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The Helper (Birds Do It, Bees Do It . . .)

Genesis 2:15-25

October 21, 2007

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When we lived in Northern California, we were in a small group with our good friends the Harrises. They had a son named Conner, who was about five. One night at small group, Micki Ann told us about their family's recent trip to the ballet in San Francisco. Of course, it was a high society affair, and a bit of a stretch for Conner.

Conner sat next to his grandpa, who was hard of hearing. The music was playing when a male ballet dancer came dancing onto the stage wearing the customary tights that male dancers wear when dancing ballet.

Conner watched a while and then leaned over to his grandpa and whispered, "Where's his penis?" His grandpa said, "What?" So Conner said it louder. "Where's his penis?" His grandpa said, "What?"

"Where's his penis?" Conner said it louder because the music was getting louder; actually it was reaching a crescendo. Finally, his grandpa said again, "What?" And Conner yelled, but just as Conner yelled, the music stopped. So everyone at the San Francisco Ballet heard five-year-old Conner scream, "Where's his penis?"

Well, I just want to say that I feel like a five-year-old Conner at the ballet. You see, the Bible is just packed with sexuality, yet mentioning sexuality in church makes me feel like Conner at the ballet. And I know I'm not the only one. Many of you are nervous right now.

Some of us grew up in an age of sexual repression; some of us grew up in an age of sexual indulgence or idolatry. Actually, repression and indulgence may both be the same idolatry.

In the early 60's, we were taught that sex is a dirty, filthy thing, so you should save it for the person you marry. But in the late 60's, things had changed, and people talked about sex like they talked about scratching an itch.

So repression and denial leads to indulgence and broken hearts, which lead to more repression and denial

. . . which people usually think is the job of the church.

So when I talk about sexuality in sermons, I get letters. And often those letters come from persons whose strategy is repression, but their lifestyle is indulgence.

For them, church is a means of repressing desires. So when the preacher gets up and says *that word* (that Conner Harris mentioned at the ballet), it's a problem. And the word fills them with fear, pain, and shame.

For some, there has been so much fear, pain, and shame, they can no longer even

hope for pleasure.

And now here's our problem: Already in Genesis 1, in the very first commandment to humanity, God said, "Be fruitful and multiply." You see, that is extremely difficult to do without the thing Conner Harris mentioned at the ballet.

Now in Genesis 2, God is going to get into the details, not because sex is *bad*, but because sex is profoundly *good*.

If I gave my son a new BMW and then said, "Jon, don't take the Beemer four-wheeling, and never put Cheez Whiz in the crank case," I wouldn't be saying that because the BMW is *bad* but because the BMW is *good*—really good.

So God says, "Conner, ballet dancers wear very tight underwear. And Conner, your thing you mentioned at the ballet is *good*—really good. I made it. And so I'll help you know what to do with it. Trust me. You're only five."

Well, we are all like five-year-old Conner Harris. Whether we're 95 or five, we're all sexual beings. And we're only beginning to learn what to do with that fact.

Now I'm needing to preach on this stuff over the next few weeks, so I'm asking you to grow up a bit. I'm tired of the church abdicating sexuality to MTV. Our strategy is not repression or mere indulgence. Our strategy is surrender, sanctification, and redemption. So I'd like us to grow up a bit.

- If you're in Junior High, you are permitted to snicker and giggle, because the topic is rather funny . . . and that's part of the wonder of it!
- If you've been abused, promiscuous, or divorced,
- If you're struggling with homosexuality, pornography, or frigidity,
- If you're a prostitute or a nun vowed to celibacy,
- If you're *human*, I know it's uncomfortable, frustrating, and scary.

But I'm asking you to grow up into Christ and to trust Him with your deepest desires and fears. I'm asking you to let me preach to your heart.

Let's pray:

Father, in the name of Jesus and under the authority of His blood, and by the power of your Spirit, I claim your grace, your covering, your righteousness, your blood over your Bride. Lord, you know how the Evil One has lied to us about our nature and your purposes, specifically our sexuality, because he hates sexuality. He hates your Gospel, he hates the communion it speaks of, he hates the fact that you made us male and female. Lord God, would you redeem us? Redeem our minds; redeem our hearts. Where people are hiding in shame, would you draw them out into your light? Where we are hopeless, would you fill us with hope? Where we've decided we're no longer going to risk love, Lord God, would you give us courage to receive your love? In Jesus' name I pray, amen.

Genesis 2:15-18:

The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

We're going to talk a whole lot more about this tree of knowledge, but for now I would just point out that in this story there are two ways of knowing:

1. Adam and Eve will know stuff through this tree and die.
2. Adam will know Eve, and she'll give birth to life.

Two ways of knowing: one feels like a board room; the other feels like a bedroom. But now Adam is alone.

Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone

This is the first thing in all of Scripture that God declares "not good": loneliness. Adam is alone. If you study Scripture, you know that "alone" is a great definition of hell, that is: Hades, Sheol, the Abyss.

Now, remember that Adam is being made in the image of God, who is a Trinity of loving persons. So if Adam is "alone," he certainly is not yet made in the image of God. And although he's in Paradise, he really *isn't* in Paradise. Or I should say Adam is alone in Paradise. Have you ever been alone in Paradise?

Several years ago, I went on a mission trip to Brazil with Andrew Trawick. At the end of the trip, Ken Flurry our missionary friend took us to the beach. I don't think I've ever seen a more gorgeous beach. The jungle came down to the sand; couples were everywhere frolicking in the waves. I held some tropical drink in my hand, and I thought, "This is Paradise."

Then I looked over at Andrew lying in the sand in his swim trunks. I looked the other way and saw middle-aged Ken with his big, old, hairy belly. Then I remembered that I hadn't seen my wife for two weeks. I thought, "This isn't Paradise! This is hell!"

Alone in Paradise.

I've been to the Caribbean about four times on romantic vacations with my wife Susan. It's the closest thing to Paradise that I can think of. Yet without Susan, the Caribbean would just be a sandbox.

You know, when I was Conner's age, if you took me to the Caribbean, I would have liked it because I liked sandboxes when I was five (in Colorado or in the Caribbean).

If Susan was with me, we might have even played together in the sand. But at five years old, we'd have no concept of Paradise. We'd be in Paradise but not at all *in* Paradise. At that young age, we weren't yet capable of experiencing our Paradise.

Adam is alone in Paradise. Alone. Or is He?

Actually, he's in the very presence of God. God is love. Adam is alone in the presence of love.

So Adam's aloneness isn't objective; it's subjective. I mean, Adam's right there with Love Himself, but he can't see love, receive love, or commune with love.

Scripture says, "In God we live and move and have our being." If that's true, are any of us alone? No. We swim in love. But yes!—we feel lonely.

So is God not there? Or are we blind, deaf, and numb . . . like some thick skin is wrapped around our senses, ears, eyes, and heart?

Old Adam is surrounded by heaven, yet he is alone. Jesus the New Adam said, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." So why do I feel alone? "The kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Lots of people want to go to heaven. Moslem fundamentalists picture heaven as a harem full of virgins; Christians tend to picture it as mansions and all-you-can-eat buffets.

My friend Andrew is an evangelist. After preaching the message, he used to ask the crowd, "How many of you want to go to heaven?" Recently he shared with me that he changed his invitation because of something my dad asked him long ago. He said, "Andrew, why would people want to go to heaven?" What is heaven? Mansions, buffets, and virgins? Or God?

Now Andrew asks, "How many of you would like to know God and have a relationship with God?"

Don't worry. I'm sure that heaven is at least mansions, buffets, and girls in bikinis, but that's the sandbox. Paradise is communion with God.

I worry about us rich, American, consumer Christians. Do we even *want* God? Do we even have the capacity to want God, that is, to want the good? For God is the good.

And that brings up a fascinating question: How can Adam choose the good if he doesn't know the good? And how is Adam to know the good?

Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him."

"Fit for him."

1. It's interesting to note that in Hebrew the word "helper" is a masculine word.
2. It's also interesting to note that Adam is like a he/she. Some of you women thought this story wasn't about you, but it is, for the woman has not been taken from the man at this point. Woman is in man. And get this: We are all in Adam. In Scripture, "all in Adam" die as "all in Christ" live. "All in Adam" are destined to be a bride. And that's female, not male.
3. It's also interesting to note that this word "helper" (*ayzer*) almost always refers to God in Scripture. It occurs twenty-five times in the Psalms, and each time we're reminded, "God is our Helper." (Not Egypt, chariots, or horses. God is our helper.) Now God will help Adam find his helper.

He has Adam name the animals. It's weird, but it's called taxonomy, and we're still doing it. In fact, there are millions of species yet to be named. We could preach a great sermon on science at this point, but suffice it to say, science is a command of God and has a purpose for God.

People turn it into idolatry, "worshipping the creature rather than the creator," but idolatry is nothing new, and idolatry is sin. Even so, it serves God's purpose. For God is still asking the question, "Adam, who's your helper? Where's your helper, Adam?"

Now, if you are like me, you want to yell, "Come on, God, just tell Adam! Tell me! Tell us all where our help is!" I mean, why doesn't God just write it in the sky? Well, there are different ways of knowing and different things to be known.

Our text is Genesis 2:18-24, and here's one more fascinating tidbit: Archeologists have recently discovered that there was a soundtrack which the ancient rabbis would play on a stereo in the temple as they recited these verses. They believe the same soundtrack was playing in the Garden long ago.

Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." Now out of the ground the LORD God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. 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.

[Music playing]

Those nightingales in the dark do it
Larks crazy for a lark do it
Let's do it, let's fall in love
Canaries caged in the house do it
When they're out of season, grouse do it
Let's do it, let's fall in love.

The most sedate barnyard fowl do it
When the chanticleer cries.
High-browed old owls do it, and they're meant to be wise.
Penguins in flocks on the rocks do it
Cuckoos in the privacy of clocks do it.
Let's do it, let's fall in love.
Those chimpanzees in the zoos do it.
Some courageous kangaroos do it.
Let's do it, let's fall in love.

I know giraffes on the sly do it.
Heavy hippopotami do it,

Let's do it, let's fall in love.
Old sloths who hang down from twigs do it.
Though the effort is great.
Sweet guinea pigs do it, buy a couple and wait.
The world admits bears in pits do it.
Even Pekineses in the Ritz do it.
Let's do it, let's fall in love.

But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man.

Actually, the part about the ancient rabbis playing a soundtrack . . . I made that up. The ancient rabbis didn't have soundtracks.

However, they did have the Talmud, their ancient commentary on Scripture. In it, the animals are pictured walking by in pairs. And Adam comments, "Everything has its partner, but I have no partner."

Meanwhile, God keeps asking, "Adam, where's your partner? Who's your helper?"

Have you ever wondered why God made sex? Not just in humans, but throughout His creation and long before the Fall?

You know, it didn't have to be this way. God could have made it so you'd split in half like amebas do. He could have made it so you went to a class, filled out a form or something, and a baby dropped from the sky. He could have made it that you grow a bud on your back, you sneeze, it pops off, and hey!—it's Junior. But He didn't. He made sex.

Why such a messy, vulnerable, passionate, and painful procedure? He made a very sexual creation. He must have had a reason.

Years ago, Aram was preaching in our old building on Valentine's Day. It was a great word on love, sex, and marriage. Aram didn't know it at the time, but right behind him, through the window, as Aram was saying it, two deer were doing it! And everyone saw! Such a lofty word made flesh for all to see. What does it mean?

God brings the animals to Adam and asks a question. Do you hear the question?

Adam, they're each male or female, each has a helper in their likeness through whom life is created: life through naked, vulnerable communion.

Adam, who's your helper? In whose likeness are you, Adam? Who will create through you, Adam? To whom will you cleave, Adam?

Adam—mankind, who is your helper? Who do you choose? Adam, can you see me, hear me, know me? Who's your helper?

"But Adam did not find a helper suitable for him."

So God begins the great lesson. He puts Adam to sleep and takes a rib (actually the Hebrew is “side”). He takes from Adam’s side (not the heart, not the feet, but the side) and fashions the side into Eve. Adam had been one body, and now Adam is two: male and female. God brings the woman to the man.

Then the man said, “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.” Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

So at last Adam has found his helper . . . or not.

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden’?”

You know, she didn’t turn out to be that great of a helper. So did Adam find his helper? How could Eve be his helper? She’s part of the one that needed help.

I mean, Adam said, “Bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh,” that is, “she is me and me is she.” So the helper Adam got was more of himself; the helper Eve got was more of herself.

Adam is a lousy helper for Eve, and Eve is a lousy helper for Adam. Adam is Eve, and Eve is Adam, and we’re just not good at helping ourselves or saving ourselves.

Yet God is still asking the question, “Who’s your helper?” But now He’s using our very bodies as a sign pointing to the answer.

“Mankind Adam, look at yourself. Every urge, every desire . . . don’t you hate being alone? Are you ready to know and be known by the Good—your helper?”

Throughout the Old Testament, God tells Israel, “I am your helper” and “I am your husband.” They have the hardest time hearing. It’s like there’s a skin over their ears . . . or hearts.

In the New Testament, we meet Jesus. The name Jesus means “God is salvation” or “God is help.” Jesus is the Word of God in human flesh. God said, “I will make a helper fit for mankind.” He did. They wrapped Him in swaddling clothes and laid Him in a manger.

Jesus is the helper (the *parakletos*),
and we are His Bride.

“Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.

(Ephesians 5:31-32)

You see, God is still asking Adam, and He’s asking you, “Who’s your helper?” Sexuality was created to help us ask that question and know the answer.

So as we begin our little series on sex, marriage, and family from Genesis 2, I just want to make a few things clear:

1. **We are all sexual beings.** Every cell in your body is male or female. Your sexuality may seem like a hope or perhaps a memory. It may feel dead and buried, or like it's burning out of control. You may be young or old; you may be male or female, but we're all sexual beings, and our sexuality is the creation of God to help us know our helper.
2. **We are all frustrated sexual beings,** because we're still waiting for our helper. So human sexuality is the sign but not the substance. We're all sexually frustrated at some level. That's by design, for God is nurturing our hope for Himself. So if you think your husband or your wife is your helper, you'll destroy him or her, because you're looking for God. G. K. Chesterton said, "The man who knocks on the brothel door is looking for God."
3. **We are all uncomfortable, frustrated, sexual beings.** Uncomfortable because we've all looked in the wrong places for our Helper. So now we hide from the question; we cover our need in shame.

At the end of Genesis 2, the man and woman are naked and unashamed. By the end of Genesis 3, they're sowing fig leaf underwear and hiding in the trees.

- The snake has tempted them to hide their need. They feel it as shame. They hide their need and thus hide from the question, "Who's my helper?"
- The snake tempted them to help themselves (complete themselves).
- The snake tempted them to know *about* the good rather than *know* the good, who is God.
- It's always more comfortable to know about the good rather than know the good, who is your helper.

Now, if you think I'm just making up all this stuff about God caring about our sexuality, let me remind you of what happens in Genesis 17. God promises to bless a man named Abraham, and his seed. He will *know God*. Then God says to Abraham, "This is my covenant. Every male among you shall be circumcised."

And old Abraham says, "Excuse me?"

"You shall cut off the foreskin of your (that thing Conner mentioned at the ballet). It shall be a sign of the covenant between me and you."

Thus Abraham thought for a moment and then spoke unto the Lord saying:

Um . . . couldn't we just wear T-shirts? Couldn't we just memorize a list and take an oath? Couldn't we just build you some buildings and start a

foundation? Maybe we could start a school and get some knowledge of good and evil or something. Anything but that! That's sensitive! That's private! That's uncomfortable.

For four thousand years, we've been saying the same thing. "God, I'd like to know *about you*, but I'm terrified to *know* you or let you know me—let you touch me . . . there."

Well, we'll see that our genitals are connected to our hearts. That's why God cares so much about what you do with them. In Scripture, God goes on to say, "Circumcise your ears and circumcise your heart. Cut the skin from your heart and let me see your heart."

Scripture says our hearts are circumcised in Christ at His cross.

At the cross, the heart of God is exposed,
and we are exposed.

To know God, to know the good and no longer be alone, you must bring your heart to the cross . . . and not just wear T-shirts, not just memorize a list, not mumble some words or obey some law. You must bring your uncomfortable, frustrated, naked heart. That is:

Bring your hopes, fears, dreams, and heartaches.
Bring the fruit of all your broken relationships.

You see, in all these things He's been helping you ask the question, "Who's my helper?"

I wonder at times why life has to hurt so much and why relationships are so painful and why God just doesn't show up and give us the answer.

I think it's because **He is the Answer**. And every day He's helping me ask the question.

So every day I'm coming to know that:

- My helper is not some animal or created thing.
- My helper is not my wife or any person.
- My helper is not my self.
- My helper is not my knowledge.
- My helper is not my will.

My helper is God. He wrapped Himself in flesh and made Himself a helper fit just for me. And even now His Spirit is the presence of the Helper in this room.

On the night He was betrayed, He took bread and broke it, cut it, saying, "This is my body given to you. Take and eat." And in the same manner, He took the cup saying, "This is the blood of the covenant. Take and drink."

In the morning, He was crucified naked before His Bride.

- Can you see? He is the Good.
- Can you see? You have been alone.
- Can you see? He wants all your heart, mind, soul, and strength.
- Can you see? He wants you to *want* Him.

He wants you to join Him in Paradise. He has literally done everything, from creation to the cross, to romance you back to His side.

Listen:

This is a sanctuary. You are bound to Him in an eternal covenant. He is inviting you to commune with Him and receive eternal seed. Stop hiding. He longs to plant eternal seed in the broken soil of your heart.

[Communion]

[Prayer]

And so, Lord Jesus, twenty-five years ago I was really frustrated and uncomfortable and kind of scared. I'd been dating this girl for five years, and I knew that in few days, on May 28, we would form a covenant. And I just thought I'd *die* waiting to commune with her. God, I *longed* for the night when I would celebrate the sacrament of our covenant, and I would commune with her. God, I didn't care whether we went to the Caribbean; I didn't care whether we were in the back of a car. I just wanted to be *with* her.

Lord Jesus, would you help us to believe that that's the way you feel about us? That you long for us? In fact, you feel that way so much more about us than I ever felt about Susan while waiting to be married! That's just a small sign of the passions of the Living God. God, to think that you feel that way about us . . . and we are so apathetic toward you!

So, Lord, I pray for Lookout Mountain Community Church. I ask you through the power of your Spirit to create that longing in us for you, because you are good, and you want us to want you.

So right now I pray, Lord, that if there were any evil associations or pictures in people as I preached, placed there by the Evil One, that you'd just erase those and fill us with the very best pictures, that you would restore our sexuality in the way that that you desire. God, right now I pray that we would surrender to you.

Even if you've done this before, do it every day. It's what it means to be a Christian. Say:

Lord Jesus, you can come in. I belong to you.

He enters us now by the power of His Spirit. It's called the *parakletos*. And in the life to come, whatever that looks like, Scripture says we are His temple. We are actually His Body. We become one body with Him.

So do it right now. Just say these words:

Lord Jesus, I give myself to you. Enter me. Make me your home. I want to long to be with you the way you long to be with me. Amen.

Now in Jesus' name, He will do what you asked Him to do. Believe the Gospel.

"Love Song"
by Third Day

I've heard a tale that a man would climb a mountain
Just to be with the one he loves.
How many times has he broken that promise?
It has never been done
Well I never climbed the highest mountain,
but I walked the hill of Calvary

And just to be with you I'll do anything,
there's no price I would not pay, no
Just to be with you I will give everything.
I would give my life away.

I've heard it said that a man would swim an ocean
Just to be with the one he loves.
But all of those dreams are an empty emotion
It can never be done.
Well I never swam the deepest ocean
But I walked upon the raging sea

And just to be with you I'll do anything,

there's no price I would not pay, no
and just to be with you I would give everything.
I would give my life away.

And I know that you don't understand the fullness of my love
How I died upon the Cross for your sin
And I know that you don't realize how much that I give you
And I promise I would do it all again

Just to be with you I've done everything
There's no price I did not pay, no
Just to be with you I gave everything
Yes I gave my life away.

Relevant Texts and Quotations (from bulletin)

The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.” Then the Lord God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a **helper** fit for him.”

~ *Genesis 2:15-18*

Hear, O Lord, and be merciful to me! O Lord, be my **helper**!

~ *Psalms 30:10*

God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved; God will **help** her when morning dawns. The nations rage, the kingdoms totter; he utters his voice, the earth melts.

~ *Psalms 46:5-6*

Behold, God is my **helper**; the Lord is the upholder of my life.

~ *Psalms 54:4*

Woe to those who go down to Egypt for **help** and rely on horses, who trust in chariots because they are many and in horsemen because they are very strong, but do not look to the Holy One of Israel or consult the Lord!... Fear not, for you will not be ashamed; be not confounded, for you will not be disgraced; for you will forget the shame of your youth, and the reproach of your widowhood you will remember no more. For your Maker is your husband, the Lord of hosts is his name; and the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer, the God of the whole earth he is called. For the Lord has called you like a wife deserted and grieved in spirit, like a wife of youth when she is cast off, says your God. For a brief moment I deserted you, but with great compassion I will gather you. . . . and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you.

~ *Isaiah 31:1, 54:4-7, 62:5b*

The one who has the bride is the bridegroom. The friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly at the bridegroom's voice. Therefore this joy of mine is now complete.

~ *John the Baptist, John 3:29*

Then the Lord God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a **helper** fit for him.” So out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. 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.

~ *Genesis 2:18-20*

Despite God's identification of man's need, there is a delay in his provision: contrast the instantaneous fulfillment of the divine word in chap. 1. This hold-up creates suspense. It allows us to feel man's loneliness. All the animals are brought before him, and we see him looking at each one in the hope it would make a suitable companion for man. Ber. Rab. 17:5 pictures the animals passing by in pairs and man commenting, “Everything has its partner but I have no partner.”

~ *Gordon Wenham,*

Word Biblical Commentary, Genesis

But for Adam there was not found a **helper** fit for him. So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, “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.” Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

~ *Genesis 2:20b-25*

The most fundamental insight that primitive man had about sexuality is one that we frequently overlook or forget: that it is a raw, primal, basic power over which we have only very limited control. Primitive man invariably viewed sexuality as sacred.

~ *Andrew Greeley*

This spiritual intercourse with God is the ecstasy hinted at in all earthly intercourse, physical or spiritual. It is the ultimate reason why sexual passion is so strong, so different from other passions, so heavy with suggestions of profound meanings that just elude our grasp.

~ Peter Kreeft,

Everything You Wanted to Know About Heaven

For if worship is the deepest available form of communion with God (and especially that particular act of worship known as Communion), then surely sex is the deepest communion that is possible between human beings, and as such is something absolutely essential (in more than a biological way) to our survival. . . .

~ Mike Mason, *The Mystery of Marriage*

Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.

~ *Ephesians 5:31-32*

When the little bluebird
Who has never said a word
Starts to sing Spring
When the little bluebell
At the bottom of the dell
Starts to ring Ding dong Ding dong
When the little blue clerk
In the middle of his work
Starts a tune to the moon up above
It is nature that is all
Simply telling us to fall in love

And that's why birds do it, bees do it
Even educated fleas do it
Let's do it, let's fall in love. . . .

Those nightingales in the dark do it
Larks crazy for a lark do it
Let's do it, let's fall in love

Canaries caged in the house do it
When they're out of season, grouse do it
Let's do it, let's fall in love

The most sedate barnyard fowl do it
When the chanticleer cries.
High-browed old owls do it,
And they're meant to be wise.

Penguins in flocks on the rocks do it
Cuckoos in the privacy of clocks do it.
Let's do it, let's fall in love.

Those chimpanzees in the zoos do it.
Some courageous kangaroos do it.
Let's do it, let's fall in love.

I know giraffes on the sly do it.
Heavy hippopotami do it,
Let's do it, let's fall in love.

Old sloths who hang down from twigs do it.
Though the effort is great.
Sweet guinea pigs do it,
Buy a couple and wait.

The world admits bears in pits do it.
Even Pekineses in the Ritz do it.
Let's do it, let's fall in love.

~Cole Porter

And God said to Abraham, "As for you, you shall keep my covenant, you and your offspring after you throughout their

generations. This is my covenant, which you shall keep, between me and you and your offspring after you: Every male among you shall be circumcised. You shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and you.”

~ *Genesis 17:9-11*

Behold, to the Lord your God belong heaven and the heaven of heavens, the earth with all that is in it. Yet the Lord set his heart in love on your fathers and chose their offspring after them, you above all peoples, as you are this day. Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no longer stubborn. . . . And the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.

~ *Deuteronomy 10:14-16, 30:6*

Circumcise yourselves to the Lord; remove the foreskin of your hearts, O men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem; lest my wrath go forth like fire, and burn with none to quench it, because of the evil of your deeds. . . . To whom shall I speak and give warning, that they may hear? Behold, their ears are uncircumcised, they cannot listen; behold, the word of the Lord is to them an object of scorn; they take no pleasure in it.

~ *Jeremiah 4:4, 6:10*

Thus says the Lord God: No foreigner, uncircumcised in heart and flesh, of all the foreigners who are among the people of Israel, shall enter my sanctuary.

~ *Ezekiel 44:9*

For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God.

~ *Romans 2:28-29*

Look out for the dogs, look out for the evildoers, look out for those who mutilate the flesh. For we are the real circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh. . . .

~ *Philippians 3:2-3*

For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority. In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead. And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.

~ *Colossians 2:9-14*

If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another **Helper**, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.

~ *John 14:15-17*

True, fear deceptively offers to **help** us. It too offers to keep us on the right track. Yet the one who strives in fear never becomes God's friend. Fear is a deceitful aid. It can sour your delight, make life arduous and miserable, make you old and decrepit; but it is never able to **help** you toward the Good. The Good will not tolerate any alien **helper**.

Those who live in fear may indeed desire heaven but not for itself. . . . Only one thing can **help** us to will the Good in truth: the Good itself.

~ *Soren Kierkegaard*

He actually becomes a creature, and thus makes the cause of the creature His own in the most concrete reality and not just in appearance, really taking its place. This is how God Himself comes on the scene.

But it is really God who does so in His free grace. And therefore it is He as the first and true and indeed the only man, as the **Helper** who really takes the creature's place, lifting from it all its need and labour and problem and placing them upon Himself, as the Warrior who assumes the full responsibility of a substitute and suffers and does everything on its behalf. In the light of this merciful action of God, the arrogant delusion of the creature that it is called and qualified to **help** and save and maintain itself in its infinite peril is shown to be evil as well as foolish and unnecessary. . . . In the light of the merciful action of God, only God Himself, and trust in Him and perseverance in His covenant, can be called good, even for the creature too. Hence the creature has only one good to choose, namely, that it has God for it, and that it is thus opposed by nothingness as God Himself is opposed, the God who can so easily master it.

~ *Karl Barth*

So we can confidently say, “The Lord is my **helper**; I will not fear; what can man do to me?”

~ *Hebrews 13:6*

So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs [Hebrew: side] and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib [Hebrew: side] that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man.

~ *Genesis 2:21-22*

But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water. . . . When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you." And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit."

~ *John 19:33-34, 20:20-22*

The Helper
(Birds Do It, Bees Do It . . .)

Genesis 2:15-25

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