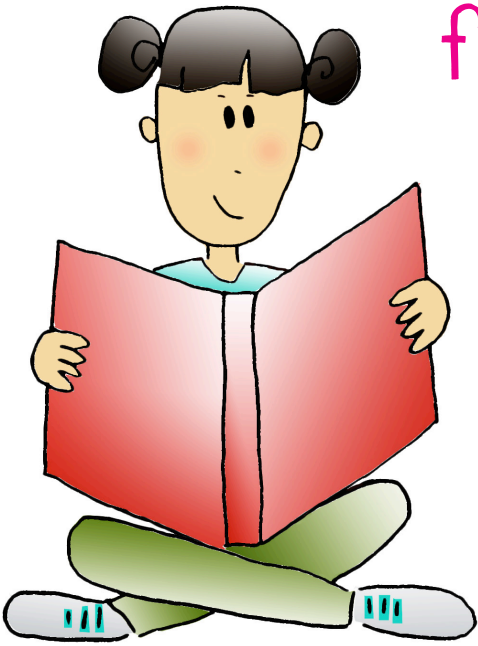
# Growing up God's way

## for girls



By Dr. Chris Richards and Dr. Liz Jones

EP

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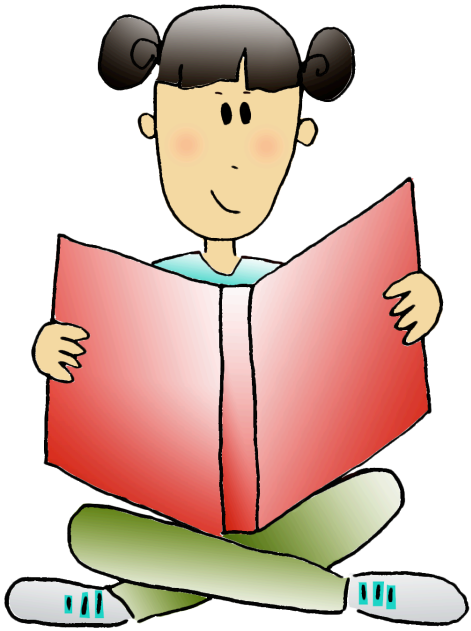
# Chapter 2
# Marriage

# Why learn about marriage?

In His wisdom God has given us one basic design for forming a family; this design is based on marriage. Over the next few years you will make decisions that might affect whether it will be possible for you to have a family in the way God intends. You will need to think and act in a way that pleases God and not do anything that might spoil this opportunity.



For these reasons, it is important to learn about marriage now, even though actually getting married may seem a long way off.

# Marriage - a special design

Have you ever seen a wedding? Did everyone seem very happy? Was there an exciting atmosphere? Yes, it is obvious to anyone at a wedding that it is a very special occasion. But this is not only because of the dress, confetti and cake; at a wedding the couple show their love for each other by starting the life-long relationship of marriage.

Marriage was designed by God. The first man and woman, Adam and Eve, were created by God.

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

Genesis 1:27

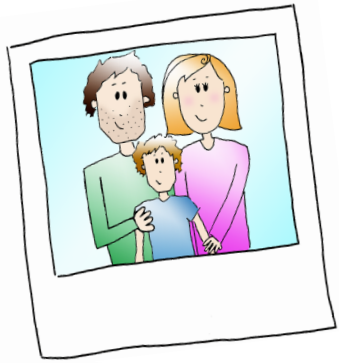
They were not only the first man and woman but were also husband and wife, setting a pattern for men and women to follow in the future. The following words from the first book of the Bible called Genesis show that this was God's intention:

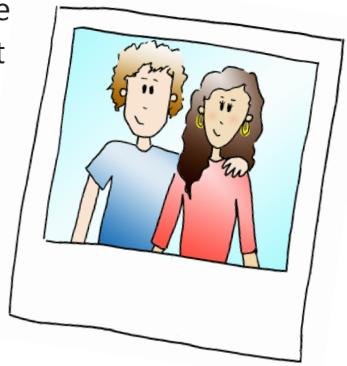
For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.

Genesis 2:24 (NIV)

This is why marriage is known as a *creation ordinance*. A creation ordinance is an arrangement, designed by God, which has been present since the creation of the world. Marriage is recorded throughout history and in all the nations around the world, even by people who do not recognise God as its designer.

Marriage has been designed to be the basis of each family unit, so that children can be born into a family and benefit from the love and security of family life. This is the way that God has chosen to raise one generation after another to work and care for His world and so fulfil God's command to 'be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it' (Genesis 1:28). Just as a building is made up of individual bricks, so God intends all nations and their communities to be made up of the building bricks of the family unit based on marriage. Without strong marriages, a country stops working properly and starts to fall apart.

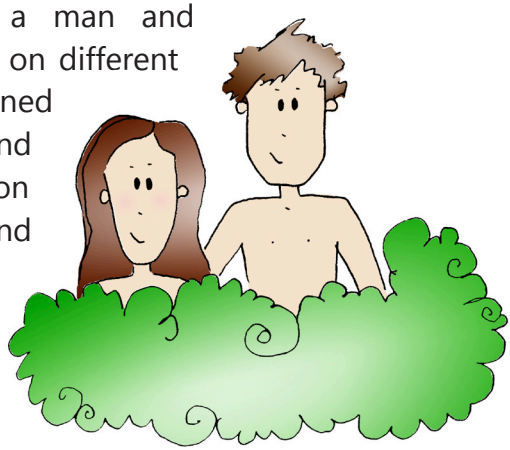




Once we realise that God is the designer of marriage, is it any wonder that we get excited about a wedding when we see His design put into practice as a new family forms and a new unit of society takes shape?

## Who can get married?

We can find the answer to this question by looking at God's own description of marriage in the verse which we have just read: 'a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh' (Genesis 2:24 [NIV]).

From this, we learn that God designed marriage to be between a man and a woman. God has designed a man and a woman to be different (Genesis 1:27). Jesus repeated this truth in Mark 10:6 – "...from the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female' ". These differences involve their bodies, and their minds – how they feel and what they think.

The differences between a man and woman allow them to take on different roles in marriage. God designed Eve to be Adam's helper and companion. It is God's intention that both the husband and the wife work together in a *complementary* way so that both they and their children benefit.