



Key Verses: Genesis 2:24, Ephesians 5:25, Genesis 2:18

Takeaway Thought: The pursuit begins the day you say “I Do.”

Everybody wants to find “the one.” It’s no secret in this culture that the pursuit of romance will find its way into your life eventually. It all begins when you realize that you’re alone.

Maybe it was that romantic comedy that came on while you were walking through a room and you stopped for a second to watch an on-screen romance begin. Or maybe it was when your friends started dating and then spammed your Instagram feed with pictures of holding hands.

At some point in our lives, we all come to this unsettling conclusion: I’m alone, and maybe there’s someone out there for me. Which brings up this question: Is there anything wrong with feeling that way? Should you feel wrong for wanting to have someone in your life?

Let’s go back to the beginning of mankind, in Genesis before sin entered the picture. In Genesis 2:18, God creates Adam, and God makes this really profound statement about Adam’s well-being:

Genesis 2:18 — Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." (ESV)

So God is already acknowledging that this creation is incomplete. Man is alone, and it’s not good! I want you to really understand the impact behind this. So far, all of creation is perfect. Everything that God has done, He’s reflected back and said, “This is good.” Yet this is the one point in all of creation where God pauses and announces, “This is not good.”

I don’t think the Creator of the universe forgot to add an ingredient to the creation cake. I think God is announcing to the reader, “I created something beautiful, and I want you to see its purpose.” This is a spiritual stop sign in the creation story, where God is making us pause to see something that we tend to glaze over. It is not good that we’re alone. God purposely wired this ache in our hearts that makes us wonder if there is something more. It’s

good for us to realize that it's not good to be alone. Why? Because God wants you to desire what He's created for you.

God doesn't really announce this to Adam, though. He doesn't give Adam a mission to go find "the one." Instead, He gives Adam this task of observing creation and naming the animals. God brings every animal to Adam, and Adam names them one at a time. Just imagine this: God the Father marches a lion and its lioness up to Adam, then a peacock and its mate, and so on and so on. Then Adam starts to feel this ache in his heart...

Genesis 2:20 — 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.

Adam has come to fully understand that there is something that's missing. He's alone and it's not good. He feels the feeling that you and me have experienced countless times. It's that feeling that keeps you up at night wondering if you'll ever meet the right person. It's that hunger that makes you scan the faces of strangers searching for that person who might make you feel complete. And then God decides to unveil the finale of all creation. He makes the woman ... God puts Adam in a deep sleep, takes out his rib, and He crafts this woman. When God walks Eve in front of Adam, this is his response:

Genesis 2:23 — "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."

Can you see the excitement in Adam's exclamation? She is what was missing! This is what I've been wanting all along.

I don't know about you, but I get jealous when I read this story of Adam and Eve. Adam's wife was created just for him. Me and you, however, have to go on this weird search to try to find the one. Adam fell asleep, and God created the perfect spouse out of his rib. We go on a series of awkward dates and roll the dice on love. I am so jealous of Adam's situation.

If you've felt like something is missing in your life, then you know about the pursuit. The pursuit is this mad dash, where we chase after love. It's this ongoing quest where we seek after the one who we feel will complete us. I think we can all recognize the pursuit in some shape or form. Unfortunately,

our culture has recognized it as well, and the media has made a fortune on it.

Magazines tell women how to look more attractive to make their dream guys fall in love with them. Guys are fed pornographic lies that women are objects to be used. Romantic movies let us know that if we could just find the right “one,” then everything will be alright, and we’ll live happily ever after. Shows like *The Bachelor* and *Bachelorette* have turned the pursuit into a game, where a house full of potentials compete for your love. And when one person finally wins that person’s attention, they are forced to ignore the fact that they just shared that person’s heart with 20 other people in the course of a couple of months.

We can feel the pursuit’s full effects when we actually start dating someone. It’s like our brains turn to mush, and slowly we start changing little pieces of who we are to make that person like us more. We try new things, we get out of our comfort zone, and we enter into this euphoric sense of love as we chase after acceptance and belonging.

But then something happens in the pursuit. The honeymoon stage dies and we start seeing more flaws in the person we’re dating. The cute little things they do start to annoy you, you become more tired than energized, and you start to notice that this person doesn’t seem to complete you anymore. The chase becomes a staggering walk and the pursuit ends. And then you find a new person to pursue, and you lather-rinse-repeat the whole process. Instead of pursuing the “one” we end up pursuing the many, in hopes that we’ll eventually find the “one.” It’s no wonder that so many married couples have a long list of people they dated before they found the one.

But what if what we’re doing isn’t the pursuit? What if we’re pursuing a lie? What if we were never meant to experience this idea of “the pursuit” so soon? Check out this relationship update that God gives on Adam and Eve:

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. ESV

God makes this game-changing announcement about how relationships are supposed to work. A man will leave his father and mother and he will hold fast to his wife. This phrase “hold fast to his wife” comes from this Hebrew word **dabaq**, which means to chase after something. God is telling

us that when a man becomes married, He starts to chase after his wife with the intention of catching her.

God is telling us that ***the pursuit doesn't happen until the day you say "I do."*** The chasing of your soulmate begins the day you are married. Can you see how radically different this is than how we've made it? We think the pursuit begins in the dating process, but God says it happens in our marriage.

To some of you, this probably sounds really backwards. It's like God is asking you to never kiss anyone until you're married, or you can start dating when you're 30. But what God is doing is setting you up for the most successful marriage possible filled with joy. Everyday marriages end as partners come to the conclusion that the pursuit has ended. They remember back when they were dating and how happy they were, yet in their marriage, the pursuit has vanished. They've stopped chasing each other, and stopped making each other feel special, so they've come to the conclusion that maybe they never found the "one." So they divorce and try starting the pursuit over.

But God has a different plan in mind for you. If the pursuit begins the day you say "I do," that entails a marriage spent on chasing each other and fighting for one another. If we can't understand what it truly means to pursue each other, we will never understand what it means to be married. The pursuit is the marriage when you think of it on God's terms.

It's this infinite adventure of trying to sacrifice yourself for your partner. It's this promise that you make to your spouse, no matter what happens, I will never stop loving you and chasing after you. When you say, "I do," God is firing the starting line gun, and that's when the chase begins. And here is what happens when you pursue someone on God's terms:

Genesis 2:25 — *And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.*

They were both naked, and they were not ashamed. They could see everything about each other, and it didn't stop them from chasing each other. Shame had no place in this relationship. They could stand side-by-side and love one another. Isn't that what we all want? Someone that can see us for who we are, and it doesn't stop them from loving us?

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