

## The First Human Relationship

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by Steve Fontenot

In the beginning, God made man. But God saw that man was “*alone*” and it was “*not good*” (Gen. 2:18). So He created from man a “*helper*” to relieve the loneliness — the woman. He brought her to the man and they entered into the *first* human relationship.

“*For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife.*” (Gen. 2:24, ESV). When daughters marry with their parents’ approval, they are “*given*” in marriage (Deut. 7:3). The man “*leaves*” and the woman is “*given.*” Although the parent-child relationship remains and should be cherished, the “*leaving*” and the “*giving*” make the husband-wife relationship *first* by God’s plan and decree.

This “*leaving*” and “*giving*” needs to be more than a ceremony at the wedding. *Parents* need to understand and prepare *themselves* for this change in relationship. When parents cling to their children, interfere in their relationships, and pout because they are no longer “*first*” in their little darling’s eyes, they are *wrong*. Instead of “*running home to momma and daddy*” to parents standing by with welcoming arms, God’s plan is that the husband and wife be committed to one another and to this relationship that has now become *first*.

The couple getting married needs to understand this change in relationship. When husbands and wives make their parents’ wishes and happiness their first priority, they are *wrong*. When parents’ wishes and happiness still dominate, it robs the husband-wife relationship of the closeness and devotion that will promote security, love, and warmth *between them*.

A man wants and needs to know he is “*first*” in his wife’s heart, and a woman likewise needs the assurance that she is the priority of her man’s love. If both parties are not ready for this change in allegiance when they marry, *they are not ready for marriage*. Men and women who are not demonstrating and cultivating this priority to their mates, need to *repent*.

While children are expected to honor and care for their parents (Ex. 20:12; Matt. 15:4-6), honor and care should *first* be shown to their *mates*; and the evidence ought to be such that a mate is confident he or she is *first*. We joke about “*daddy’s girls*” and “*momma’s boys,*” but the *first* “*girl*” in man’s heart ought to be his wife; and the *first* guy in a woman’s devotion ought to be her husband.

Likewise — while parents are expected to provide for their children’s material, emotional, and spiritual needs—the *first* relationship they entered into and the first one God made, was the husband-wife relationship. Devotion to children should not be allowed to rob either the man or the woman of the love, devotion, tenderness, and care that was pledged when they married and entered this sacred relationship. It should remain “*first.*”

Men must work to provide for their families. Women are “*workers at home*” (Titus 2:5) and may also work outside the home to help provide. But secular jobs and careers are not *first* to a godly man, nor will secular work be the *first* priority of a godly, informed woman. After people have been married for a while, they often tend to assume the love that was enjoyed in their early years will always be there and allow themselves to neglect one another for careers and “*being a good employee.*”

Just as a relationship with an employer may deteriorate if attention and devotion to job declines, so the relationship with a mate will deteriorate when it is no longer given *first* priority with the daily devotion and attention that demands.

Note that this article is about the first *human* relationship. Commitment to the *first* relationship of *all*, and the responsibility that demands, will provide the solid foundation for a long, loving, and satisfying relationship between a husband and wife: “*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment*” (Matt. 22:37, 38).

Yes, it may be difficult to juggle everything, but that doesn’t change the basic responsibility we have to put our mates *first*. If we can’t because we are “*too busy,*” then *we are too busy!* Let’s get back to putting “*first*” things *first*.

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