

Wedding Sermon: General

By Robert J. Morgan

Leaving, Cleaving, and Weaving

Dear friends, we are together in this sweet and sacred hour to witness the uniting of *Groom's First Name* and *Bride's First Name* in the enduring bonds of Christian marriage. This happiest and holiest of human relationships was first celebrated in the quiet gardens of Eden, in the springtime of world history. God saw that it was not good for man to live alone, and so He created woman and gave her to him to be his companion, his wife. In Genesis 2:24 the Lord said: "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh."

This first description of marriage gives us three words for the establishing of a home. The first is leaving. "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother." When a man and a woman establish a new home, there is a sense in which they leave their old ones. They don't leave in terms of love or communication. But they leave in terms of authority and priority. The most important human relationship for you now is the one you're establishing today, in this place and before these witnesses. The primary relationship in your life shifts from the parental to the spousal, from mother and father to husband and wife.

The second idea in Genesis 2:24 is cleaving. "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined, be united, shall cleave, to his wife." The word "cleave" means to stick like glue, to be devoted, committed to each other. Every marriage goes through difficult periods and challenging times. It's easy for love to grow lukewarm, then cold. Disillusionment can descend on a home like a Smokey Mountain fog. That's why you have to remember that divorce is never an option, that the vows you are taking before God are holy, binding, and permanent. You are today deciding to stick to one another like glue, through thick and thin, through good and bad.

We know not what the encircling years will bring, nor how life and labor will unfold before you. But whatever the passing seasons hold, you must always remember to keep your poise, guard your purity, find your place, and fulfill your purpose. "Do all things without complaining and disputing, that you may become blameless and harmless, children

of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world" (Phil. 2:14–15).

But that leads to a third concept in Genesis 2:24: weaving. The verse goes on to say that the man and the woman who leave their parents, cleave to one another, should then become as one. They should weave their lives together. Marriage requires developing common interests, common hobbies, good communication, time together, frequent dating, and growing love. A wedding takes twenty minutes to perform. A friendship takes a lifetime to perfect.

In your marriage, ". . . walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:1–3). And in your marriage, ". . . putting away lying, 'Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor,' for we are members of one another. 'Be angry, and do not sin': do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil. Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers" (Eph. 4:25–27, 29).

In your marriage, "Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you" (Eph. 4:31, 32).

In three words, a godly marriage requires leaving, cleaving, and weaving.

If you then, *Groom's First Name* and *Bride's First Name*, having freely and deliberately and prayerfully chosen each other as partners for life, will you please unite your right hands and repeat after me:

In taking the woman I hold by the right hand to be my wedded wife, before God and these witnesses I promise to love her, to honor her in this relationship; and leaving all others to be in all things a true and faithful husband as long as we both shall live.

In taking the man I hold by the right hand to be my wedded husband, before God and these witnesses I promise to love him, to honor him in this relationship; and leaving all others to be in all things a true and faithful wife as long as we both shall live.

Then you are each given to the other for richer or poorer, for better or worse, in sickness and in health by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.