bible when everything was good, good, very good, don’t forget when you get to the last two chapters the Lord has restored us. The tree of life is available again. The river is again flowing from the throne of God. There is no more sin or suffering or sorrow. There is unity and harmony. The lion and the lamb and the child and the wolf, they’re all abiding in perfect harmony and peace together. The purpose of the plan of salvation is to get us back to the garden. Amen? And the thing that I heard one pastor say one time that really struck me, God put Adam to sleep and He pierced his side and brought out his bride. The Lord put Jesus to sleep on the cross. He said, “It is finished,” and He went to sleep. And His side was pierced and a flow of blood and water came out and the church was born. Can you say, “Amen?” The first Adam, the bride came out of his side. The second Adam, Jesus, the church came out of his side. You know why Jesus’ side was pierced? So that we can get back to the garden and walk with Him and talk with Him.

Is that your prayer friends? That you can someday be invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb? And all this in the Garden of Eden is a vague reflection of how much more beautiful and real, the reality of what we’re going to see in the kingdom. And if you want to be ready for that day, and if you would like to be married to Christ, then let’s stand now and sing about that as we sing In The Garden.

[Singing]

You know, as we’ve studied what it must have been like back in paradise, it’s easy to forget that this was real. And it’s sometimes possible that we might forget that the garden where God is going to take us is still real. It exists today. God still has that tree of life. Would you like to eat from that tree? Would you like to be able to walk and see Jesus face to face? And be married to Him and be able to live in paradise? These first two chapters that we saw there in the Bible are just a faint glimpse of what God has in store for those that trust and love Him. And if you’d like to say, “Lord, I want to be married to Christ. I want to be in paradise. I want to be in the garden.” Would you like to lift your hands before Him now and say, “Lord, prepare me. Cleanse me. That I might dwell in Your presence and be in a world where there’s total harmony and peace.” Let’s sing the last verse together.

[Singing]

Loving Lord, our hearts have thrilled as we have considered how beautiful it must have been back in the beginning, before the enemy got a foothold in our world and kidnapped this planet. And Lord, it helps us to look ahead in faith to that day when once again Eden will be restored. The meek will inherit the earth, and Jesus will walk in the garden with us. Lord, we want to be ready for that day. Lord, we want to be there in that kingdom. We pray that You will work in our lives however You need to, to fit us and prepare us. Teach us how to be one, first of all with Thee that we might be one with our spouses, and one with our friends and family. That we might have that love and that unity that will qualify us to be in harmony in that new world. Lord, I pray that You will help us to know that if we’re going to walk with You there then, we must first walk with You here now. And I pray that we can remember to live as a people who are in Your presence every moment. Bless us as we go from this place. I pray that we can keep this eternal perspective. We ask in Jesus’ name. Amen.