

## Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Sermon Road Map

Pastor Roger W. Huffman

Genesis 2:18-25

October 8, 2017

### The LORD God designed people for family and community.

The Lord used our dog Fintan to teach me about companionship & God's design.

- Fintan's first family saw he didn't do well left alone for hours
- Fintan thrived on companionship in our home - until Karen was employed
- Fintan is part Shih tzu - companion dogs - by God's design/character
- That's how we ended up with Nikko, a Shih tzu mix, companion to Fintan

*It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.*

- The LORD God reveals his design for humans. We're social creatures.

### The LORD God designed people for family and community.

❖ Human character by design - for companionship/community - not alone

- *The man* - clear reference to Adam, but used word for *mankind/humans*
- People need people - natural desire for friends - human interaction
- *Lone wolf* - not natural, something is wrong, danger

❖ Foundation of community is the home. The foundation of the home is marriage: 1 man & 1 woman.

- *For what is a city but a group of homes? ... If the homes are badly governed, how can an entire county be well governed?* # 4248 in *What Luther Says*, p. 1322
- While a home is a union with social, economic, and efficiency of labor implications, it is **so much more**. Companionship, love, growth...
- God's natural design for adding new humans to community.

❖ Role of community even before the Fall

- Companionship: conversation, sharing experiences, cooperate, help
  - ♦ Caretakers of God's creation - Food: growing, gathering, preparing
- Parenting - caretakers of children:
  - ♦ Children thrive with: care, interaction, tender touch, love
    - Critical for physical, neurological, emotional, and social development
    - Learn to move, imitate, speak, communicate, explore, learn to learn
  - ♦ Home to raise boys and girls - model man/woman - relationships
- Creativity, discovery, inventions - music, instruments, metal working

❖ Role of community after the Fall

- Protection: from hostile animals and people.
- Raising food in world under the curse.
- Care for the weak and vulnerable in a world of disease and aging.

❖ Sin attacks the family and community

- Love - selfless care - is critical for healthy families and communities
- Sin is *loveless* - at best: offering self-interest love
- Sin destroys communities - conflict, fear, loss of life, insecurity, chaos
  - ♦ Broken families - mistrust, fear, self-centered lives.
  - ♦ Some withdraw. Some seek the companionship with faithful pets
    - Adam saw good in animals, but not his own kind. Something missing

❖ While good communities can exist based on human wisdom

- History is full of pagan communities that thrived, then died.
  - ♦ Communities built on self-interest and fear - can't be sustained
- Nothing builds families & communities like love born of repentance/faith

### The LORD God designed people for family and community.

❖ The LORD God designed the Church Family and Community

- Sin destroyed our relationship with God and with other people.
- Christ's forgiveness reconciles us to God and gives birth to a New Self:
  - ♦ We love God - learn trust & respect - delight to belong to his family
  - ♦ Knowing God's love we learn to love our neighbors (community)
- Families and other communities blossom under Christ-like love
  - ♦ Abounds in forgiveness - eager to rescue from sin's influence
  - ♦ Help each other grow - encourage, build up in Christ, rescue from sin
  - ♦ Practice correction in an environment of trust knowing it's out of love
- God's family grows to share God's mission - work together on it
  - ♦ We see how much more we can do together than alone
  - ♦ We see we deprive community (home, church, neighborhood) when we don't contribute to the common good.
    - Conditions in Puerto Rico remind us of the blessings we have in community. Without community - left alone with nothing.

### The LORD God designed people for family and community.

Keep on discovering our God-given roles and blessings in community, repenting of self-centered lives, being enriched by treasuring our life in God's family and nurturing the relationships God has given us. Start in our church family, where his word will equip us to love in our homes and neighborhoods.