

Brothers and sisters in Christ, family of God,  
Grace and peace are yours from God our Father through our Lord  
and Savior, our brother, Jesus Christ.

Last week, I'm sure thousands of people started new jobs. But I had a special feeling because my dad was installed as pastor in his new church in Arkansas last Sunday, beginning this next chapter in his career of service to God. I wasn't even there, but it was a special day for me. Three of his sons got to be involved in that installation service. That made it even more special. Why? Family.

All over the world, millions of people are having a birthday today – but today is a special day for me because three years ago today – I got to meet my youngest son as he was born on this day. And Wednesday marks 6 years I've known Hannah. In fact, it was this Sunday in the church year that she was baptized. Why do these days stand out so much for me? Family.

Family makes things better, doesn't it? Then again, I'm sure there have been plenty of people upset with you or disappointed with you in your life – but when your wife won't talk to you without that anger in the voice – or when your dad told you that you let him down – that hurts so much more, doesn't it? Why? Family.

There is something about family that impacts and affects our life, intensifying every emotion and experience – and that can be positively or negatively. Now – obviously, we want the heightened joys and could do without the added stress. So, how can we make that happen more and more? Realize what our sermon text says – **“God has made a helper suitable.”**

You're familiar with Genesis One, right? Remember God's analysis after he made light? “Good.” And when he made the land and the seas, he saw that it was “good”. Then the plants and trees? Again, “good.” Then the sun, moon, stars also were “good.” And the birds and the animals – “good.” So now – after God created Adam, you might expect that same verdict, right, for the highlight of his creation? Well, if you do, our text starts with a

shocker – **“The LORD God said, “It is not good.”** It wasn’t complete yet. What was the problem? Loneliness. That was never what God intended for us. So he made family. That’s what our text is all about – God’s solution. Did you notice that as soon as God identifies what’s missing, he gives the solution? **“I will make a helper suitable for him.”**

Now, just to make sure we’re clear, notice what he doesn’t say. He doesn’t say, “I’m making a slave for him” nor does he say, “I’ll make someone to direct him,” not even “I’m making something exactly like him. He says, “I will make a helper suitable – a helper – the same word God’s Word uses to describe God – “my help comes from the LORD,” a helper that is suitable – exactly what he needs, with different strengths and purposes, just as he is exactly what she needs. So God made this helper suitable.

And as you go through the text, you have to be amazed at how perfectly God knows his creation and what it is that we need. He doesn’t just spring Eve on Adam, but draws Adam to an understanding of his own need so that he can appreciate just how special his wife is. God shows Adam every single type of animal, each with its companion. Only once Adam realized what he was missing, God gave him exactly what he needed – a helper suitable.

God knows us. He knows we need companionship. Ask Tom Hanks’ character in Castaway, who had conversations with a volleyball to keep his sanity. Ask Will Smith’s character in “I am Legend,” who made friends of cardboard cutouts. Or be real and just ask yourself when you experience something by yourself that would be so much better to share.

And just like he did for Adam – he has done for us. First and foremost, we’re talking about spouses here – but even if you aren’t married, God gives that gift of companionship – isn’t that one of the secondary reasons we gather here each week? But since the texts today do, I’ll phrase all this in the context of marriage. Just don’t think that’s reason to take a nap now if you aren’t married. It’s not. We all have reason to celebrate the gift God gives in a helper suitable.

OK – so God puts husbands and wives together. Isn’t that what Jesus said? **“What God has joined together let man not separate.”** And God puts the rest of the family together too. Remember our Psalm? God **“knit me together in my mother’s**

**womb.”** In the Gospel lesson, we saw how special marriages and children are to him as he told us not to even think of breaking that marriage relationship and showed us how much he truly loves and cares for the children too.

God tells us – “don’t you dare do damage to this helper suitable.” He tells us “don’t even think of doing anything that would keep my children from me.” But let’s be honest, we do. We fail our spouse, and our kids, really anyone we have relationships with. God wants us to give them perfect love to make it easier for them to love – but our love is flawed, all too often selfish. Instead of composing poems of appreciation and excitement over our wives like Adam did, guys, how often do you find your head making a list of the things that are disappointing you about her? Or wives, how often don’t your conversations mimic the sitcoms where it seems that a husband is closer to a nuisance than a gift of God? We even laugh at and joke about how often we are disappointed by each other. Think about this one that was in the Saturday Evening Post: “To prove his love for her, he swam the deepest river, crossed the widest desert and climbed the highest mountain. She divorced him. He was never home.”

In so many ways, whether we’re trying or not – we fail one another – in our acts of love and in our appreciation of the other. And that destroys relationships. That’s not funny. That destroys this beautiful thing God has given us. But in so doing, another relationship is destroyed – the one between us and God. If a husband’s love for his wife is to be like Christ’s for the church and hers is like the church to Christ – what does failure there say about what we think about God? We need help for our broken and breaking relationships.

Here it is: The same one who put us together with each other in the first place stepped in and put us back together with him – through the blood of his Son. Let me reread a couple parts of our second lesson: **But we see Jesus..., now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.** <sup>10</sup> **In bringing many sons to glory....** <sup>11</sup> **Both the one who makes men holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers.**

There were irreconcilable differences between us (sinners) and God (holy). Those two don't meet. But – “Glory be to Jesus” as the writer to the Hebrews said, he suffered, so that by his grace, he might taste our death. He drank the cup of our suffering. You know how when someone wrongs you, you sometimes want them to taste that pain, you want them to have to suffer for it. You can't let them get off without realizing how much they hurt you, and you twist that thorn in a little...Jesus felt those thorns. Jesus drank to its dregs the cup of all of that vengeance and repercussion for our sins. He tasted death to bring us to glory – and look at what it says – he made us a part of His family! Because of what he's done for us – because he has – in all actuality and fact – because he has changed what we are from sinner to saint – he is not ashamed to call us brothers. God is proud of us – that is how forgiven we are. That is how perfectly he has restored our relationship with him.

It's good to be in his family, huh? Now – as God has been our only helper suitable to deal with sin – he puts us together with helpers suitable to deal with life. Because of his love and forgiveness for us – our relationships can actually work because we are able to share **that** love and forgiveness. We are able to **be** helpers suitable. Wives, keeping God's sacrifice for you in mind, you won't feel the need to punish your husband for his failures, but forgive. Husbands, seeing Jesus give up so much of himself to make your relationship with God work - sacrifice will come naturally as you lead your Christian family in love. In all your relationships, if you truly believe (and I know you do) that God's forgiveness is complete – more and more you'll stop focusing on the sins of others and see them as God does – perfect, glorious! Then Adam's song of joy will be ours every time we see the ones that God has given us - exactly what we need.

Our God truly has been and has given us and has made us – a helper suitable.

In Christ,  
Amen.

### God Has Made a Helper Suitable

- I. He has given each of us our helper suitable.
- II. He has been our Helper suitable.
- III. He helps us live as a helper suitable.