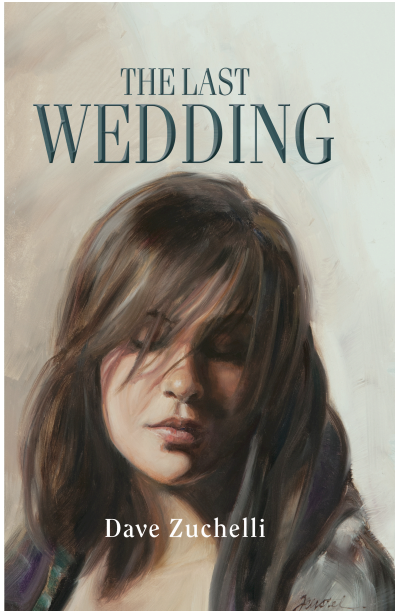


Sample Chapter

The Last Wedding

Dave Zuchelli



Chapter One: The First Wedding

On more than one occasion, I have asked a small group of Christian adults to collectively tell me the story of Adam and Eve. Now everyone knows that story...everyone except Christian adults, apparently. From my observation, no one really knows the story. Everyone only thinks they know the story. It's amazing how inept most adults are at relaying the events that make up one of the most fundamental stories of their faith.

We seem to know that God created Adam and Eve and that He placed them in a beautiful place. Sometimes we remember that Eve was taken

from Adam's side (or rib). Usually we throw in something about an apple tree. Beyond that, we seem clueless. So I'm going to suggest you stop here and read Genesis chapter two. It's a quick read. I'll wait right here.

Are you back? Great! Let's begin.

As far as we can tell, the first wedding was held in the Garden of Eden. Frankly, there was probably no wedding as we understand weddings today. However, that was a different time and a much different setting. There doesn't seem to have been a need for a ceremony, and the Bible never does mention there was one. Some of us, however, feel a little uncomfortable about our original parents merely living together. It just doesn't seem right to us. So we refer to the first wedding as if it was a fact. I hope they made beautiful music that day because there were no other people yet (and therefore, no band at the reception...or a reception for that matter...unless God sent His angels or invited all the new animals).

So there was probably no wedding per se. There was a marriage, however. Genesis 2:24 refers to the "uniting" of a man and a woman to become one flesh. Interestingly enough, it immediately follows by saying that Adam and Eve were naked and were not ashamed. Frankly, that sounds a lot like a honeymoon to me. Fortunately (or unfortunately—depending how you look at it), the Bible doesn't expound upon this any further. It seems clear, though, that this was the first marriage, if not the first wedding.

We don't get much indication of how the marriage went. Details at this point are quite sparse. Indeed, they're rather nonexistent. What most of us believe about this honeymoon period has been assumed or inferred. So what do we believe?

Well... Firstly, we believe Eden to be a perfect place. Why, after all, would God create something imperfect? Since we have never seen or experienced a perfect place, we have to take a somewhat uneducated

guess as to its traits or characteristics. What would make our garden home an idyllic place of perfection?

Let's start with the one thing we do know. Genesis 2:15 tells us that God placed Adam in the garden to "work it and take care of it." Hmmmm... I don't know about you, but that wipes out the whole perfection thing for me. If I have to work it, it's not perfect. If I'm Adam, I want to play around. I want to watch a few baseball games and frolic in the trees. That's another thing we know...there were trees (but probably no baseball).

We should note here there was no Eve at this time either. She doesn't come along until verse twenty-two. On top of that, there were no animals yet either. Imagine this. No women, no animals, just trees and rivers (four of them to be exact). That scenario is hard to imagine. That might be why we have chapter one. Genesis one gives us a summary of the entire creation thing that doesn't quite line up with the more intimate version in chapter two. Chapter one gives us plants and animals before people. Middle Eastern storytellers had a great saying. "Never let the facts get in the way of a great story."

But I digress. If you will recall, we left Adam all alone in the garden to "work" it (whatever that means). This "job," like many other things in this story, is not detailed in Scripture. There is no job description at all. There is, however, one great perk. In verse sixteen, immediately after God puts Adam into the garden to work it, He tells him he can have all he wants to eat (with one slight limitation—but we'll get to that later).

That would be like working in Morton's Steakhouse and getting to eat all the free surf and turf you could handle. I was going to say MacDonald's, but this is Eden after all (my apologies to Ray Kroc). So, even though it's a job, it's apparently the perfect job. Any guy, particularly the first guy, would be happy with that.

There's no indication how long this phase of Adam's life would have played out. It might have gone this way for days or even years. We don't

know if Adam was happy with his situation, if he was bored, or if he was just willing to grow fat and lazy. Whatever his course may have been, God decided to change things up a bit. That change is located in verse eighteen. There He says, “It’s not good for the man to be alone.”

Okay. I can buy that. One guy bouncing around in a garden by himself, no matter how cool the garden might be, can be kind of lonely. At least that would be my assumption. After giving all the birds and animals names, it was apparent the animals were falling short. None of them seemed to fit the bill as a good helper for Adam. I guess God hadn’t created any dogs yet. One would think he’d be happy with man’s best friend, but no...

That’s another thing. Apparently, the job was a little too big for Adam to handle all by himself. God says, “I will make a helper suitable for him.” It’s starting to sound a little like God had this all planned out ahead of time. I’m sure He knew the job was too big for Adam before he hired him. I suppose that makes sense. I can’t picture the Lord of the Universe just winging it.

So Adam gets his perfect helper. Here’s the interesting thing about the helper part. I could be wrong, but I don’t think Eve is ever referred to as his helper again. It might be my imagination, but it seems like she’s awfully quick to take the lead. Or maybe it’s the other way around. Maybe Adam was happy to sit back and get out of the way. If it was anything like my marriage, the latter is probably the case.

At any rate, we now have the first wedding. At least we have the first marriage. I’m quite sure marital bliss ensued. They had all they could eat, they were naked, and they were “one flesh.” Or as King James liked to say, they “knew” one another. Not only that, they weren’t ashamed. On top of everything else, they had steady employment. Eternal bliss was the only possibility. Awesome!

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