Helping Hands

Prepared by Nathan L Morrison for Sunday May 15th, 2022

Text: Genesis 2:18; John 14:26

# **Intro**

1. Help! We all need it on occasion, and we all provide it to some degree to one another.
   1. When you need help, think about the person you trust the most that you turn to.
   2. Sometimes help comes from a family member or friend, and sometimes it comes in the form of a kind stranger (been broke down on the highway before cell phones, lol).
   3. For married couples, that time of need is most likely often filled in by your spouse!
   4. This was by God’s design.
2. Genesis 2:18-20: God showed Adam that there was no one else created like him! He saw all the animals had mates but there was no “helper suitable for him.”
   1. God took care of that. From the first man God created woman (Genesis 2:23; I Corinthians 11:8-9).
   2. From the beginning God ordained marriage for a husband and a wife (Genesis 2:24; Mark 10:6-9)
   3. The Hebrew word for “helper” is *H5828 ezer* (ay-zer) and means: “help” or “one who helps.”
3. John 14:16-17, 26; 15:26; 16:7: When Jesus was preparing His apostles, not just for His death, but His departure to Heaven (Mark 16:19; Luke 24:50-53; Acts 1:9) He told them when He left, God would send “the Helper, the Holy Spirit.”
   1. The word for “Helper” is different than the *Hebrew “ezer”* and its Greek equivalent (from the LXX) *G998 “boēthos”* (bo-ay-thos).
   2. John’s gospel uses the Greek word *G3875 “paraklētos”* (par-ak'-lay-tos), which means: “one called alongside, intercessor,” used of one who offers counsel, support or assistance in a court, or in some other potentially adversarial setting, as well as emotional support.
   3. Different English versions translate it as “Helper” (ESV, NASB), Comforter (KJV), Advocate (NET, NIV), and Counselor (HCSB).
   4. The Douay-Rheims Bible (1st Catholic English translation) uses a transliteration of this word and simply translates John 14:26 as “the Paraclete.”
   5. It is almost universally translated as “Advocate” to refer to Jesus in I John 2:1.
4. God wanted man to have a “helper suitable for him” and so He made woman, and both male and female were created in His image (Genesis 1:27).
5. God wanted man to have His word when Christ sat at God’s right hand (Mark 16:19) so He sent “the Helper” who would tell the world about sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:7-15).
6. God gave to mankind divinely appointed Helping Hands!
7. **Four Reasons To Encourage Wives To Be Called “Helpers”**
8. Some women might find it offensive to be identified as their husband’s “helpers,” but the title is not a criticism of Eve’s insufficiency. Instead, ***it is an identification of Adam’s inadequacy!***
   1. To call a woman a helper is not to emphasize her weakness, but her strength.
   2. Not to label her as superfluous but as essential to Adam’s condition and to God’s purpose in the world.
9. ***Helper is a position of dignity given to women by God Himself!***
10. ***“Ezer”* Describes Great Strength and Support**
11. Genesis 2 doesn’t tell us what Eve did as “helper” other than remedy the problem of him being alone. A brief look at how the word is used can help identify her role.
12. *Ezer (H5828)* occurs twenty-one times in the Old Testament.
    1. Twice it is used to describe the first woman.
    2. Three times it is used of people helping (or failing to help) in life-threatening situations.
    3. Sixteen times it is used in reference to God as a helper.
    4. These texts are about a vital, urgent, powerful kind of help.
13. *Ezer* is never used in Scripture for something negative, such as a sycophant, minion, or slave.
14. Consider these verses:
    1. Deuteronomy 33:29: “Blessed are you, O Israel; Who is like you, a people saved by the LORD, Who is the shield of your help *(ezer)* And the sword of your majesty! So your enemies will cringe before you, And you will tread upon their high places!”
    2. Ezekiel 12:14: “I will scatter to every wind all who are around him, his helpers *(ezer)* and all his troops; and I will draw out a sword after them.”
15. There is nothing passive, submissive, or domestic implied in the Hebrew word *ezer* (“helper”).
16. Identifying the role of a wife as her husband’s helper (*ezer)* reveals her as a powerful and influential companion!

### **God Is Called Helper *(Ezer)***

1. Eleven of the twenty-one times *ezer* is used occur in Psalms.
2. Each time it describes God as our helper. Some examples include:
   1. Psalm 33:20: “Our soul waits for the Lord; He is our help *(ezer)* and our shield.”
   2. Psalm 70:5: “But I am afflicted and needy; Hasten to me, O God! You are my help *(ezer)* and my deliverer; O LORD, do not delay.”
   3. Psalm 115:9: “O Israel, trust in the Lord; He is their help *(ezer)* and their shield.”
3. The word used to describe a woman’s role is a word used to describe God Himself. Since we do not let the identification of God as our helper make us think less of God, we should apply that same thinking to wives as their husbands’ helpers.
   1. God is our helper *(ezer)* but He is not subservient or subordinate to those He helps.
4. In Exodus 18:4 it says that Moses named one of his sons Eliezer *(H461),* which in Hebrew means “My God is my helper” (*El (H410)* = “my God”; *ezer (H5828)* = “helper”).
   1. This verse goes on to explain why Moses named his son Eliezer: because God had powerfully delivered Moses from Pharaoh’s sword!
5. *Ezer* describes aspects of God’s character: He is our strength, our rescuer, our protector, and our help!
6. *Ezer* is the word God used to describe the first woman: Eve was someone who would give vital strength and help to Adam.

### **The Holy Spirit Is Called Helper *(Paraklētos)***

1. Helper is the title Jesus used for the Holy Spirit when He promised not to abandon the disciples after His departure, but used the Greek word *G3875 “paraklētos”:*
   1. John 14:16: “I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper *(paraklētos),* that He may be with you forever”
   2. John 14:26: “But the Helper *(paraklētos),* the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.”
   3. John 16:7: “But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper *(paraklētos)* will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you.”
2. The Holy Spirit is effectively Jesus’ replacement and representative now that Jesus has returned to the Father and is no longer on earth (The Holy Spirit is an Advocate).
   1. He is sent by the Father for primarily teaching, revealing and interpreting Jesus to the disciples with divine foresight and inspiration found in John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7.
   2. This does NOT correspond with what Eve did for Adam.
3. While the role of Helper is different from Eve to the Holy Spirit, there are some similarities that can be seen in the wife as a Helper, Comforter, Advocate, and Counselor:
   1. A wife helps her husband and her children
      1. Proverbs 31:12: She does him good and not evil All the days of her life.
   2. A wife comforts both husband and children alike
      1. Proverbs 31:11: The heart of her husband trusts in her, And he will have no lack of gain.
   3. A wife intercedes (advocates) for her family through prayer *(also schools and others).*
      1. Proverbs 31:23: Her husband is known in the gates, When he sits among the elders of the land.
   4. A wife counsels (gives advice) her husband and children and they listen!
      1. Proverbs 31:26: She opens her mouth in wisdom, And the teaching of kindness is on her tongue.
      2. Proverbs 31:28-29: Her children rise up and bless her; Her husband also, and he praises her, saying: “Many daughters have done nobly, But you excel them all.”
4. The Holy Spirit stopped the disciples from being left alone as powerless orphans *(John 14:18),* and Eve stopped Adam from being alone *(Genesis 2:18-20).*
5. It’s a privilege for women to carry the same title given to the Holy Spirit as a Helper *(even if the roles and reasons are slightly different)* and it is clear that the role of “helper” is not one of inferiority but of honor!

### **Helping Is Commended In The Scriptures**

1. Thinking Biblically, helping and serving are two of the most admirable actions we can engage in as Christians -- Jesus modeled such behavior and called His followers to do the same:
   1. In answering Mama Zebedee’s desire for her two sons (James and John) to sit on the right and left of Jesus in the kingdom (Matthew 20:20-25), Jesus said,
   2. “It is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave; just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many” (Matthew 20:26–28).
2. Few actions are commanded as often in Scripture or look more like Christ than helping and serving.
   1. As a result, wives should find it encouraging to be called their husbands’ helpers.
   2. They should not let society’s stereotypes influence their thinking about being a wife.
   3. Instead, they should joyfully embrace the role God has given them. In the *Above Rubies* article, *“Do You Feel Downgraded?”* Nancy Campbell writes to the Ladies:
   4. “Are you feeling base and discouraged? Don’t listen to these lies any longer. Lift up your head and embrace your mandate from God. You are not working for any earthly employer, but for the King of kings and Lord of lords, the Sovereign God of the universe.”
   5. (<http://aboverubies.org/index.php/ar-blogs/entry/do-you-feel-downgraded>)
3. God called wives to be helpers but, interestingly, there’s no list in Scripture telling wives how to help their husbands.
   1. Wives need to look for the unique areas in which their strengths can complement their husbands’ needs and weaknesses. *Part of becoming “one flesh” is helping one another!*
4. When God calls you a helper, you can hold your head high!

### **One In Christ**

1. Both men and women were created in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:26-28).
   1. It says this without dividing up the Godhead and implying that women are more like one person of the Godhead and men are more like another.
2. In the New Testament, both men and women are called to be transformed and become like Jesus (Romans 8:29-30; II Corinthians 3:18)
3. All followers of Jesus are given His Holy Spirit and in the 1st c. were given spiritual gifts, regardless of gender (Acts 2:16-18; 8:12-17; 21:9).
4. We are all one in Christ:
   1. Galatians 3:28: There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, ***there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.***
   2. I Peter 3:7: You husbands in the same way, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with someone weaker, since she is a woman; and show her honor as a ***fellow heir of the grace of life***, so that your prayers will not be hindered.
5. The “one flesh” part of marriage is more than the physical relationship but also spiritual as husbands and wives are “one in Christ,” their goal is the same: Heaven!

# **Conclusion**

1. Men and women have different roles, husbands and wives have different strengths and weaknesses, and both look for ways to help the other out, since men and women are “one in Christ” and “fellow heirs of the grace of life” husbands and wives seek out ways to help one another grow and get to Heaven!
2. God wanted man to have a “helper suitable for him” and so He made woman, and both male and female were created in His image (Genesis 1:27).
3. God wanted man to have His word when Christ sat at God’s right hand (Mark 16:19) so He sent “the Helper” who would tell the world about sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:7-15).
4. God gave to mankind divinely appointed Helping Hands!
5. Wives, do you look for ways to help your husband?
6. Husbands, do you show appreciation for the help your wives are to you, and look for ways to help them?
7. Men and women, the best way to show God honor and appreciation for His sending the Holy Spirit is to obey His word! *Have you heard, listened and obeyed?*
8. If you are not a Christian, you are not serving God but yourself. Repent and be baptized!
9. If a Christian in error, repent and be forgiven!
10. Whatever your requests may be, come forward ***NOW***and let them be known while we stand and sing!