

Genesis 2:18-25
“Fulfilling Our Every Need”
19th Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 22B)

October 3, 2021
First Ev. Lutheran Church, Glencoe, Minn.
Pastor Peter Adelsen

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! Amen!

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

[Intro]

The Lord God said, **“It is not good that the man should be alone”** (Genesis 2:18a).

If there is anything that we have come to learn over the past couple years: it is not good to be alone. Mankind was never meant to be alone, secluded by oneself. When we are by ourselves, we are incomplete. We are incomplete, because the Triune God – *the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit* – created man and woman as social beings.

All throughout the Days of Creation, God calls everything good. God created light; God created the sky; God created land and plants and gathered waters into seas; God created the sun, moon, and stars to fill the heavens; God created birds to fill the skies and sea creatures to fill the seas; God created land animals and people to fill the land. God looks at everything He created and says, **“It is very good.”**

When all seems perfect, God says what we would think is the unexpected: **“It is not good.” “It is not good that the man should be alone.”**

But for Adam, he had no idea that he needed companionship. Adam had no idea he was incomplete. So, according to God’s definite plan, God built woman from man.

Ultimately, today’s Old Testament and Gospel lessons are about marriage. It’s about how all humanity was created by God as distinct from each other as male or female. It’s about how God ordained marriage as the one flesh union of man and wife. But there is much more! Our readings from God’s Word inform us of our need for relationships — *our need to be together* — our need of family, friends, and neighbors.

Today on this 19th Sunday after Pentecost, God assures us that He knows our every need. He assures us that He fulfills our every need.

[God Provides for Adam]

Now, even before Adam realizes that he has no companion, even before Adam realizes that he is lacking a helper, God says: ***“It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make a helper fit for him”*** (Genesis 2:18).

But before God builds a helper for Adam, God gave Adam a task: to name all livestock, to name all the birds of the heavens, and to name every beast of the field. By a single word, Adam was able to compel the lions, tigers, bears, apes, hawks, eagles, and every other animal to come to him to be named. But as Adam chose the names of each animal, he came to realize that each other animal had a mate. Every other creature had a companion.

Now, do not feel sorry for Adam. For he was innocent and righteous. So, he perfectly trusted God.

“But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him” (Genesis 2:20b).

You see, God wanted Adam to discover for himself that no other creature was like him. The Lord was using the process of naming the animals and birds as a teaching device to bring Adam’s loneliness home to him. Every other living creature had suitable mates, but Adam had none.

As Adam now longed for a mate, God caused a deep sleep to fall upon him. Now, just as God gave special care and attention to the creation of Adam, He did the same in the case of Eve. As Adam was asleep, he spared him the sight of having part of his own body removed. With great care God built Eve who was to be the companion Adam sorely needed, and who would become the matriarch of mankind.

When God fashioned Eve, He brought her to Adam. With this act, God instituted marriage and He gave His approval to the estate of holy matrimony.

At once, Adam recognized this great blessing that God has given him in this wife and proclaimed, ***“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”*** (Genesis 2:23).

With joy and satisfaction, and with praise to God, Adam found Eve to be just the companion he needed to complete his happiness. God fulfilled Adam's need for a companion.

From this point forward, ***“the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed”*** (Genesis 2:25).

You see, everything about Adam was an open book to Eve. Everything about Eve was an open book to Adam. There was no selfishness. There were no secrets. There was no shame. No uncleanness.

[Paradise Lost]

Tragically, this time of perfect righteousness would soon come to an end. The very next verse begins Genesis Chapter 3: The Fall. Paradise would soon come to an end.

Due to the Fall, we are ashamed. Due to the Fall, we have sinful thoughts and selfish desires. Due to the Fall, our pride leads us to think that we are our own god. Due to the Fall, our sinful nature causes us to question even our own identity. Our sinful nature even leads people to question how God created us.

Again, this is how God created us: ***“God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth’”*** (Genesis 1:27-28).

Everything that has been corrupted in the world was due to the Fall into sin. Animals no longer simply trust humans. Humans no longer trust humans. Marriages aren't all happily ever after. Friendships are broken.

How can this be? As humans, we are God's crowning glory. After all, we are all created in the image of God! How could everything become so corrupted? Well, that answer is sin.

Sin invades our marriages. Today, a sinful man and a sinful woman are joined together in marriage. Sin invades our families. Sin invades our friendships. Sin destroys reputations.

Due to sin, we look inward – *to ourselves, to our wants and our desires* – instead of looking outward as we ought to do in loving God and serving our neighbor.

[Paradise Restored]

Despite sin entering the world, by dividing us from God, and us from each other, God prepares for everything. Nothing comes to the surprise of God. He again fulfills our every need. He knows our need before we even know our need. He gives us our Daily Bread, our bodily needs: food, clothing, and shelter. But that is just a small fraction of God's love for us. From the offspring of Adam and Eve would come the Savior of the world — the Savior from sin, eternal death, and Satan. From Adam and Eve's offspring would come the incarnate Son of God, the Second Adam, Jesus Christ.

So, where there is forgiveness of sins that Jesus earned for all upon the cross, those sinful thoughts, those sinful desires, that do cross our minds, that do invade our marriages and come between husband and wife, that do invade our friendships and come between friends, knowing that Christ has died for every sin, and that Christ has forgiven them and takes them upon Himself is the way that all companions — husbands and wives, as well as friendships — can once again become together and be unashamed.

Through Christ's forgiveness won for us, we receive a sampling of what Adam and Eve had in the Garden before the Fall. Through Christ's forgiveness won for us, we learn how to forgive one another. And, by faith in Christ alone, Paradise is restored!

Christ has indeed defeated sin's power over all who cling to Him alone! With sin's power destroyed, we inherit eternal life and salvation!

The Triune God continues to fulfill our every need! He alone builds the house. He builds the house as He increases our faith through His Means of Grace. He reconciles us. He brings us back to Him. And not only that, He sustains us through His Means of Grace. He makes us complete!

Through hearing His Word and receiving Christ's very body and blood under the bread and the wine, He fulfills our every need. He brings us into relationship with Him and with each other. He brings us into fellowship with Him and with each

other. Our true identity as a child of God is strengthened. This is what happens at each Divine Service.

Here, at each Divine Service, we are at true fellowship with God – *the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit* – as He unites us to Him by forgiving our sins, by strengthening our faith in Christ, and by strengthening our love toward Him and to service for our neighbor.

Now, faith in Christ is not something that we can figure out on our own — *by our own logic and reason*. As Christ says, ***“Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it”*** (Mark 10:15). Faith in Christ is receiving what is given. Faith is pure trust, like infants instinctively trusting their parents for all their needs. Faith in Christ was given to us by God in our Baptism. This faith and identity in Christ is what God nourishes in us in His Means of Grace.

Today, God gives us a glimpse of His work on the sixth day of creation. God gives us a glimpse of Paradise. But even as we live on this side of the Fall, God the Father continues to fulfill our every need through His Son Jesus Christ! Amen.

The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus, our Lord. Amen.

✠ SOLI DEO GLORIA ✠