



# THE GIFTS OF GOD: EVE, THE FIRST LADY

WEEK 1  
03.04.18

## FOCUS VERSE

### James 1:17

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

## LESSON TEXT

### Genesis 2:18–24

18 And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.

19 And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof.

20 And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him.

21 And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof;

22 And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.

23 And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.

24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.



## FOCUS THOUGHT

As the first woman in human history, Eve's life portrays universal lessons for people across all time



# CULTURE CONNECTION

## Contested Views in Complicated Times

**O**n January 21, 2017, more than one million people marched in cities around the world under a broad banner of women's rights. While the press and United States presidential staffers bogged in a debate over the size of the crowds, politicians, actors, and activists took to the microphone to declare a number of causes ranging from equal pay for women to unfettered access to abortion to protests of the U. S. presidential election results.

Meanwhile a divisive social media conversation ensued that in many cases pitted friends, neighbors, and family members at opposing sides. Perhaps the endless debates became more complicated because of the broad range of causes that became associated with the general nature of the protest. Lines blurred as the conversation morphed continually from issues of women's rights to cultural issues to any number of political hot topics.

Whatever a person's politics, the incendiary week of January 20 revealed a stark reality: we live in complicated times. Maybe it did not take a worldwide march to reveal that point, but as communities became embroiled in the controversial topics, the degree of just how contested these issues have become reached a fever pitch.

In these complex times where Christians are often categorized in any number of stereotypes, it is all the more important to look to God's Word as our standard for beliefs. No voice rises above His Word to determine truth. His Word celebrates women as valuable vessels made in His image. Despite the chaos of voices around us, the student of Scripture has only to look to God's Word for direction. In word and in action we can honor Him as we honor one another according to His Word—a simple but powerful source of direction in complicated times.

### OUTLINE

#### I. GOD GIVES GIFTS

- A. The Gifts of Love
- B. The Gifts of Life

#### II. WOMEN ARE GIFTS OF GOD

- A. Eve Was God's Gift to Adam
- B. Eve Gives Us Direction Today for Serving God
- C. Eve Gives Us Direction Today for Our Relationships

#### III. GOD'S GIFTS ARE GREAT

### CONTEMPLATING THE TOPIC

The Bible speaks of the two Adams. The first man Adam was made in the image of God, the conclusion and glory of the six days of Creation. He was the finishing work of God's thoughts and the reflection of God's person. He was made in God's image and in His likeness. He was made after the figure of Christ who was to come.

*"Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come" (Romans 5:1).*

Christ was the second Adam. He was in the mind of God from the foundation of the world (I Peter 1:17–20). He was in the mind of God before Adam was created in the Garden of Eden. The Lord of glory became flesh and dwelled among us so that we could behold Him and become one with Him.

But not only was Adam in the mind of God, so too was Eve. She was God's gift to the First Adam and through their union all of the earth was blessed. In addition, all the daughters of Eve are also God's gift and they too hold the potential for great blessing.

### SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

#### I. GOD GIVES GIFTS

The Bible declares that God is love (I John

4:8). For love to be known, it must be expressed. God expressed His love over and over in all that He manifested in Creation. God's expressions of love are in the form of gifts. The greatest of these was the gift of Christ (John 3:16).

### A. The Gifts of Love

*Every good gift.* God, who is identified as love and light, delights in giving good gifts. He so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son (John 3:16). His pleasure is to give His little flock the kingdom (Luke 12:32). God gives good things. James wrote, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (James 1:17).

It is God's nature to give good and perfect gifts. Good gifts enlighten. They brighten lives with joy, peace, and satisfaction. They lift the spirit, express love, and endear the heart.

God's gifts are always appropriate, timely, and highly beneficial. They are welcomed and cherished. Consider the wise men who blessed and sustained the family of Jesus with their diverse gifts. They were men led by light and love to give good gifts to Jesus: gold, frankincense, and myrrh (Matthew 2:11). Their gifts sustained the lives of Jesus and His family while they were in Egypt.

*The Garden of Eden.* God presented Adam with many gifts. He lived in an environment saturated with God's gifts. Everything he saw, touched, ate, and experienced in the Garden of Eden was a gift from God. God's gifts to Adam included life in a paradise and the strength to work, intellect in an aura of innocence, and the blessings of conscientious choice. He had dominion over all God created. Because he walked and talked daily with his creator, he was equipped to handle it all. The gifts were endless and potentially eternal. Each was significant. But last, and most important, was the gift of the woman.

### B. The Gifts of Life

*The three great gifts.* The greatest of the many gifts God gave Adam were life, His presence, and Eve. The gift of life can come only from above. It is a gift of light and love. Life is God's breath in us, which created us

as living souls. Life is the mother of all gifts, the essence of God's love. The spirit of life is the glory of the creative power of God. The creative process was by the spoken word of God. But the three greatest gifts were given by the personal touch of God's hands-on presence. The greatest gifts are those personally presented in love and light.

To Adam's life, God added His presence. He walked and talked with Adam daily in the Garden of Eden. Nothing can take the place of God's presence. The wonder of God's presence is a well of refreshing, springing up continually unto life more abundantly and eternal. Without question, the most difficult aspect of life for Adam outside the Garden was the sense of living outside His daily presence.

*Adam's crowning gift.* Made in God's image as Adam was, Eve was God's crowning gift to him. She was the ultimate symbol of what a perfect gift should be. She fulfilled the needs of God and man, was loved by both, and lived a life of purpose. Eve was God's final creation. As God surveyed all He had made, He observed that "it was very good" (Genesis 1:31). This statement is an accolade above the previous expressions of "good" for all that had been created before Eve. (See Genesis 1:10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31.)

## II. WOMEN ARE GIFTS OF GOD

Women are, and should always be, viewed as a gift from God. Both Adam and Eve were created in the image of God:

*"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." (Genesis 1:27).*

Both man and woman were equal in the sight of God. Both were personally responsible to God though their roles in life were different. Neither was complete without the other, for neither could fulfill the purpose of God in creation without the other. Into Adam was breathed the gift of life, but the privilege and responsibility to continue that life was through Eve. She was the chosen vessel through which children should be born to sustain life, both physically in this world and ultimately in the spiritual world to come.

## A. Eve Was God's Gift to Adam

God made Eve for Adam. She was good for Adam because she was from within him, but she was also from God, who was above him. Her origin was Adam's rib, but her making was of God.

Eve was made especially for Adam and bonded to him in marriage. They were one in spirit, fully mature flesh and bone, husband and wife, united by the Spirit of God as the first couple. They were in love, united by love to express love. Husbands and wives who are true companions love each other, function together with purpose, and live with the blessing and sanction of God, who is love. The union of the first couple as one flesh was what God intended marriage to be. The initial three-fold cord of marriage was man, woman, and God. That cord is not easily broken.

Eve was conceived in the mind of God, uniquely created, and presented to Adam as a glorious, one-of-a-kind gift-bride. She ultimately became the source of the gift of life to all humanity. She was more than just a bride to Adam. She was part of Adam, out of Adam, and therefore part of all that Adam was to God. They were to be one flesh fulfilling the will of God in His complete plan for humanity. Eve was created to be Adam's helper ("a helper suitable for him" NIV; "a helper who is just right for him" NLT). Her qualities and abilities would complement those of Adam, thus allowing them to fulfill all that God had in mind when He created the universe and humanity.

In addition to being Adam's wife, Eve was destined to become the mother of all living human beings (Genesis 3:20). The seven billion plus inhabitants of the world today, plus all who have preceded them, trace their origin to Eve. Had sin not entered into the picture, all would have lived eternally in the utopia of Eden with its atmosphere of love and blessing in the presence of God. Sin changed the utopia but not the love of God or the motherhood of Eve.

In child bearing, Eve ultimately brought to birth, many generations later, the Savior of the world, Jesus Christ (I Timothy 2:15). Thus, following the original sin in the Garden that changed the relationship of God to His creation for all time, Eve became the source of the hope of eternal life. The bride of Jesus Christ

is made righteous by the atoning death of the Lamb of God. That Lamb was the offspring of Eve. She was part of God's redemptive plan for humanity.

## B. Eve Gives Us Direction Today for Serving God

Our society has developed the term *trailblazer* to indicate someone who does something for the first time and creates a path for others to follow. The connotation is usually complimentary, suggesting the individual has done a service to others by opening a door for future progress. While it is difficult to apply contemporary terms to ancient biblical culture, consider the experiences of Eve and Adam as the first humans. Experiences we take for granted today would have been new, strange, and perhaps unsettling. In some sense they blazed the trail of life by default as the first humans. From both their successes and their failures, we can learn timeless lessons for our lives today.

Eve is not just a case study for females. We see in Eve what we see in us all: the fallibility of our humanness and the hardships and complexities of life as a result of our sin. The criticisms we sometimes make in jest about the curses resulting from Eve's choice are our reality. We cannot seem to talk about Eve without talking about her sin since it so starkly shaped human history. Yet Eve is not merely a villain or victim of Scripture. She represents the human experience and the epitome of free will. Every one of us will face moments of temptation like Eve did. Rather than simply critique Eve, we should learn from her how to use godly wisdom for the choices we will surely face. It would not be many generations after Eve and Adam that God would say of following His Word:

*"I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live: that thou mayest love the Lord thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy life, and the length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the*

*Lord swear unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.” (Deuteronomy 30:19–20).*

Eve’s choice put all of humanity on a collision course with a multitude of daily difficult choices, but we learn from her a universal lesson for women and men alike: the importance of hearing and heeding God’s Word. In some sense it is a gift to go into life knowing in advance the reality of an active enemy seeking to bring destruction. Eve gives the youngest of children a lesson learned the hard way. If we will heed her example and study Scripture’s account of her choice, we can avoid similar downfalls. Learning from her lesson, we can cultivate in our lives a reverence for God’s Word and ways, not just submitting to rules but embracing with thanksgiving the life that God’s Word gives and the safety it brings in making us wise to the enemy’s tactics. His Word shows us how to live in relationship with Him—our ultimate source of hope.



**The Bible has Ten Commandments, four Gospels, and two Testaments but just one theme: love. The scriptural narrative serves up an amazing account of the Creator who lovingly woos His creation. The Lord does not force His will upon us but rather gives us space to respond. When we freely choose to commit, to purposely pour ourselves into that loving relationship, the Bible offers a special name for such commitment: covenant.**

**Sadly, too many rebel against their Maker. Adam and Eve were the first to do so, and as well the first ones to understand that such actions have consequences. After eating forbidden fruit, Adam experienced guilt and fully expected death, for God’s pronouncement had been clear: “In the day that you eat of it you shall surely die” (Genesis 2:17).**

**But Adam did not die immediately—and for two very good reasons: First, God is merciful. Second, God’s**

**love is stronger than our weakness. Indeed, from the very foundation of the world God crafted a plan to mitigate the consequences of our sin; redemption would become possible through the precious blood of Christ (I Peter 1:18–20).**

*Excerpted from “Living in Covenant” by David Norris in the Apostolic Study Bible available at [www.pentecostalpublishing.com](http://www.pentecostalpublishing.com)*

### **C. Eve Gives Us Direction Today for Our Relationships**

Eve and Adam experienced the first human joys of relationship. They give us a precedent in forming a family. Eve was the first mother to experience the joy of holding her child for the first time. She also was the first to experience the grief of losing a child.

While Scripture does not record Eve’s perspective or emotions, it is not hard to imagine the grief, the what-ifs, and the infinite questions that must have tormented her. Could she have blamed herself and her fall in the Garden for opening the door to this horrific loss? Might she have felt an overwhelming sense of shame all over again because her choice led to this unspeakable pain?

What we do know is that somehow life went on for Eve. She and Adam had another child, and Scripture is intentional in recording the naming of the child: “And she bare a son, and called his name Seth: For God, *said she*, hath appointed me another seed” (Genesis 4:25). To be human is to feel pain, so we can surmise Eve still grieved for the loss in her family. Yet in Seth’s birth it seems she acknowledged God. This passage of Scripture suggests in the midst of unimaginable family tragedy, she looked again to her Creator and Provider. Perhaps she saw in this situation that the merciful God who clothed her and Adam after the tragedy of her first sin now again visited her with provision in another season of loss.

No family is perfect because people aren’t perfect, and family life will involve hard times, disappointments, and questions. In our own time of family difficulty, we can look to Scripture and Eve’s statement of God’s provision. In every season of family life, we can find in God a faithful provider, always with us and

guiding us through whatever looms ahead of us. When those difficulties come, we can have faith in a God who is mindful of us.

### III. GOD'S GIFTS ARE GREAT

God always gives the best. His gifts are from above, priceless and eternal. They are presented in love, function in love, and produce a loving atmosphere. Love is declared to be the greatest of God's abiding attributes: faith, hope, and charity. (See I Corinthians 13:13.)

Eve was created perfectly, a gift only God could give. God knew Adam's makeup, his future, and God's plans for him. Great gifts are always presented with thorough knowledge of the recipient. The gifts of God are given severally to us as He wills because He knows us. (See I Corinthians 12:11.) They are always right, perfect for us in every way. Eve was a gift to Adam and to all of humanity as the mother of all living. Furthermore, Eve is a gift to us in setting precedents and teaching us lessons. From her we learn the importance of looking to God's Word for direction in life and looking to Him for provision with our families. No matter what else we achieve in life, let us learn these two lessons from the first lady.

The ability to reproduce was inherent with Adam and Eve and with Christ and the church. It is in accord with God's creative pattern and after His own nature. The life God first breathed into Adam was returned to God many times over in the procreation of life. It was His own creation giving back precious life. Eve produced children who eventually produced the generation out of whom Christ was born. Christ's birth was the beginning of many generations to come from which the Lord would call out a people for His name's sake to become the bride of Christ.

The great gifts of God revolve around life. Physical life, abundant life, and eternal life are

all gifts of God. They are all great, unmatched by anything humanity can produce or give. Be they physical gifts or talents or the spiritual gifts of peace, love, and joy, they all rest within the confines of greatness. They are to be enjoyed, appreciated, received with thanksgiving, and shared with others. The reward of the gift-giver is the appreciation and gratefulness of the recipient. Acknowledge Him and He will be pleased.

### INTERNALIZING THE MESSAGE

God never leaves anything He creates incomplete. He finishes what He starts. He is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. When Adam was created, God knew Adam was alone. He also knew there was a woman in His plan. God created Eve as a woman of worth with a valuable role in His kingdom.

Just as Eve contributed a special gift to creation in her role as the mother of all living, all women today are endowed with gifts that can be used to bless God's kingdom. These numerous gifts can range from natural talents to feminine qualities to spiritual gifts. Whatever the case, it is evident that women make a tremendous impact in our communities, our homes, and our churches.

For women to be esteemed as they are created to be, we must recognize them as unique and precious gifts of God. Eve was made to fulfill the purpose and plan of God in creation. She was presented to her counterpart as an equal, to be loved and cherished, to be a helpmeet in making humanity complete. Likewise, women today are to be recognized as gifts of God. God endows all people with gifts that bless God's kingdom and fulfill His purposes. Women are a special part of His story of love, written by a God who delights in giving good gifts. ■

### REFLECTIONS

- Discuss the character of God as a gift giver and how we can duplicate His giving example.
- Discuss the practical ramifications of the helpmeet role for women today.
- Identify and discuss how the gifts of God should be received and revered in today's church.
- Identify some of the gifts with which God has graced your life.