

# GENESIS

Why The Beginning Matters

Study 4

The Nature And Purpose of Man

Genesis 2:4-26

Part 1 of 3: Spiritual — Worship

## Verse 4

Genesis 2:4 (ESV)

These are the generations  
of the heavens and the earth when they were created,  
in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens.

**1) a) Objective question. Select the most appropriate. The word “generations” in verse 4 refers to:**

A. the different generations of heaven and earth, there are many versions and generations of heaven and earth

B. “generations” is *toledoth* in hebrew and is used in the beginning of story like a ‘chapter’, so the word in verse 2 refers to ‘the chapter of creation’.

## Verse 5-7

Genesis 2:5-7 (ESV)

When no bush of the field was yet in the land and no small plant of the field had yet sprung up—for the Lord God had not caused it to rain on the land, and there was no man to work the ground, and a mist was going up from the land and was watering the whole face of the ground—then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.

**2) a) Objective question. Select the most appropriate. Genesis 2:5-7 says that Adam was made before any plant had sprung up, whereas, in Genesis 1, plants are made on day 3, before men were made on day 6. Why is there this apparent contradiction?**

A. The author is confused

B. The bible is fake

C. Genesis 1 is a poem genre, Genesis 2 is a narrative genre, you cannot take a poem genre literally (word for word) and compare it as a historical fact

**b) Reflection question. Verse 7 says man (*Adam*) is made from dust (*Adama*) using the breath of life. According to the video lecture, what happens when God’s breath stops being supplied to humans?**

**Verse 8-15**

Genesis 2:8-15 (ESV)

And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground the Lord God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, and there it divided and became four rivers. The name of the first is the Pishon. It is the one that flowed around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. And the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there. The name of the second river is the Gihon. It is the one that flowed around the whole land of Cush. And the name of the third river is the Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it.

**3) a) Fill in the blanks. From the lecture slides, fill in the blanks on the definition of Adam’s work/opportunity to worship in verse 15.**

The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to	Work it	&	Keep it
Hebrew words	<i>Abad</i>		<i>Samar</i>
Definition	To serve		To exercise great care over/ to guard

**b) Objective question. Select the most appropriate. According to the video lecture, other than Adam, who also had to *Abad & Samar*?**

- A. Priests
- B. Gardeners
- C. Eve

### Verse 16-17

Genesis 2:16-17 (ESV)

And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

**4) Objective question. Select the most appropriate. Which one is FALSE about the connection between priests in the temple and Adam in the Garden of Eden?**

- A. Garden of Eden is the first temple.
- B. Temple is a place where one has access to God
- C. Gold or precious metals can be found in the Garden of Eden, the Tabernacle, the Temple as well as the future temple/heaven described in Revelations.
- D. Both Adam and male Priests are supposed to choose to worship and obey, but Eve doesn't have to.**
- E. It shows that all humans are spiritual beings, not just physical.

Part 2 of 3: Physical — Work

### Verse 15,19-20

Genesis 2:15, 19-20 (ESV)

The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it.

Now out of the ground the Lord God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field

**5) Objective question. Select the most appropriate. Which one is FALSE about work?**

- A. Genesis 2:1-2 parallels God's 7-day work week with humans' 7-day work week
- B. The ancient Babylonian myths and Greek myths believed that work is not a bad thing**
- C. Genesis 2:7-8 used words like 'planted' instead of magically snapping fingers to show that God thinks there is dignity in doing work
- D. Humans were tasked in Genesis 2:15 to start their work in the Garden of Eden, but their jurisdiction covers all of creation as described in Genesis 1:28
- E. When God asked Adam to garden, which included watering, weeding, & planting, it can be summarised as organizing, enhancing, and enriching the ground, which can be applied to cities or other jobs whether in arts & culture or science, technology, business, finance or academia.

### Quick References

“We are “gardening” the creation, drawing out the resources and powers of the material universe. We are supposed to do this to create a “city” that glorifies and reflects back to God his own richness and life and love and wisdom.” — Tim Keller

Ecclesiastes 3:22

So I saw that there is nothing better for a person than to enjoy their work, because that is their lot. For who can bring them to see what will happen after them?

Ecclesiastes 5:12

Sweet is the sleep of a laborer, whether he eats little or much, but the full stomach of the rich will not let him sleep

**6) Objective question. Select all that apply. According to the lecture, which of the following is a biblical view on work?**

- A. Work should be our identity, and we lose this identity when we retire
- B. Work is a necessary evil to earn a living
- C. We need to work as a sacrifice for others such as our children
- D. We should regard work as our calling and find fulfillment in it
- E. Paradise is a place where there is no work
- F. Work is necessary for our fulfillment as human beings. It was put in paradise (2:15) along with many other things to meet all our needs.
- G. Work is for the care and benefit of the world and others around us. The purpose of our work is to “care for” —to cultivate and protect —creation.
- H. Work is a duty.

### Quick References

“Work is permeated with purpose; it is intended to serve God, benefit humankind, and make nature subservient to the moral program of creation... Therefore we apply our whole being — heart and mind, as well as hand —to the daily job. As God’s fellow workers, we reflect God’s creative activity on Monday no less than on Sunday.” —Carl Henry

Part 3 of 3: Relational — Male and Female

**Verse 18-20**

Genesis 2:18-20 (ESV)

Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." Now out of the ground the Lord God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him.

**7) Objective question. Select the most appropriate. According to the lecture, which of the following about the creation of man and woman is FALSE?**

- A. Even though a relationship existed between Adam and God, God declared it was not good.
- B. The word 'helper' in verse 19 means *kakak* (maid)
- C. The word 'helper' (*Ezer* in Hebrew) is also used to describe God

**8) Discussion question. What evidence from the passage was given in the video lecture as a support for the complementary view between men and women?**

The word fit in verse 20 is *Kenegdo* in Hebrew which means: Fits as counterpart/ Opposite/ Complementary.

Complementary-Neither is complete without the other.

Equal-From side.

Male leadership- Naming.

**Verse 21-25**

Genesis 2:21-25 (ESV)

So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said,

"This at last is bone of my bones  
and flesh of my flesh;  
she shall be called Woman,  
because she was taken out of Man."

Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

**9) Objective question. Select all that apply. According to the lecture, which of the following is a non biblical view on marriage?**

- A. Marriage is a covenant.
- B. Marriage is a public act of social accountability.
- C. Marriage is a supreme act of love-exclusive and is lifelong.
- D. Marriage is based on feelings, if you don't like him or her already, just divorce.**
- E. Marriage is a binding socio-legal bond to help maintain a couple through the difficult times.

### **Takeaway for Genesis 2:4-26**

#### **THE NATURE OF MAN**

- Value and significance —Dignity, glory
- Purpose—Work-develop
- Moral Nature—Obedience
- Relational nature—Love (We cannot grow into the image of God without community)

### **Case Study**

#### **Case 1 – Relation between Marriage and Sex**

Wanda and James are a couple who have been living together for the past 2 years, are very much in love, attend the 3rd Baptist Church and are starting to feel as if they need to serve in the leadership. James is good at bible study and Wanda has a gift for teaching children. However, when the elders found out that they were cohabiting, they declined their offer to serve and suggested they get married. Obviously, Wanda and James were annoyed and answered “What is the use of getting that useless piece of paper? We are in love and that is the only thing that matters. We enjoy each other sexually with none of the conflict and issues of marriage we see in so many of our friends.”

**1) Discussion question. Are they right? What do you think? Looking at Genesis 2:24**

**“Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh”. Can you explain why marriage is important rather than just living together?**

### Model Answer

First, we see that the nature of marriage is a need to *leave*. This implies several things.

a) It means that new couples must make each other the first priority of their lives, not their parents or their former families.

The needs and concerns of your spouse, then, must take precedence over the needs and concerns of your parents and your former family.

b) It probably also implies that the new marriage is truly to me, a new family.

You should work out new patterns of life together that fit your particular context, gifts, and needs. You have not “left” your former family if you automatically insist that everything in your marriage be done like you saw it done in your parents’ marriage and family. In other words, there must be a psychological separation from the father and mother as one, and your spouse should have priority over your heart.

Second, we see that there must be covenantal unity. The old word “*cleaves*” brings out more of the original sense than the word “*united*” (NIV). In Deut.10:20, 11:22; Joshua 22:5; 23:8 we see that the word “*cleave*” means to unite with someone through a covenant, a binding promise, or oath. (cf. Deut 10:20 — “*Fear the Lord your God and serve him. Cleave to him and take your oaths in his name.*”) This is the ‘missing piece’ in contemporary thinking. In our individualistic society, the legality of marriage seems inconsequential — “just a piece of paper”. “What matters is that we love each other.” The Bible, however, insists that there be a public act of social accountability. A covenant is always something that was done through a ceremony before witnesses. In fact, Genesis 2:22-25 actually is the first marriage ceremony, in which “*God himself, like a father of the bride, leads the woman to the man*”

## **2) Discussion question. How is sex related to marriage and covenantal unity?**

### Model Answer

The husband and wife should be one flesh which is “*the personal union of man and woman at all levels of their lives, which is expressed [visibly] in and deepened through the sexual relationship*”. Most commentators agree that “one flesh” does not simply mean sex, but includes it. Therefore we come to see the purpose of sexuality. It is a mirror, a visible expression of, the complete unity that should be happening in the rest of the marriage.

Sex should then be viewed as a covenant renewal ceremony where the man leaves to cleave to his wife and they shall be one flesh.

Covenant renewal is enormously important in the Bible. Deuteronomy itself is a long covenant renewal of the covenant of Sinai. The Lord’s Supper is a regular covenant renewal

ceremony, renewing the covenant of baptism. Sex, then, is an acting out, physically, of the inseparable oneness in all other areas (economically, legally, personally, psychologically) created by the marriage covenant. Sex renews and revitalizes the marriage covenant. So marriage is a physical and personal union, as well.

**3) Discussion question. What are the practical implications to our marriages if sex is the physical renewal of our marriage covenant?**

Model Answer

Have sex often and don't deprive each other because sexuality is clearly good. God-created and a requisite part of marriage. One spouse may not simply deprive the other spouse of sex. *(Let the husband give to his wife what is owed her, and likewise the wife to the husband. For the wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. Likewise also the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. 1 Cor. 7:3-4).*

Second, if sexuality is linked here to covenant, and indeed is given for the purpose of symbolizing, deepening, and renewing a covenant commitment, it needs the context of a covenant commitment. You can't renew a covenant unless you've made one, and you can't be sure you love a person enough to have sex with them unless you've made one. Not only that, you shouldn't trust another person with your sexuality unless he or she has "left the father and mother" — i.e. made you his or her number one priority. It all fits together rather logically, but in our modern world, we have split them all apart.

Thirdly, we can have sex without the act being open to procreation. Some Christians, particularly in the Roman Catholic tradition, believe that this rules out any sex act which uses contraceptives and thus is not 'open to life'. But this does not seem to follow. It seems perfectly possible for a marriage to be open to parenthood without every sexual act being open to conception. Indeed, by far the more important focus in Genesis 1-2 is on the unitive aspect of the marriage relationship.

**4) Discussion question. What then is the problem of having sex outside of marriage?**

Model Answer

The problem of sexual intercourse outside of marriage is that those who indulge in it are trying to isolate one kind of union (the sexual) from all the other kinds of union which were intended to go along with it and make up the total union. The Christian attitude does not mean that there is anything wrong about sexual pleasure, any more than about the pleasure

of eating. It means that you must not isolate the pleasure and try to get it by itself, any more than you ought to try to get the pleasure of taste without swallowing and digesting, by chewing things and spitting them out again.”

– C.S.Lewis, Mere Christianity

Lewis’ illustration is very telling. The purpose of the sense (and pleasure) of taste is to get you to “commit” the food to digestion, to actually make it part of yourself. So sexual pleasure is to get you to commit yourself (and re-commit yourself) to a person, to attain deep unity with your spouse in every way. St. Paul assumes this same logic when he insists that even sex with a prostitute is to engage in an action that is meant to express an exclusive, permanent, ‘one flesh’ relationship (1 Cor.6:12ff.)

In summary, this is why Christians continue to maintain that sexual intercourse is only one proper context — heterosexual marriage.

### **Case 2 – Perspective of Marriage and Singleness**

Patrice is a single lady who had kept herself pure for marriage to the right Christian partner, but after years of praying and waiting, it is still a struggle for her and she is finding difficulty in coming to terms with her singleness. Bernice is married but rather unhappily as she finds her husband cannot really meet all her needs and there is often tension and quarreling and sometimes, she wishes she could get out and start all over again.

**5) Discussion question. Read Eph. 5:22-33 and 1 Cor .7:27-31. How do these passages put marriage into perspective for both these Christian women?**

### **Quick Verse Reference**

Ephesians 5:22-33

Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church— for we are members of his body. “For this reason, a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.” This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church. However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

1 Corinthians 7:27-31

Are you pledged to a woman? Do not seek to be released. Are you free from such a commitment? Do not look for a wife. But if you do marry, you have not sinned; and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. But those who marry will face many troubles in this life, and I want to spare you this.

What I mean, brothers and sisters, is that the time is short. From now on, those who have wives should live as if they do not; those who mourn, as if they did not; those who are happy, as if they were not; those who buy something, as if it were not theirs to keep; those who use the things of the world, as if not engrossed in them. For this world in its present form is passing away.

### **Case 3 – Singleness and Loneliness**

Lawrence is a faithful Christian who is single and struggles with loneliness. He will not admit this to his parents or friends because it just makes him feel needy, weak, and unfulfilled. Sometimes he feels guilty because he is supposed to find all his satisfaction and pleasure in life in loving and serving God and yet in the quieter moments of his life he really feels lonely. He feels that maybe his character is so flawed that no woman would want to marry him and this constantly wears him down.

**6) Discussion question. Look at Genesis 2:18-25 and see how this passage can help Lawrence in his dilemma.**

### Model Answer

We have seen by the very term “image” that human beings are made for relationships. Thus loneliness is a problem for any human being. God sees that there is something wrong — “not good” — about the level of Adam’s loneliness. What is extremely interesting here is the implication that Adam’s relationship with God is not, in itself, enough! We must realize that Adam is without sin, and therefore has an un-impeded relationship with God. Nothing blocks his fellowship with the Father. And yet, his aloneness is substantial. That means that Adam’s relationship needs and capacity are such that a relationship with God himself is not in itself sufficient to satisfy it.

Loneliness is not a sin nor a sign of immaturity and weakness. It is startling to see that even the love of God alone was not enough for Adam. This must be the design of God; he made us to deeply need other human beings on purpose. That means that we must not think of loneliness as the result of some imperfection in us. It is not the result of the fall (sin) but of creation. Of course, a particular case of loneliness today might be the result of foolishness or sin on our part. We may have lost significant relationships through selfishness or pride, etc. But loneliness per se is not a sin or flaw. In fact, loneliness may be a sign not of immaturity but of maturity. We should admit our need for friendship and human love.

### **Case 4 – Gender Roles in Marriage**

Ron is a new Christian who was recently taught in Bible study that marriage is heterosexual.

Ron struggles with believing that marriage is exclusively between a male and a female because he sees that same-sex marriage is just an expression of love between two human beings.

The Bible study taught that Eve was made as a “helper” fit for Adam. Ron sees that being of the same gender does not stop one man from being a helper to another man in marriage.

**7) Discussion question. How is a woman a “helper fit” for a man (Genesis 2:18) in a way that another man is not?**

### Model Answer

The solution to the ‘not-good’ of Adam’s aloneness is not just friendship in general. Rather, God says that he needs a “helper, suitable for him”. The English word “helper” is, unfortunately, a rather weak word. It connotes an ‘assistant’ — someone who is less capable and who simply runs errands and does menial tasks. However, the Hebrew word “ezer” is

used in the Bible almost every other time as describing God himself. All the citations illustrate this fact. As we use the word “help” for God, we see that it means “providing... what is lacking in the one who needs help” (Atkinson, p.68). A helper (in this Biblical concept) is someone who helps out of strength, yet in a supportive way. For example, what does it mean for a parent to help her child with his arithmetic homework? The word “help” implies two things: First, it means that the helper is more capable of something than the one being helped. You can help with arithmetic if (and only if!) you do multiplication better than your child. Second, however, it means to use your power in a way that enables and supports. You are not “helping” your child with his homework if you actually do the homework for him. You must not usurp his responsibility. You must use your power in such a way that enriches, supports, and ‘empowers’ him.

What are the implications for an understanding of gender? At first glance, this text seems to be teaching that women are by nature weaker and less capable than men. But now we see that the word does not convey that. Indeed, if anything, it conveys that women are stronger than men, at least in many areas. **It is not that she lacks things that he has, but that she has things he lacks.** Here, then, we have a vivid confirmation and elaboration of the hint in 1:27-28 — that the sexes are deeply complementary.

The text contradicts, then, both very traditional and very feminist views. On the one hand, it teaches that women are not inferior to men. If to be a “help” is to be inferior, then God is inferior to us, for he is our help!

In order to be a help to men, it means that they must be stronger. Yet, on the other hand, it teaches that there must be some ways that the genders are irreducibly different. There must be some things that women can do better than men. And, by way of implication, there must be some things that men are better at than women.

#### **8) Discussion question. Does that mean that a wife is inferior to her husband in marriage?**

##### Model Answer

Genesis 1:26 confirms the equal dignity of males and females. Both are said to be created in the image of God from the beginning. Both genders, not just males, are given “**dominion**” over the earth in Gen.1:28. [**God blessed them and said...fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over...**] It means that only as males and females together in full participation can we carry out our mandate to build civilization and culture. This is in contrast to the traditional view that a “woman’s place is in the home”.

Besides this explicit statement of equality, these verses also hint that the sexes are **complementary**. Immediately after making us male and female (v.27), God says: “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth...” (v.28). Here God gives us the ability of **procreativity** which is a reflection of his own life-giving creativity. **“Human procreativity is part of the outworking in our histories of the creative love of God in us as his image.”** (Atkinson, p.41). However, this wonderful gift of creating new human life is something we can only carry out together. Neither women alone nor men alone can produce what is necessary to create new human beings. It is only in a complementary union that we can do so.

Thus, males and females are equal in dignity but different in many traits and functions. We are equal but not interchangeable or equivalent. There is a tendency for the ‘liberal’ mindset to emphasize the first of these truths and a tendency of the ‘conservative’ mindset to emphasize the second of these truths. But they must be both believed together.

#### **Case 5 – Dignity in Work**

Ali is a cleaner who is working in a big corporate office building. He feels sad that his work is less meaningful and dignified compared to other higher-ups in the company, like the CEO. He thinks being a cleaner is just a means to make a living and nothing more.

**9) Discussion question. Is Ali’s view that manual labor is less dignified than other work correct? Why does all work have dignity? Hint: Consider how God “planted a garden” (2:8).**

#### Model Answer

Not only do we learn that work itself has great dignity, but we also learn that all kinds of work have dignity. If your worldview does not grasp the **goodness** of material creation, then ‘manual’ labor — labor which is more physical and which involves more contact with the ‘stuff’ of the natural world — will be seen as lower and beneath us. Greek philosophy was one source of this view of work, but the current era of global capitalism has given us new resources for despising work like farming or teaching and caring for children. ‘Information’ work now pays far better than manufacturing, etc. Also, though feminism has been rightly seeking to open up the public-work world for women, it has unfortunately demeaned child-rearing and domestic work because it is ‘non-paying’.

But God’s work in Genesis 1 and 2 is ‘manual’ labor since God **“planted a garden”** (2:8). Not only that, but in the creation of Adam he literally gets his hands into the **“dust of the ground”** (2:7). This idea is too familiar for us to really grasp how revolutionary it is.

“If God came into the world, what would he be like? For the ancient Greeks, he might have been a philosopher-king. The ancient Romans might have looked for a just and noble statesman. But how does the God of the Hebrews come into the world? As a carpenter — “  
– Phillip Jensen and Tony Payne, *Eden and Beyond: Genesis 1-11*

### **Case 6 – Work in Paradise**

Patrick wants to work very hard for 10 years with overtime and even on weekends so that he can retire early and not work for the rest of his life.

This is because he dreads work and thinks of it as a curse by God when sin entered the world. However, after attending a Gamma class, he learns that work was put by God in Eden, even before Adam and Eve sinned.

**10) Discussion question. If Patrick were to ask you why did God give Adam work in Eden, how would you answer him?**

**11) Discussion question. Is it possible for Patrick to feel fulfilled when he stops working altogether when he has accumulated enough money?**

### Model Answer

The fact that God put work in paradise is startling to us because we almost always think of work as drudgery or even a punishment. First, this shows us that work is as much a basic good need as food, beauty, rest, friendship, prayer, and sexuality. Work is not simply a “drain” but an important means of fulfilling our deepest needs and thus an important component of the ‘good life’.

Though that seems to be counter to common sense, we can see the truth of it as we reflect on the unhappy lives of people who through wealth or physical disability have been cut off from a life of work. Second, we learn that we are not simply to work for our own fulfillment, but also for the sake of the beauty and living things around us. God put us into the garden not simply to enjoy it but to “**work it and take care of it.**” (2:15). So we are also to work for the ‘common good’, not simply for our own good.

### **Case 7 – Naked and Unashamed in Marriage**

David and Alisson are both happily married for 10 years. As husband and wife, David is fully

comfortable when he takes his shirt off (naked) on a hot day in front of Alisson.

However, there are deep dark secrets of David's past that he does not want to reveal to Alisson because he feels ashamed about it. Over time, David feels tired and exhausted because he is putting up a façade in his marriage with Alisson. He cannot seem to be fully transparent or fully vulnerable with Alisson.

**12) Discussion question. Genesis 2:25 mentions that "they were both naked, the man and the wife, and were not ashamed". Was David truly "naked and unashamed" in his marriage with Alisson?**

**13) Discussion question. What does being "naked and unashamed" in a Christian marriage reflect?**

#### Model Answer

This is a wistful comment. Adam and Eve had a perfect relationship. Just as sex is supposed to reflect the unity of the relationship, so their complete nakedness reflected how their relationship was one of total transparency and total vulnerability to one another. They had nothing to hide — they were absolutely open to each other, and neither partner abused this privilege. Their relationship had **"no alloy of greed, distrust, or dishonor"** (Kidner, p.66), it had an **"openness and a unity, not masked by guilt, not disordered by lust, not hampered by shame."** (Atkinson, p.79). [Note: The lack of clothing does not only indicate a perfect relationship, but also a perfect physical environment. It was never too hot or too cold, or too prickly!]

Nearly all commentators believe that the author is getting us ready for the contrast of Genesis 3. Sin has disordered all relationships and also all sexuality. We must remember that heterosexual sexuality is also "broken" — none of us have the kind of relationship that Adam and Eve enjoyed before the fall. Heterosexuality, in this world, is marked by obsessiveness, fear, guilt, idolatry, addiction, and oppression. This balances for us the 'critique' of homosexuality that we saw the passage has given us. In 2:25 we see also a critique of heterosexuality. That does not mean that married heterosexuality is not God's will, but rather that we must recognize its brokenness and imperfection in this life and world. Even inside a Christian marriage, we must beware of obsessiveness, fear, guilt, idolatry, addiction, and oppression.