

THE EFFECT OF THE FALL IN MARRIAGE

Richie Kaa, prepared for the Presbytery fellowship word, 05 June 2022

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Introduction

In the word focus today, I would like to continue in our focus on *The Freedom of Choice*.¹ The particular area that I want to focus on, and where my thoughts will be based, is found in pages 16 to 20. This will be a point of follow-up in your own meditation and devotional time.

I want to encourage us, today, to not get caught 'playing defence' for the entirety of our days. The Lord wants us to 'kick some goals'! Hopefully, that statement will make more sense as we move through.

The fallen culture of our marriage covenant prevents our joining the *agape* meal

This morning, I want to continue from where I was sharing last week. You will remember that in the parable of the great supper, a certain man offered the excuse of having 'married a wife', as the reason that he could not attend that supper. Luk 14:20.

We made the point that this is the *same* excuse that Adam offered the Father when He came looking for them. Adam said, 'This woman You gave me – she fed me, and I ate what she fed me.' 'This woman who You gave me – she offered me food and I ate what she offered me.' Gen 3:12.

Then, by implication, Adam refused his daily meal with Yahweh at the tree of life, in preference for a different conversation and a different food source, which Eve was now feeding to him.

The point which we made last week was that *getting married* is not the issue. It can sound as though the man in the parable of the great supper said, 'Because I married, I can't attend.' We want to make the point that getting married is not the issue.

The issue that prevents us from joining the *agape* meal is the *fallen culture of our marriage covenant*.

That is the key point that we want to focus on today.

Choosing the Lord's image for marriage – His provision of a portion of His Spirit

Let me begin today with the question: What *image of marriage* have you chosen?

I want you to register that *you have made a choice*.

The Lord is coming, by His word, to invite us to choose what *He* is offering to us. He is ministering this to us in His word.

He is inviting us to *choose the image that He has* for marriage.

I will say it another way: What is the *model* of your marriage? How does it work? Will you muse on this for a moment? What is the 'equation' that keeps your marriage working?

I do not want anyone to be saying, 'Well, we love each other, and it works.' That is a lovely, sweet answer, isn't it – 'We just love each other'?

But I tell you now that, unless you are receiving a portion of the Spirit each day at the tree of life, your marriage does *not* work as God designed it to work.

That is an important point for us to register, isn't it?

And, if you are not receiving *His provision*, you will be making huge *compensations* to keep the peace and to 'stay afloat'.

This is because a Christian marriage cannot work unless a couple receive the *specific capacity of grace* each day, which they receive *in fellowship with Yahweh at the tree of life*. That is just the bottom-line statement that the Lord is very kindly ministering now to us.

I suspect that there are many who have testimony over the years of knowing this reality. However, the Lord is *refreshing us* with something in this whole area of understanding 'a portion of His Spirit'.

This is not only for a few. This is for *every household* – every son of God who is desiring to live and walk in the manner that the Lord is calling us forward to.

1. Victor Hall with Peter Hay and David Baker, 2022, *The Freedom of Choice*.

Learning the lessons that Adam and Eve learned

So, the focus of our meditation this morning is to consider why Eve chose what she chose; and why Adam chose what he chose.

They are, for us, a case study – Adam and Eve are a case study for *every Christian marriage*.

‘A case study’ means that we can look and understand and learn from the choices that they made. And we can allow the *lessons that they learned* to become lessons that *we also* can learn from.

Isn't it a privilege that the Scriptures have been written of these faithful ones, recorded through the course of history – and that we can read of these things?

How would you go if your life was recorded in the Scriptures, and all of history got to read about you? How would you go with that? It would be a bit difficult, wouldn't it! There are certain things I'd like to 'white out' and keep to myself!

But here it is for us – they are walking and living, and come alive to us in the Scriptures. And we can learn from these things.

Through devotional fellowship, we 'eat' the word and it becomes our culture

Now, if you think that you are the exception to the rule in regard to a marriage that is working as God designed it, I want to simply and very gently suggest to you that the Lord wants to *illuminate* you on these matters.

It is not enough for us to say, 'I heard the word, and it didn't trouble me too much. I'm just getting on with life.'

I think the Lord is really asking us to 'buy into' the *fellowship* of His word, because there is *much He wants to show us*.

It will not be enough for us to sit in the church and *hear* the proclamation of the word. We are going to have to 'eat' it.

That 'eating' is occurring in the *agape* meal. That eating is occurring through the course of the week, as we are *devotional* with our family and we are devotional with our wife. That eating is occurring in our devotional time, *praying* before the Lord.

All of these elements that are put before us as the *fourfold foundation of fellowship* – all four of these

aspects of fellowship are *critical* for us to *eat* the word; for us to receive the *sustenance* of the word; and for it to *become our culture*. This is what the Lord is inviting us to.

Eve and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil

Let's go back before the Fall and consider why Adam and Eve chose what they did. We will begin with Eve.

Prior to the Fall, the woman knew that God the Father was the *origin* and *source* of creation. They both knew that; and that was a good thing to know. Everything has its beginning *from Him*.

The spiritual capacity for this initiative is in the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

What belongs to God, in the fellowship of Yahweh, was viewed by the woman as a way of life which became her desire.

I want you to register that! What *belongs to God*, in the fellowship of Yahweh, was viewed by Eve as a way of life which *became her desire*.

It was for this reason, prompted by Satan's lie, that Eve saw that the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was 'good for food', 'pleasant to the eyes' and 'desirable to make one wise'. Gen 3:6.

Let's be very clear on this point: The fruit of this tree *was indeed* good for food. It *was* pleasant to the eyes. And it *was* good for wisdom.

But it was *not* for *mankind* to take hold of!

Eve's recognition of the threefold reality concerning that tree – the fact that she recognised what the tree was good for – was not actually the problem.

It was her belief that *gaining access to this fruit would make her like God*. That became the issue; that is the issue.

Eve's desire to be like God – to be the origin – within the family

And, she wanted to be like God *within the context of a family*.

She believed, as every woman since has believed, that a family would be created *from her*; that is, in *her* image and in *her* likeness.

Consequently, the woman perceived the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil as *a*

resource to service her desire. Eve, representing all women, *coveted what belonged to God*.

I find that a fascinating point in itself. Adam did not covet that. Adam had other issues; but he did not covet what Eve coveted. She saw something, and it caught her attention.

She desired the thing that *belonged to God*. She wanted *God's unique capacity*, as the *source* of creation, to be the *basis of her motherhood*.

I want you to hear that! Eve wanted God's unique capacity, as the source of creation, to be the basis of her motherhood.

As such, she ate the fruit that *belonged exclusively to God*, in order to become the *origin of multiplication*.

Hear that point – 'the origin'. It was not enough to be the 'vessel' of multiplication. She wanted to be the *origin*. This was the life that she coveted.

She wanted to 'design' her family. She wanted to design all the elements of her household, her lifestyle, to create it to be according to the image that she valued.

She wanted to *name* it and then *sustain* it by feeding it *her wisdom*.

The mode of fallen woman in the family

Corresponding with Eve's desire, a woman now believes that, in the family, *she is like God*.

Let's make sure that we are hearing this in the proper manner. The Lord is not 'picking on' Eve, here! He is helping us to receive *insight* concerning the fallen, *default position* of every woman. The word of the Lord is coming to us in this way, so that we *receive insight*.

I dare say that there is not a single woman in this room who wakes each morning, saying to herself, 'I am like God!' If you are doing that, you have deep troubles! But I doubt you are doing that!

However, corresponding with Eve's desire, a woman now believes that, *in the family*, she is *like God*.

What do we mean by that?

In this deluded state, a woman believes that *she* has the *wisdom* to 'feed' her family, in order to make them successful.

That is what we mean when we say that she views herself as 'like God'.

She accordingly views herself as *the beginning* of a house – she is the *origin* – and believes that a family is *created from her*.

By that, I mean that *she* is the one with 'the plan'. She is the one with 'the template' of what they are pressing for. She is the one with the perspective and the view of what success 'looks like' – as a couple; regarding the raising of their children; concerning the nature of their home; concerning the colour of the paint on the walls ...

She is the one who is motivated and focused to this end.

She is happy for there to be a husband in the mix! Let's make sure that that is clear! She is even willing to allow her husband to take the spotlight from time to time, and to announce his edicts and the direction for their family, as long as everyone *abides by her 'wisdom'*.

She covets this role, *believing it to be the proper expression of motherhood*. It is really important that we register this: She *believes* that this is the proper expression of motherhood, and she then proceeds to live *by this principle*; and this is her *delusion*.

Once a woman becomes a wife and a mother, she feeds this view of herself, with its accompanying 'wisdom', to her husband and children, as her 'gospel', with which she presumes to *define their household*.

This delusion remains her default until she is *converted* from her *idolatrous iniquity* – which is only possible as she *allows Christ to reveal this* to her.

Coming to hear Christ speaking, be illuminated and enter in to the 'much more'

He *will* show this to you; but, while ever you cover *His eyes* with the veil of *your own perspective*, you *cannot be illuminated*. While ever you cover His eyes with the veil of your own perspective, you *cannot receive* the thing that *He wants to give* to you.

As I indicated in my opening statement, we do not come to church to *defend our position*. We do not come to church to *defend* our marriages; to *defend* the way we have done things.

We come to church so that we might *hear Christ speaking* to His church. We come to *hear His word*, so that we can know the 'more' that He is calling us forward to.

Christ is not 'picking on' us! He has *much more* for us. He wants to *call us into the 'much more'* that He has for us.

In that sense, the note of joy and rejoicing that is among us, the note of thanksgiving, is that *He is speaking to us*. Praise the Lord – He is speaking to us! Christ is *in His church*, speaking to His people. 'Refuse not Him who speaks from heaven.' Heb 12:25.

We do not come to church to defend our position. *We come to hear Christ speaking from heaven*. We must accept the fact that, if He is speaking, then *we need to hear it*.

Loyalty to a woman's fallen wisdom will prevent the family joining the agape meal

We said in January that, until the threefold delusion is broken, we have *no access to the tree of life* – no access.

Until then, every woman will feed her husband the fruit of the other tree, which *she believes is wisdom* to help her household succeed. When a woman is doing that, she will *prevent that household from joining the agape meal*.

I want you to hear that. There is *another conversation*, and there is *another wisdom*, that sits within a home; and the *entire family* are then loyal to that wisdom.

A fallen agenda for a household competes with the call of the Father's household

Let's now consider the men.

Men, in the same manner as Adam, *accept* what is put to them by their wives, believing her delusion to be the *proper template for family life*.

Her image of family is that family is a discreet entity, or private context, *separate from the house of the Father*, and where her husband should exercise *his dominion*.

Hence, there is a drawing to the agenda of the household, *over and above the Father's household*.

Often times, there are flashpoints – 'Well, why are you doing *that*, when we need *this*? How can you give yourself to *that*, when *this* is sitting here in our home?' These are the flashpoints – the Father's house viewed as *distinct from your house*?

Of course, there *is* a distinction – a *sanctified* distinction. But this distinction must not be on the basis of there being *two conversations*.

Engaging his wife's fallen conversation, Adam ceased from fellowship with Yahweh at the tree of life

We need to register that, when Adam received Eve's word, and connected himself to the conversation that his wife fed to him, *he ceased from fellowship with Yahweh at the tree of life*.

We know that to be the outcome, because the Father came looking for Adam, crying, 'Where are you?' Gen 3:9. That was such a grief-filled cry – 'Where are you?'

Only in daily fellowship with Yahweh at the tree of life is grace ministered for our works

Adam chose this because he *had not chosen* to be the *son of the Father*.

Instead, Adam heeded the voice of his wife, and he ate the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thinking that he could exercise dominion over creation, *without the grace that comes from God*.

We want to make that point clear: our *only* capacity to exercise dominion over what God has give us to exercise dominion over, is by *the grace that He ministers to us at the tree of life, each day*.

When we are *disconnected* from that context, we have *no capacity*.

Please note that Eve – and every woman in their deluded state – was not being 'wicked and naughty', and trying to trick her husband! She was legitimately deceived. It sounds like an oxymoron, doesn't it – 'legitimately deceived'?

She was trying to help her husband, and to bring success to their household. She believed that this was *the right way*.

Likewise, the first husband – and then every husband since – received this *alternative wisdom*.

The necessity to accountably choose the fatherhood of God – to choose sonship

Adam's willingness to eat what Eve offered only exposed that he *had not yet chosen the fatherhood of God*, which, in essence, means that he had not yet chosen *sonship*.

There is a *choice* that we *must make*. It is not enough to 'hop on the conveyor belt of life' and get carried along, and 'enjoy the scenery' along the way. It is not enough!

We must *accountably choose* to be at every place and every point that we find ourselves, as the demonstration of our *obedience* as a son of God.

We cannot simply find ourselves somewhere and say, 'Well, *que sera, sera*. Here we are – it is what it will be!' That is not the accountable sound of a son of God.

We must register that there is an *obedience* that He is ministering to us *each day*. He wants us to *know* the reality of *where He is calling us to*.

A lifetime of church involvement, weekly attendance at all the different activities, working bees, singing in the choir, raising our family as a part of a house to house context – all of these activities can occur through the course of our lives and, *still, we have not chosen*.

It is an amazing thought, isn't it: a life filled with activity and service – and yet, we have still not chosen.

The Lord is provoking us here *to ensure that we are choosing*.

Have we chosen? What are we obedient to? No access to the tree of life until we choose

The *only way* that we can know that we have *chosen*, is to look at who or *what we are obedient to*.

What are you obedient to? What are the things that *set the priority* for you in your household?

Is it the *word of the Lord*, that comes through His *messenger administration* – the word which is then becoming the *conversation* at the *agape meal*, where we are receiving *illumination*; which then connects to the implications of *how our house works* for the following week, the following month?

Unless we *live by every word* that proceeds from His *mouth*, we cannot say that we have actually chosen. Our *choosing* will be demonstrated by our *culture* – being ones who live by every word that proceeds from His mouth.

The question that the Lord is asking us is, 'What conversation are you joined to?'

Here is the bottom line: we have *no access* to the tree of life, which is the book of life, where the substance of our name is being ministered to us, *until we choose*.

We join His agape meal when we honour the word that He is feeding us

We can come to church each week and receive a nice, religious experience; we can sit talking at morning tea – but that is not going to do us any good.

Please do not presume that you are joined to His *agape meal* just because you *call* it an '*agape meal*'. You can call it whatever you want! I

it is His *agape meal* when we *actually honour the word that He is feeding to us*.

We demonstrate that *we fear the Lord* by eating what *He is feeding us*.

'Those who feared the Lord spoke to one another.' Mal 3:16. And they were not talking about the footy! They were talking about *the present truth word* that was being proclaimed at that point.

'Those who feared the Lord spoke to one another.' And Yahweh was *listening*; He was joined to their fellowship. Mal 3:16. Isn't that a beautiful point? He was *there among them* as they shared together.

His grace was being *made available* in the context of the *dialogue of fellowship* – the fellowship of life that we receive together.

We have to be careful, don't we? We do not come into the church, and catch up with all our friends, and enjoy the collected realities of our shared history – enjoy all of those matters – and then sit at an *agape meal* and simply *presume* that we can talk about *whatever we want*.

Imagine if I came to your house, when you had invited me for dinner. I'd said, 'Oh great, I'd love to come over to your house for dinner.' So I walked in, and I made myself at home.

I had a little bag with me.

'Oh, what's in your bag there, Rich?'

'Oh, I brought some food. I'm going to cook a meal.'

'What?'

'Yeah, thought I'd cook a meal.' I go straight to the fridge, straight to the pantry, into the cupboards.

'What are you doing?'

'I'm making a meal, and I'm going to feed it to you.'

'Well, we didn't invite you to do that.'

‘Yeah, but we’re friends, aren’t we? You don’t mind if I exercise my liberty, just to demonstrate a bit of hospitality? It’s called “hospitality”.’

No, you would not tolerate that. I would not tolerate that.

So why do we expect that the Lord would tolerate that, when we come into *His* house with a *different conversation*?

Why would we dare to cook a *different meal*, and then try and *feed it to God’s people*?

We have the food that *He is feeding to us*.

We must honour the *bread of life* that *He is feeding to us*.

Joining the dialogue of the word to gain understanding

If you do not know how it applies, ‘lift your voice for understanding’. Pro 2:3.

If you do not know where this word applies to you, *get talking* – because He is not speaking for no reason!

He is speaking so that you can *join the dialogue* and *receive illumination*.

There is some *work* to be done there, isn’t there?

I think, sometimes, that we think that ‘illumination’ is ‘We just sit, and something happens in my brain!’ That is a bit lazy.

He wants you *to talk*. He wants you to *open your mouth*. He wants you to be *vulnerable*. He wants you to be *humble*.

He definitely wants you to ‘*eat His food*’.

We offer no ‘other’ food – because we love one another

He also wants to ensure that there is *no other food* that is being offered at His *agape* meal.

I had a dear sister chatting with us yesterday – it was a great time of fellowship. We were so refreshed and washed in the fellowship of the word.

She made a comment to me. She said, ‘I was at an *agape* meal recently.’ She had made a comment during that *agape* meal, and she said to me, ‘You know, I didn’t think it was terribly difficult or awkward.’

One of the brothers had gently leaned across to her and said, ‘I don’t think that’s the conversation that we should be having here at this *agape* meal.’

And she was a little checked by it, in herself.

The next day she rang that brother and thanked him. She said, ‘Thank you for helping me to continue learning what we are to be honouring at His *agape* meal.’

Does it mean that we cannot say, ‘How are you?’

Of course, we can say, ‘How are you?’

We love each other. We care for one another. We love each other so much that we want to *honour this meal* – so that this *word comes alive*, and is the *sustenance* for each one in their sonship and on the journey that they are walking.

Motivations which hinder proper engagement in the Lord’s agape meal

The reason that Eve’s offering was more palatable to Adam than what Yahweh was offering was because he believed that he would receive the necessary energy from *her* food to *achieve his goals and aspirations* – which included a happy and harmonious marriage.

He was reliant upon *his success*, and his wife’s *affirmation*, to *verify the projection* that he had created for himself.

Let’s highlight and ‘unpack’ this point a little more, meditating around some of these points with the men.

There may have been many more reasons why this man considered *his wife’s food* to be more palatable than joining Yahweh at the tree of life, or heading off to the great supper; or why any husband would *give priority to another conversation* which then hinders his proper engagement in the *agape* meal.

Let’s look at four of these:

I. An independent man

The first one was perhaps an *independent* man. In the Spirit, last weekend, I kept hearing that word ‘independent’. It kept lighting up every time I heard it – ‘independent’. The independent man.

What is an independent man like?

He does not want to be *constrained by obedience* to the word of God, and to the *relational obligations* of *true friendship* among the brethren. That is an independent man.

2. A lazy man

Perhaps he was a *lazy* man who did not want to *apply himself* to the *word of God* or to the *offering* that is required in speaking in the fellowship of the *agape* meal.

That is interesting, isn't it? The lazy man – he did not want to apply himself.

3. A proud man

Perhaps he was a *proud* man who believed that he would be *humiliated* because of his *inadequacy*, if he took his place at the Lord's table and *spoke up*.

I think some of us have felt that at times: 'I'm not going to say anything, in fear of looking like a fool, particularly when all these young kids are very sharp.'

Have you noticed that the kids are quite sharp?

They say, 'Hang on, what do you mean by that?'

'Whoa! Don't question me! I'm trying to share here!'

We sometimes get a little 'on the back foot'.

4. A cowardly man

What about the *cowardly* man, who did not want to risk any form of *conflict* with his wife?

We are without grace – unable to fulfil the will of God – when we depart from fellowship

Prior to the Fall, as Adam and Eve fellowshiped with God each day at the tree of life, they were *clothed with grace*. That is a beautiful thought, isn't it? They were clothed with *God's capacity*.

Grace was the *garment* that mandated their *priesthood* over creation.

Once they *departed from fellowship*, they were without grace. I want you to hear that point! *They were without grace*.

We are without grace when we depart from fellowship.

Consequently, they were *naked* and *without authority*, and were *unable* to fulfil the will of God. The works of their name were not able to be achieved, except by the mercy of God, to give them a context of making offering, which we know and we understand.

However, when they *removed themselves* from that conversation; when they removed themselves

from that *fellowship setting*, they *could not* do the will of God.

Drawing from this account, we note that God's *grace* never resides within a person, apart from *fellowship with Yahweh*.

Fellowship with Yahweh, receiving His grace, continues for eternity

For all of eternity, we will remain in fellowship with Yahweh. We will *continue* to hear the *substance of our name*, and will continue to receive the *grace of God* for us to continue doing what He has for us to do.

We are never independent of, or free from, connection and fellowship with Them. We are forever in fellowship; forever connected and in receipt of grace and faith and capacity to be who the Father has named us to be.

The struggle for acceptance and validity

Now fallen, men and women are slaves to their circumstances, and they struggle for survival.

We do not sit down to the *agape* meal table and begin with, 'We have an innate and desperate struggle for survival as a couple!' That is not our opening line! But I do want you to 'tune in' to this thought:

There is an innate struggle which involves each person's *desire for acceptance* – think 'husband and wife' here – and the *need for identity validity* or identity verification.

That verification is sought through the expression of each one's personal 'initiative'.

And this creates *tension* within the marriage.

So, the desire for *acceptance*; the need for identity verification or *validity* – these are sought through the expression of *personal initiative*.

There are certain things that either husband or wife does in a desire to find this kind of validity or verification.

This is the desire for *approval*, isn't it? This desire for approval runs in *every one of us*. It can take us to all sorts of places.

Jodie and I have talked about this, over the season of our married life together – how we can find ourselves doing things that are so *beyond* what is for us to be doing.

But there is this desperate need for *validity*, for *approval*, for a sense of *belonging*, for a sense of *acceptance*.

Competing agendas for ‘survival’ create tension within a marriage

The woman desires her husband to facilitate the agenda that *she* has for herself and for her household.

The man’s agenda for life and expression *conflicts* with this focus. He has his own ambition and focus that particularly relates to *how he is seen by others*.

He views his household as a *resource* from which he can initiate and exercise rulership in the contexts of his life - be it in the *family*, in the *church*, in the *workplace* or in the broader *community*.

Driven by this motivation, he endeavours to ‘rule over’ his wife, so that she serves his agenda.

This becomes the two *competing agendas* in every marriage, which creates tension between them.

The romance of their affection for each other is inevitably *insufficient* to compensate for this tension. That’s the real ‘kicker’, isn’t it? The romance of their affection for each other is *insufficient to compensate for the tension*.

Unless they are *recovered* to the tree of life, ‘*trading*’ will become the basis of their marriage covenant. This will result in further conflict and corruption, individually, and within their relationship.

The remnant of the Spirit within marriage

The true romantic model for marriage, which the Lord God has chosen for us, requires ‘a remnant of the Spirit’. Mal 2:15.

Praise the Lord! He wants every married couple, every family, gathered here today, to receive this. He wants this for all of us, but we *must* know how to *participate in and to take hold of this provision*.

A remnant of the Spirit is ministered, received, engaged with, through true connection to the order of headship at the tree of life.

Speaking of marriage in this order of grace, the Lord said, ‘But did He not make them one, having a remnant of the Spirit? And why one? He seeks godly offspring.’ Mal 2:15. We know that well now, don’t we?

What does ‘a remnant of the Spirit’ in a marriage ‘look like’?

Let’s break this down a little.

It *begins* with two sons of God – and I will be clear: a man and a woman – who have been born from above; have been baptised into Christ, and live each day in the faith of their baptism; are filled with the Spirit; pray in the Spirit, and are therefore led by the Spirit each day.

They obtain a remnant of the Spirit as they *participate in a dialogue of fellowship at the tree of life*.

When you hear that word ‘fellowship’, will you register that we are referring to the *four foundations of fellowship*.

The fourfold foundation of fellowship

We will enunciate these four foundations again.

When a couple ‘participate in a dialogue of fellowship at the tree of life’, it means that they *continue together in the apostles’ doctrine*, which informs the *culture* of their conversation and interactions. Hence, they are poring over the word. They love the word. They are meditating together. They are lifting up and rejoicing in the points of illumination. They are turning in repentance, and are recognising elements that the word is highlighting for them. This is *participation in the apostles’ doctrine*.

They continue *in fellowship*, through which the blood of Christ is operative to cleanse them from sin. ‘If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship.’ 1Jn 1:7 And when we are having fellowship – what happens? The blood of Christ is effective. 1Jn 1:7.

When we think ‘blood’, think ‘*joined to His offering and sufferings*’. That is the dimension of fellowship that we are declaring. This is the bottom-line reality of those who are receiving a portion of His Spirit.

It is also in *the breaking of bread*, as they care for and nourish one another.

Then it is in *the dialogue of prayer*. We could say a lot about that, but we need to move through.

Understanding the ‘remnant of the Spirit’ and ‘meeting at the tree of life’

Through this dialogue at the tree of life, in the fellowship of one Spirit, the couple receive a remnant, or a portion, of the Spirit.

This portion of the Spirit, which is unique to their marriage covenant, equips them for the works through which the life of God is multiplied in the family, to their children, and then overflows as a blessing to other houses.

So, it is important that we understand this 'remnant of the Spirit' We need to give attention to an *upgrade in our understanding* regarding this.

It is important that we understand that a woman is called *with* her husband; but she is called by *her own name*. This makes her *personally accountable* to the *Father*.

Our former understanding was that a married woman's primary work was to serve her husband's agenda – particularly his religious or ministry agenda – believing this to be her submission to his headship.

However, such an approach causes her to be *unaccountable* in relation to *her own sonship initiative*.

Furthermore, no couple should meet at the tree of life for the purpose of *arranging their household program* or *arranging how she will service his agenda*, as though that is the 'right way' that she should be *verified* in the *marriage*, or as a *person*.

That is not what 'meeting at the tree of life' is about.

The 'verifying' of a woman's identity by this kind of 'teamwork' approach is *not acceptable* to the Father, and demonstrates a pragmatic *compensation*, probably for a *lack of access to grace*.

When this is the basis of a marriage, it will inevitably fail. It will be characterised by *dystrophy*, *alienation* and *bickering*; as well as by a focus toward everyone else's marriage, except their own.

We receive our validity and the substance of our name only from Yahweh's fellowship

This is because the identity of every son can only be verified at the tree of life, where the *substance of their name is fed to them from the mouth of Christ*.

Accordingly, a portion of the Spirit is given *amidst* the genuine conversation of two 'born' sons, who are *both* finding what is spiritual at the tree of life, where Yahweh is feeding them.

Diligent to lay hold of and be established in the culture of fellowship at the tree of life

In line with this upgrade, the Lord is urging this current generation of young men and women to *take heed to their daily culture* and to the routine of their daily culture, *prior* to marriage.

This includes making every effort to be *joined to the agape meal* at the tree of life, and to be *established in its culture*.

This will serve as a proper preparation for Christian marriage, where they will eventually be joined with their spouse *in conversation with Yahweh each day*.

As a single person, you do not need the portion of the Spirit that is being given to a Christian married couple. You have all that is required.

But when you are coming together in Christian marriage to do the work of nurturing the divine nature – the significant work of a 'ministry couple', ministering life, and ordering the family and the care of the family, and all the things that pertain to that – the Lord gives you something in addition.

However, you have to 'go and get it'. He is offering it, but *you* have to come and receive it. *This* is where you will receive a portion of the Spirit, first enabling you to be *joined in one Spirit*.

Joined in one Spirit

You see, if I am prayerful, and considering the care of my children, and the Lord puts on my heart something that I have heard in the word which relates very particularly to a child, it is pointless that I ring up Tim Wills to say, 'You know, Tim, I had this great illumination concerning how to raise my child; and how to bring some adjustment to these things; and I really feel quite settled.' And for Tim to reply, 'Oh, that's great, Rich.'

No doubt, Tim would be encouraging - but who do I need to talk to about that? I need to talk to *my wife*, don't I?

Don't we need to be *one Spirit*? Doesn't she need to *bear witness* to that *same* adjustment and that *same* matter? Doesn't she then *join me* and bring her *own unique expression of multiplication* to that spiritual conversation that we are having?

That is being in 'one Spirit'.

It is pointless that I hold these points of understanding and illumination *in myself*, and do not mention them to anyone, particularly Jodie.

Joined in one Spirit because the word is our culture

That is our one-Spirit reality in our marriage. We are 'on the same page'.

We are working together, because *the word is our culture*.

This is where those who are coming together in Christian marriage will receive a portion of the Spirit, first enabling them to be joined in one Spirit with each other.

They will then be activated by their portion of the Spirit toward their specific works of offering, according to the only order of life that connects God with man, and by which the grace of God flows to them.

The Scriptures refer to this as 'the order of headship'.