

By Design

At a camp last summer, my wife and I tried to control a bunch of junior high kids long enough to help them understand the significance of what we were telling them. We knew they needed to hear, and so we knew we'd have to make it relevant. We started with a craft they had been working on that week... "Bead Geckos".

Bead animals were "in" and everybody loved making them. The lady teaching the kids how to make them was a craft expert and had been making them for a long time (long before any of the junior highers had been).

So we asked them, "If you were going to put together a Bead Gecko, who would you trust more? Linda (the craft expert) or Ethan?"

Now, Ethan was a young lad of about... 7 years of age. He was a cute kid - the one everybody loved that week - but I'm not sure he really had the Bead Gecko concept down yet.

They all responded in unison, "Linda!"

We then proposed a bigger question to them.

“What if you suddenly had all the money you needed to build a house? You can have your own house, the way you want it, you just need to find someone to build it. Who would you choose? an expert contractor - the best in the business (remembering of course that money is no issue) or Jason?”

Jason was the dean of the week. He is the junior high leader of one of the bigger youth groups represented at the week, and loved by everyone. He is a fairly big, strong, young man... but as far as we knew, had little to NO experience in home building.

This one was a bit tougher for them! They liked Jason, but after they thought about it for a while, they all agreed, “The expert contractor.”

How about you? Who would you have build your house? The best designer in the world, or someone who happens to be available, or even cheaper?

Unfortunately, I think the answer might be the latter.

There is a supreme designer in the universe. God made all that was (Gen 1) and continues to hold all things together (Col 1:17). It was he who made us and knows us the best (Psalm 139). Why is it then that we turn to other “experts” for answers to life’s questions? Why do we turn to the second best (or worse) when we’re looking to build our “house”?

We are God's house (Heb 3:6, 1 Pet 2:5). We are being built to be what God wants us to be (Phil 1:6) by Him *and* by us! We can greatly determine the quality of the craftsmanship with which our house is constructed by who we listen to. One of the reasons we don't listen to God when building our house is that we don't *know* He cares! We don't think that He speaks to every issue in our lives, *but He does!*

In this case (this book) we are looking at how God wants us to build the relationship part of our house.

Does God have something to say about our relationships?

YOU BET!

Try Genesis chapter 1!!!

If you're going to look at the design of the Designer, you should look at his original plans. The first words in Genesis (the first words in the BIBLE!) are, "In the beginning God..." That speaks volumes right there! God was before the beginning! That is phenomenal and incomprehensible to our finite minds, but our intent is not a theological exposition of the book of Genesis, so we won't get into that here!

The point is, God started everything. He formed everything out of *nothing* (Gen 1:1). Not only is He *our* Designer, He's the Designer of all that we know!!! That gives us

even more reason to look to Him for life's instruction manual.

There are many theories as to how long it took Him to create everything, and we do have an opinion (based on Scripture, of course!) But, for the sake of this text, we will simply assume that God created our entire world in six solar days.¹

On the first day, God created the light and the darkness. On the second day, He created the sky. On the third day, He created dry ground and vegetation. Every day He created something new, something that had never been; and He called it "good".

At the end of each day, it says, "And God saw that it was good."² Everything He was making He labeled, "Good." What a statement to come from One who is *perfect* in every way!

The greatest of all of His creation-day statements comes in Genesis 1:31. God says after creating man and surveying all that He had just made, "It [is] very good." (Emphasis mine.)

God decided on the last day of Creation, that He was going to make something

¹ There are several reasons to believe this to be true. One reason that is given is the account of each "day". The Bible text has a morning and an evening, suggesting that it was an actual 24 hour period intended by the word, "day". For further reading consult any of the books on "Creation" you can find. It's quite an interesting subject - but again, not the focus here.

² Genesis 1:10, 12, 18, 21, 25.

phenomenal - like nothing He had made so far. He was going to make something “very good”. He says in Genesis chapter 1 verse 26, “Let us make *man* in our image.” This is what sets man above all the rest of creation. God made us in HIS image, in HIS likeness. It even says that He made us to rule over all the rest of His creation.³ God made us to be “the crown of His creation.” This is what sets us apart from animals. This is what makes this book necessary. If we were no different than the animals, we wouldn’t need to learn how to “relate” to each other, which implies respect for the other person. That respect is inherently *owed* to *everyone* because God made them in HIS image. Once we understand the significance of who we are - that affects how we treat other people. He called us “very good”.

There is a second account of the creation story. AND, again, there are many opinions on why there are two. It is the opinion of this author that the account of creation in Genesis 2 is a direct result of the previous paragraph. The more detailed account we have of *that* day in Genesis 2 accentuates the great importance of God making man superior.

The second chapter of Genesis starts out with⁴ everything having been created, except

³ Gen 1:26, 28

⁴ Actually beginning at 2:4.

man. This is where we learn that God made Adam (man) first before Eve (woman). In the chapter one account, it says he created them on the same day (which gives the appearance of simultaneous creation).

The text then relates the story of the garden God had planted for Adam to tend. He made everything in the garden for Adam, with one exception: the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.⁵ It is unknown to us why God chose to restrict Adam from eating the fruit of this tree, but it is certain that He did restrict him! He did tell Adam the consequences of disobedience; “You will surely die.”⁶ The significance of this command in our text will become more evident later.

The most fascinating verse, and the one that tells us a great deal about God’s design for us, is verse 18. It is here that we find God’s role as a “Need Meeter” which will be further developed in the next chapter.

“The LORD God said, ‘It is not good for man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.’”

A pretty simple statement that says a lot!

First, it is a negative that stands out the most here. God said, “It is NOT good”! In all of chapter one, all we hear Him saying is, “It

⁵ Gen 2:16-17

⁶ Gen 2:17

IS good!” What has changed? What can be so bad?

God says - “for the man to be alone.”

It is here that we see our need for companionship. God had already made all the animals for Adam to befriend. In fact, a couple verses later, God has all the animals come before Adam and in quite an interesting way, has Adam *name* all the animals. The reason, perhaps, for God to use *that* moment for Adam to name all the animals was to show him that there was yet no one like him - no one who completed him in all of creation. The end of verse 20 says, “But for Adam, no suitable helper was found.” God had not yet made Adam “complete”.

The account then continues with the forming of the first *woman* from a *part* of the first man!⁷ This is a great picture of the connection (intended by God) between man and woman.

It is in verse twenty-two that we get a clearer picture of God being a Need Meeter. After forming the woman - the Bible says, “and He *brought her to the man.*”⁸ It is in these seven words that we see God’s original design of the male/female relationship.

God made man. Man needed a “suitable helper”. God made that suitable

⁷ “He took one of the man’s ribs and... made a woman...” - Gen 2:21-22

⁸ Gen 2:24

helper, a woman. God *brought* the woman to the man. One man, one woman - the first "complete" man.

Now, I am the first one to say that God makes you complete before you are "hitched". In fact, that was the theme of our wedding. My wife and I had recently found great fulfillment in our completion in God alone when we found *even greater* completion *together* in God! God certainly is all that we need in life, but HE also saw that he made us to be "*completed*" by the opposite gender.

And what is the nature of God's originally designed male/female relationship? Well we've already stated that it was one woman for one man. God created Eve for Adam. He did not create Eve, Joan, Liz, Mary, Shirley, Lisa and Mabel! He had just the right person for Adam - knew exactly what he needed - and He provided. The next piece we find is in verse 24. This verse is the only verse repeated word for word in the Bible. Three times! By Jesus! Must be important. He made the first *marriage*! AND - what Jesus later says⁹ (and Scripture says elsewhere) is that marriage is for life! So the nature of the first man and woman relationship - designed by God - one man, one woman, with God, for life.

The design can be found in the beginning. God made everything, there was

⁹ Matthew 19:4-6

nothing before Him, including relationships! We believe there is significance also in the fact that the relationship between a guy and a girl is the *second ever* relationship. God made man first - the first relationship. Then He made woman - the second relationship. There is significance in that order. Our first relationship in life, the one we should have in order before anything else, is our relationship with God. The *second greatest* relationship we can have? The relationship with our husband or wife. We'll look at further applications of this later, but simply by looking at the chronological order of creation, it is the second most important relationship.

God's design for us is that we would find companionship with *ONE* other person for life - a person of the opposite gender. He saw that as man's only need in the garden. It is the opinion of this author that the "very good" from Genesis 1:31 is *after* God met Adam's need for companionship.

He is a loving God - who made us and knows us best. He knows what we need - He even knows the desires of our hearts (Psalm 37:4). He is the ultimate Need Meeter.