



How Will I Know?: Who[m] Should I Marry?

Genesis 1–2

November 12, 2023

DAILY DEVOTION

Find a rhythm in God's word this week! Follow this 5-day plan on your own or with your group!

<https://my.bible.com/reading-plans/29941>

INSPIRATION

Say farewell to the dark of night
I see the comin' of the sun
I feel like a little child, whose life has just begun
You came and breathed new life
Into this lonely heart of mine
—Brian McKnight, "Back At One"

ICE BREAKER

- If you're not familiar with the Brian McKnight song, here's a link to his performance: <https://youtu.be/rXPfovXw2tw?si=r3Qclcz3O5Dt1EIL>
 - When did you first realize you really loved someone other than a family member? You can choose a best friend relationship or a romantic relationship.
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DEEP DIVE

Reflection: The Person and Character of God
One, you're like a dream come true

Read Genesis 1:26–27.

Notice in this Bible passage that the mystery of the image of God includes both male and female. The word translated "God" in the original language is *Elohim* (EL oh heem), which is plural in form but in context is singular in meaning. The plural form reflects the completeness of God in his triune nature of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Without getting heavily theological, what



does God's triune nature suggest about his "personality"? (Hint: Think of "person" as any self-aware, rational being, not just a human being.)

How is this image of the triune God reflected in the human condition? Think in terms not only of the three persons of God's being, but also in terms of the statement in Genesis 1:27: "male and female he created them."

Connection: Made for Relationship
Two, just wanna be with you

Read Genesis 2:18.

As a triune God, the three persons of the trinity have some sense of emotional attachments in that relationship. We get a sense of this when Jesus speaks of his Heavenly Father, and especially toward the end of each gospel the week before his crucifixion. How do you see these divine emotional attachments reflected in yourself and your relationships as people created in the image of God?

The word "helper" here, referring eventually to Eve, is also used to describe God's relationship with his creation (see Psalms 70:5, 121:1–2; 146:5). How is that idea of helping reflected in the nature and character of God? In the next section, we'll see how it applies to us.

Identification: Created With a Unique Identity
Three, girl, it's plain to see that you're the only one for me.

Read Genesis 2:19–25.

God is all-powerful, omnipotent, and he used that power to create living beings and living vegetation on a planet sustained by its interaction with the elements in and physical properties of the universe. God granted us this power to create life as well, but not on our own. This is where the "male and female" part of the image of God comes in. How is that creative ability expressed in a couple's relationship? The obvious thought here is about sex (at least for the guys 😊), but we'll cover that in the next section), which is important, but also think more broadly about how you and your spouse "help" each other be like God in other types of creative endeavors. NOTE: The word "helper" here doesn't imply a hierarchical relationship, but a cooperative one.

Multiplication: Created to Reproduce Together
Four, repeat steps one through three.

Read Genesis 1:28.

One phrase some have used to describe the evolution of a couple's romantic and sexual relationship is "practice, procreation, pleasure." The lines between those three aspects of the relationship may be blurrier for some than others! [Note to Leaders: be sensitive to your group's dynamic with these questions. If members aren't comfortable talking about what follows in a



group setting, suggest the couples talk about them privately at home.] How important is that relationship in your own life if you're married? Song of Songs (or in some Bibles, Song of Solomon or Canticles) is a biblical book about the sexual and romantic relationship between, presumably, Solomon and his wife. Read Song of Songs chapter 4 and discuss, as appropriate in your setting, what you think the imagery might mean or imply. What commitments can you make to each other to improve this aspect of your relationship.

Maturation: Process of Becoming More Like Christ
Five, make you fall in love with me

How many of you have heard the phrase, "Never stop dating your spouse"? What are some ways you can keep your marriage fresh and exciting? How do you keep growing in your relationship with your spouse? NOTE: The church may be able to provide recommendations if you feel like you need professional help in certain aspects of your marriage.

Additional Study

If you have time during your Small Group or you want to study more about the message topic, read and consider the following passages:

- 1 Corinthians 7:1–16
- Song of Songs (aka Song of Solomon or Canticles depending on version)
- Hebrews 13:1–6
- "Helper": Exodus 18; Deuteronomy 33:24–29; Hosea 13

NEXT STEPS

1. How are you going to apply the lessons learned in the message this week?
2. What can you do to encourage someone in your group to take their next step?

PRAYER

1. After sharing prayer requests, pray for the person on your right. Pray for that person throughout the week.
2. Is there someone in your group that could use a prayerful reminder that God is present in their lives?

SERVE YOUR COMMUNITY

Establish a regular rhythm of serving together! Below are some service opportunities.



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- BENSON - Local Mission Partner is ABIDE. Contact Campus Pastor for more information.
 - MILLARD - Local Mission Partner is Heartland Hope. Contact Campus Pastor for more information.
 - FREMONT - Local Mission Partner is LifeHouse. Contact Campus Pastor for more information.
 - OMAHA - Local Mission Partner is Open Door Mission. Contact Lyndsey Deyoe for more information.
 - Or get to know your community! Seek out service opportunities in your area.