

# Sweetheart Sunday

## *Splitting the Adam*

February 14, 2010

Dearly beloved, we're gathered here today in the presence of God to examine our relationships and celebrate the covenant of marriage.

Let's face it, some of you are happily married, some *unhappily* married, some have *never* been married, some are divorced, some are widowed, and some are living together *outside* of marriage. I can't possibly address each of you in your specific situations. But I would like to refresh our picture of God's ideal of marriage as a great source of intimacy, joy, and a reflection of His passionate love for us.



When Genesis sums up the creation account, it says:

Male and female created he **them**; and blessed **them**, and called **their** name Adam ... - *Genesis 5:2 KJV*

"Adam" is Hebrew for *man* (we still say man/mankind when referring to both sexes). The name "Eve" was given *after* she had given birth (*Gen 3:20*). Until then, she was known by yet another name:

And Adam said, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called **Woman**, because she was taken out of Man." - *Genesis 2:23 KJV*

What's that mean: "she was taken out of Man"? Genesis 2:22, says she was made from Adam's rib; but, why? And when man was created, God *breathed* into his nostrils the breath of life (*Gen 2:7*), but *not* into the woman's ... why?!

One theory says that God called *their* name Adam because they were created (and breathed into) as one complete being, made in God's image, containing the essence of both male and female. And when "they" longed for another like them, God could only fulfill their desire by dividing them into two equal but unique halves.

According to this theory, God literally split the Adam! And that's why, when He brought them together and they saw that they'd been *divided*, their instincts told them to *multiply*! Even the physical act of lovemaking symbolizes the reality of two equal but unique souls desiring to unite as one.

For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh. - *Genesis 2:24 NIV*

The “becoming one flesh” is easy – and fun! It’s the becoming one spirit that takes a lifetime of commitment and effort.

One of my favorite wedding cards says: “Marriage lets you annoy one special person for the rest of your life”

It’s our uniqueness as male and female that *inevitably* brings so much tension and frustration into the mix.



I’m sure you’ve heard that each of us has a God-shaped space in our soul that only *He* can fill. But, are you aware that: We have a *human-shaped* space *He refuses* to fill. Whether it’s met through our friends, family, or a spouse, God uses *human* intimacy to fulfill *and* develop us; because, intimacy brings conflict, and conflict brings potential for growth.



Was marriage created to make us happy or holy? If we look to marriage to make us happy, we’ll be disappointed. Even healthy marriages at times make us miserable. Happiness is not its *highest* purpose. Our highest purpose is to glorify God and to be conformed to the image of Christ. Only *this* will bring *true* joy.

And God uses relationships (*especially* marriage) to spur this process. If we look to marriage to make us *holy* – we’ll be happy! But, if we reverse them, we’ll end up with *neither*. So don’t say, “My spouse is irritating me!” Instead say, “My spouse is sanctifying me!”

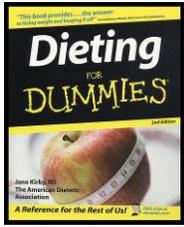
As males and females we have been created *equal*, but our brains are wired distinctly *different*.

This guy has an inoperable brain tumor, but he finds out that there’s this brand new procedure to transplant a human brain. The doctor says it’ll cost \$100,000 for a *male* brain, but only a couple thousand for a *female* brain. The guy asks why female brains are worth so much less than males; and the doctor says, “Well ... they’re *used*.”

It’s not that we don’t use ours; we just use them *differently*.

Wives, have you ever found a great book on love and marriage, read it, saw how it could help your relationship, and then got frustrated trying to get your husband to even open it? Maybe you slyly left it where he’d see it, but he ignored it. Or, maybe you stuck it in his hands and he openly resisted it.

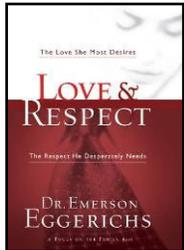
And you thought, “Why are you *against* being healthy and happy?!”



Well, let me ask you this: how would *you* feel if your husband bought *you* a book like “Dieting for Dummies”? What if he just “slyly” left it on your night stand? Or, what if he stuck it in your hands and told you why you needed to read it. Would you be ... *resistant*?

Why are you against being healthy and happy?!

We’re wired different!



In the book “Love & Respect”, Dr. Emerson Eggerichs, makes a strong case that women speak the language of *love*, whereas men speak the language of *respect*. He sees a secret that’s been “hidden” in plain sight in the New Testament for 2000 years:

... each man must **love** his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must **respect** her husband. – *Ephesians 5:33b NLT*

You would see the diet book as making three *obvious* statements: He doesn’t approve of me as I am. He doesn’t accept me as I am. And He won’t *love* me unless I look like a Dallas Cowboys Cheerleader! To him, the *marriage* book likely makes three *obvious* statements: She doesn’t approve of me as I am. She doesn’t accept me as I am. And She won’t *respect* me unless I act like Dr. Phil!

To her, the diet book symbolizes a lack of love. To him, the marriage book symbolizes a lack of respect. This doesn’t mean that as men and women we can’t work on our relational health and our physical health together. It just means we need to be sensitive to each other’s “wiring”.

The key to motivating your spouse is meeting their *deepest* need.



Men, she needs love like she needs air to breathe. And when you stand on her “air hose”, she will ... *react*. Typically, it’ll be verbal, critical, and hot (*and not the good kind*). Thus the old saying: “When mama ain’t happy, nooobody’s happy!”

- Without love, she reacts without respect.

She’s trying to communicate, “It doesn’t feel like you *cherish* me.” But he can be “slow to decode” and hear only her contempt. And this steps on *his* “air hose” and *he* reacts.

- Without respect, he reacts without love.

Typically, it’ll be nonverbal, detached, and cold. His silence and stonewalling over the marriage book was an attempt to communicate, “I don’t feel like you *admire* me.” But she can be “slow to decode” and miss the message altogether, and only “hear” that he doesn’t care about the marriage or *her*.



And back and forth this can go; each reacting more and more to the deprivation of what they need most - he becoming ever more unloving, and she becoming ever more disrespectful. There's only one thing we can do to crack this communication "code" and break the viscous cycle: He must give unconditional love. And she must give unconditional respect.

Don't confuse these with unconditional *acceptance*. We must learn to love the worth and respect the dignity of the person, even while confronting sinful attitudes and offensive behaviors.

We guys are supposed to take our cue (to love unconditionally in response to disrespect) from the example of Jesus.

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy ... In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. - *Ephesians 5:25-28 NIV*

When a wife feels loved and cherished like *that*, she's designed to naturally respond with appreciation, respect, and devotion. Christ didn't love the church *because* it was holy, but in order to *make* it holy!

And you gals are to take *your* cue (to respect unconditionally in the face of unloving ways) from the church.

Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church ... - *Ephesians 5:22-23a NIV*

This isn't calling a wife to worship her husband, but to respect his role as your appointed servant-leader. When a husband feels respected and appreciated like *that*, he's designed to naturally respond with tenderness, love, and devotion.

It's all in the wiring! Unconditional love; unconditional respect; this has been both the challenge *and* the reward ever since God split the Adam! And this kind of devotion to one another will only come as a result of personally embracing the Lord's intimate presence, passionate love, and sufficient grace in our private lives.

Our relationship with God as our Heavenly Father changes when we get married, then He also becomes our Father-in-law!

So, treat your wife, His daughter, the way you'd want your own daughter to be cherished and treasured by *her* husband ... even when she's less than pleasant.

And, treat your husband, His son, the way you'd want your own son to be regarded and esteemed by *his* wife ... even when he's less than honorable.