

Readings for Sunday October 6th 2024 – Readings Genesis 2, 18 – 24 and Mark 10, 2 – 16:-

Human Relationships with Creation and Each Other:- Here, at the beginning of the record in the Bible there is the account of the creation of all living things.

To put these readings into context read:-

Genesis chapter 2, Verses 15 – 17:- The man was placed by the Lord God in the Garden of Eden “*to till it and keep it*”. Along with his authority, man was given a responsibility. For food he was given the fruit of any tree with the exception of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Eating the fruit of this tree meant the loss of the intimate spiritual life given to man at creation. With this loss death and separation from the Lord God was inevitable. Note at that point of creation there would be no evil present because “*God saw everything that he had made, and behold it was very good.*” Chapter 1, verse 31.

Verses 18 – 20:- Notice that man begins to assume his responsibility for the creation. He was alone and needing companionship. In the creation of the animals the Lord God brings them to the man “*to see what he would call them;*”. In naming the animals man was in fact taking responsibility for them as we do at present when we name our pets.

Verses 21 – 24:- Because man was endued with the breath of the Lord God and a “spiritual being”, the animals could not be fit helpers to work alongside him. In creating a helper, the Lord God formed her out of man himself. An intimate part of man’s being became his partner in life. They were part of one another and belonged together. “*Therefore a man leaves his father and mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh*”.

Mark chapter 10, verses 2 – 12:- Here the Lord Jesus uses the Genesis text as an answer to the question put by some Pharisees. Jesus says that divorce came to be allowed by Moses because of “*your hardness of heart*” - (verse 5). At the beginning of creation there was no sin, no “*hardness of heart*”. Sin led to the breakdown of communication and affection between human beings. Divorce was, and is, an alternative to living together in bitterness. It does not remove the fact that separation of the “*one flesh*” is against the original intention of the Lord God, and so Jesus said remarriage is adultery. In 1 Corinthians chapter 6, verses 15 – 20 the Apostle Paul takes a very literal view of ‘one flesh’. It is the sexual coming together of a man and woman that unites them in ‘oneness’. This is in accordance with the teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ in His comments on adultery here in the Gospel of Mark.

Verses 13 – 16:- The natural outcome of the ‘one flesh union’ is the birth of children. In this Gospel (and in the Gospel of Matthew chapter 19) the account of the Lord Jesus blessing the children follows naturally from the explanation of marriage. The disciples are again reminded that rank and power do not count when seeking the Kingdom of Heaven – see Mark chapter 9 verses 33 – 37. The openness of minds of children to seeking and learning is in contrast to the closed minds of many adults, the Pharisees at the time of the Lord Jesus being a good example!

***Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness,
And all these things shall be yours as well.***

Matthew chapter 6, verse 33