

NEXT: The Gospel and the Next Generation

Biblical Manhood & Womanhood – Part 1

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Biblical Manhood & Womanhood – Part 1 **Genesis 1:1-31; 3:1-24**

If you have a Bible, and I hope you do, then I invite you to open with me to Genesis 1, the first chapter in the Bible, and have you pull out those notes that you received in the worship guide when you came in. We've got a lot of ground to cover this morning on one of the most sensitive, and I am convinced, most important issues that is clear all over Scripture but under attack in our culture and also under attack in the church. It's the issue of biblical manhood and biblical womanhood.

So today is going to Part 1 of 2 on this issue, not to imply that two parts cover everything that needs to be covered here but my aim is to provide core biblical foundations this week and the first part of next week, so cover some core biblical foundations and then most of next week dive into the practical implications of what this means for our lives, for our families, for our homes, for the church. So there's going to be points I know throughout this morning where you might start to think, well, what does that mean? How does that look in my life? And so that's a good question but I want to encourage you to hold onto that question because we're not going to really dive in as much today to the practical. I want to make sure to get the right foundations out there.

In fact, for that matter, hold on with me throughout this one this morning because there are some points along the way where you might begin to think, "Did he just really say that? In the 21st century does he know how chauvinistic that is? Does he know how antiquated that is?" I know what I'm saying. I want you to hang with me there. I want to be faithful to what God's Word is saying here, as we do every week. I want to submit ourselves to God's Word. And so I want you to hang through those moments where you may not say it but you may start thinking it. Just hang with me. I want you to see this all the way to the end, especially maybe if you're visiting with us this morning, maybe even if you're here and not a follower of Christ, I want you to see... So hang with me. Don't count everything out at the beginning. Just hang with me all the way to the end and I want you to see a picture even of who Christ is in what we're talking about today when it comes to men and women.

The Effects of Manhood & Womanhood...

Here's the deal. Effects of manhood and womanhood, deep and widespread. This issue touches every part of life. This is more than just about gender. This issue touches on our understanding of God, biblical manhood and biblical womanhood and how we understand this issue affects how we understand who God is and how God operates. Our understanding of God is affected here.

Our understanding of the gospel—and not just our understanding of the gospel but our proclamation of the gospel to the ends of the earth. This issue of biblical manhood and womanhood has everything to do with these people that we just prayed for and they're going out. This issue has everything to do with how we proclaim the glory and the gospel of Christ to the ends of the earth.

Obviously it affects how we express our sexuality. We live in a day where sexual differences are labeled social constructions. Masculinity and femininity—people say those are just constructions we've made up. There are no real differences between man and woman beyond the obvious physical differences. Elisabeth Elliot talking about the effects of feminism in our culture said, "Throughout the millennia of human history, up until the past two decades or so, people took for granted that the differences between men and women were so obvious as to need no comment. They accepted the way things were. But our easy assumptions have been assailed and confused, we have lost our bearings in a fog of rhetoric about something called equality, so that I find myself in the uncomfortable position of having to belabor to educated people what was once perfectly obvious to the simplest peasant."

As a result of our rebellion against a Biblical understanding of gender, we have a warped view of sexuality. In our culture, where pornography is rampant, where women are looked upon as objects for sexual gratification and exploitation. In other cultures where baby girls are aborted or left to die because they are not seen as important as boys. We desperately need a Biblical view of men and women in our culture.

How we express our sexuality, how we love our spouses—not just how we love our spouses, but who our spouse is. We live in a culture that is degrading and redefining marriage, where it's not necessary to have a man and woman for marriage—woman and woman will do, man and man will do. Ideas espoused from the highest offices in our land. From that in our culture all the way down to marriages in the church between a man and a woman where men are abdicating their responsibility for leadership in their homes, where women are taking charge because men are, quite frankly, wimps who are running after more money, chasing after their careers, lusting after women either in person or on images on their computer, or just playing videogames. Regardless, it's a weakness. Biblical manhood, compromised in a way that affects the entire family.

We need to see this issue for how we love our spouses. This affects how we thrive as singles. That's why we're going to take a week later in this series to talk about the role of singles and passing the gospel in the next generation. What does it mean to be a single man and why is that important? What does it mean to be a single woman and why is that important?

And all of this affects how we train our children. What does it mean to train sons? What does it mean to train daughters? Is there a difference or are they the same? And the answer to that question has everything to do with how we raise children as parents; it has everything to do with how we pass the gospel to the next generation. What does it mean to train boys to be men of God, to train girls to be women of God? Same or different? That's what I want us to see foundations for.

So what we're going to do, Genesis 1-2—I want to show you three truths about manhood and womanhood. We'll kind of briefly wade into chapter three but we'll be there a little more next week. I want you to see three foundational truths that God has woven into the fabric of creation. Now here's the deal, you get to the end of chapter one in Genesis, you see the creation of man and woman. And then, when you turn the page to chapter two, most of chapter two is a parallel account of creation, so kind of a second. Not chronologically this happened and then this happened. What you have is two different accounts of creation told from two different perspectives basically, emphasizing different things.

Three Truths About Manhood & Womanhood...

So what I want us to do is I want us to look at the end of Genesis one and see truth number one about manhood and womanhood. Then I want us to look at Genesis two and look at truth number two about manhood and womanhood. Then that will lead us into truth number three. Are you ready to hang with me all the way through?

Genesis 1:26, let's start there and hear God's Word:

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth." And God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food." And it was so. And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day (Gen. 1:26-31).

First truth about Biblical manhood and womanhood. And I'm going to mention at different points a variety of different passages in the New Testament but because of all the ground we've got to cover, we're not going to have time to turn there, but you might write them down as we get to them. Three truths:

God Created Men & Women with Equal Dignity

Number one: God created men and women in equal dignity. In this first chapter of the Bible, after a Trinitarian counsel in verse 26, God created man and woman in His image. Nothing else in all creation, not even the mighty majestic angels created in the image of God, but man and woman, both born equally valuable to God, equally important to God, equally in the image of God, with equal dignity before God and equal dignity before each other. This is where any conversation on manhood and womanhood must start here and hold fast here the whole way through. From the very beginning of Scripture God is making clear that men are not superior to women, nor are women superior to men. No one is superior or inferior, better or worse.

The reality is we are all made in the image of God. So the Bible is from the very beginning undercutting any culture, any relationship where man treats woman as inferior, or any relationship, any culture where woman treats man as inferior, where men or women treat one another as objects to be used or abused. Scripture is undercutting that from the very beginning in the design of God. Both made in the image of God. Now what does that mean, to be made in the image of God?

Oh, I want you to feel the wonder of this, for us to be in the image of God. Just think about this. Let this soak in right where you're sitting, to think about your person made in the image of God means we all resemble God. We are like God. That's what it means to be created in His image. To be like Him.

Now obviously there are a lot of things about us that are different from God. But the whole picture is our very makeup, our moral capacities, our intellectual capacities, our capacity to reason, our ability to love, to forgive, to humble ourselves. Even to be holy. Now here's a way we're different from God. He's holy not like us, but at the same time He commands us to be holy. This is something that animals, mountains, seas—nothing else in all creation can do. We are uniquely resembling God in who we are. Even where we're different from God, we resemble God.

Take, for example our physical being. We have a physical body. God is spirit. So God the Father does not have a physical body; God the Spirit does not have a physical body. But even our physical bodies are a reflection of who He is as spirit. So when Psalm 94:9 says, "*He who planted the ear, does he not hear? He who formed the eye, does he not see?*" So think about it. God does not have physical eyes, but He sees. God does not have physical ears, but He hears. And our physical being is still a resemblance of who He is, even in our differences. So we all resemble God.

Second, we all represent God. This is what God does. He tells His creation, male and female, be fruitful and multiply, fill the earth, subdue it, rule over it. In other words, "Spread my image and demonstrate my reign all over creation." This is a picture that we'll say later in the Old Testament, just helping us get into ancient world mindset.

You go to Daniel 3 and you see King Nebuchadnezzar forms an image that is sent out in the land as a representation of who he is. Now obviously, that leads to idolatry, pagan practices, but the whole picture of image is that which represents another—like a picture that represents the real thing. If I were to show you a picture of my family that picture would not be the real thing but would be a representation of the real thing. So we are representations of God in the world. We image God in the world. We represent Him.

Keep going. Third, we all have the capacity to relate to God. Verse 28 says God blessed us. Then you get to Genesis 2, what we're about to read in a second. You're going to see the relationship between man and woman and God is different than anything else in all creation. That God relates to man and woman, to us, in a far different way than God relates to dogs and cats or mountains and seas. All these things we sang about earlier, all these things praise God with their very being but we have a capacity to relate to God that nothing else in all creation has.

Which then leads to, finally, we all have personal responsibility before God. Now in just a second we're going to talk about degrees of responsibility but suffice to say at this point that because each one of us, male and female alike, are created in the image of God, we are responsible for how we live in the image of God. The first thing God does after He creates man and woman in His image is He gives them the command, "*Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it*" (Gen. 1:28). A command which, by the way, requires both male and female, if you know what I'm saying. This command cannot be carried out by male alone or female alone. There's no fruitful multiplication unless you have man and woman, male and female, together. So in the very design of creation, He is, from the very beginning, giving them responsibility that involves one another.

So you see that whole picture. We resemble God, we represent God, have the capacity to relate to God, have personal responsibility before God. Created in the image of God. So in the very beginning of Scripture God is undercutting any kind of male/female superiority. It is never right to disparage or belittle a woman. And it is never right to disparage or belittle a man. To do either undercuts the very design of God. That's why 1 Peter 3 in the New Testament tells—I think it's around verse 7, when the New Testament tells husbands to honor their wives... It says, "You don't honor your wives; God will not listen to your prayers." Men, hear that. So the picture from the very beginning of Scripture is clear. Equal dignity, equal honor in His image—man and

woman always honored in the presence of God. No room for male dominance, female exploitation, anything along those lines. Those violate the very created order that God has designed.

That leads us to then truth number two. Which we're going to see... Let's read Genesis 2 first, then we'll see the truth. Parallel account. This doesn't contradict what we just read in Genesis 1. It elaborates on it, helps us understand it more. It goes into more detail, so follow along. Genesis 2, starting in verse 4:

These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens. When no bush of the field was yet in the land and no small plant of the field had yet sprung up—for the Lord God had not caused it to rain on the land, and there was no man to work the ground, and a mist was going up from the land and was watering the whole face of the ground—then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature. And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground the Lord God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 2:4–9).

Go ahead and skip down to verse 15:

The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die." Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." Now out of the ground the Lord God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed (Gen. 2:15–25).

God Created Men & Women with Different Roles

Okay, truth number one. God created men and women with equal dignity. Truth number two: God created men and women with different roles. Different roles. Clearly, in so many ways, God created man and woman from the very beginning differently. There is a reason why there's male and female here. There's a reason—multiple reasons, actually why male and female are distinct, they are designed by God to be that way. Genesis 2 is showing us here that it's deeper than mere anatomy. This is not just biological triviality accident. This is God creating man for a

reason, God creating woman for a reason. Both in the image of God, but each with different roles. And God desires to teach us here in Genesis 2 what those roles are if we will listen.

If we will listen we will see that God is giving roles to man and woman that complement one another—this is in your notes—man and woman complement one another. Beautifully, wonderfully, by God's design, they match one another. They fit with one another. They go together. And this is being denied, disregarded and denigrated in our day—twisted into all kinds of ideas and caricatures that are not the design of God and, ultimately, as a result being ignored, even by man in the church in the name of cultural progress or political correctness. So I want you to follow with me here and I want you to see the wonderful design of God in complementary roles for man woman.

First, we'll start with man, because that's where Genesis 2 begins. By the design of God, man was created to be the head. Now I use the word "head" here in the same way that the New Testament uses the word head. I'll mention two particular places. I don't have time to turn to them. You might write them down. First Corinthians 11:3 is the first one. Paul there is referring all the way back here to Genesis 2 and what he says is...he says to the church, *"I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ [now follow this], the head of a wife is her husband, and the head of Christ is God."* So here's God's word in the New Testament looking back to Genesis 2, saying this is what Genesis 2 is teaching us. That the head of a wife is her husband and the head of Christ is God. We're going to come back to that one a couple of different times.

Later in that passage, 1 Corinthians 11:8, Paul notes how—this is what 1 Corinthians 11:8 says—*"For man was not made from woman, but woman from man. Neither was man created for woman, but woman for man."* There's a ton that can be said about this text in 1 Corinthians 11. We can dive into that more another day, but stay with me here.

The other text is Ephesians 5, which we are going to dive in-depth into in a few weeks. Ephesians 5:23, which says, *"The husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church..."* This picture that is used in Scripture, based on Genesis 2, of man as head, is a picture of head—having leadership, even authority, in relationship with woman. Not in a way that leads to domination. Whenever you hear headship, don't hear caricature domination. Headship: good loving authority. Domination would lead totally against God's design. Not superiority. We're not talking about dignity or value. We're talking about role and that's a key distinction, one that is familiar to all of us.

I think about my two sons, five and three. So I'm in a position of authority in my relationship with them. And it is a good position of authority. And it is good it's this way. This three-year-old does not need a position of authority over me, right? Now it doesn't mean my position of authority and my relationship with my sons does not mean that I'm any more human than they are, any more valuable than they are, have more dignity than they do. No, equally valuable. Equal dignity before each other and before God. But by God's good design, position of authority. Loving authority I hope is evident in my parenting of them.

So hear this. Man created as head, as a role in a role of leadership. And then, follow the rest of Genesis 2, woman created to be the helper. Now this is a word that is used two times here in Genesis 2. First time verse 18, you might circle it. *"The Lord God said. 'It is not good that the man should be alone. I will make a helper fit for him'"* (Gen. 2:18). Then you get down to verse 20, end of that verse it says, *"For Adam, [amidst all these different animals] there was not found a helper fit for him"* (Gen. 2:20). It's really interesting. You read all through Genesis 1, Genesis 2, all the way to verse 18. What you see over and over and over again in creation is when God creates something it's good, it's good, it's good. Go to the end of Genesis 1, verse 31, it says it's

very good. Man and woman were created. But then you get to Genesis 2:18 and for the first time, the Lord God said, "*It is not good.*"

This was before sin even entered into the world in Genesis 3. Before sin entered the world, something was not good, and what was not good was man was alone and needed a helper like him, similar to him. There was no one like him. So here's the paradox we see in these two truths. On one hand you've got a need for someone who is equal in dignity and value. At the same time, pointing out two times, a helper fit for him. A role that is different from him; that complements him. So was the woman created the same as man? Yes and no. Yes, absolutely, in the first sense—equal dignity and value. No, in the second sense because she was created quite literally as a helpmeet for man. So another way of putting this in your notes, as head, man was created to exercise loving authority over woman. As head, this was his role, clearly defined, especially in the marriage relationship. While as helper, keep going there, woman was created to extend glad submission to man.

Now as soon as I say that I know we're walking completely against the grain of our culture, a culture that has convinced us that such statements are chauvinistic and dominating. Authority, submission, those are such negative words in our day and our culture would have us believe that to be submissive to someone else's authority means that you're obviously of less worth than that person. What I want to show you, though, is that that is not the case. This in no way undercuts truth number one—equal in dignity and value—but that these different roles are good for us and glorifying to God if we will listen. If we will listen. Now, keep in mind, we're going to dive into practicals next week; so there's so much practical here. Suffice it to say at this point, I'm not saying that all women are subject to do whatever all men say. Okay? We're going to dive into that next week. But for the time being, see this clearly.

I say see it clearly, because I put a question there. Are you sure about that? Because I know there's some of you might be thinking, "Are you sure about that?" And so what I've got under that question are eight realities grounded in Genesis 2 that show man as head, woman as helper. I'm not making this up here. This is from the Word. Some of these realities whisper, "male headship and authority." Some of them shout it. So I want you to follow me and I want you to see this is the picture that God designed. We're going to think about why in just a minute but I want you to see at this point these different roles as the way God designed it. Eight realities.

First, see the order of creation. The order of creation. Very simply, man was created first and then woman was created. That may not sound like a huge deal; maybe just a coincidence but obviously man and woman could have been created at the exact same time. That's certainly within the bounds of what God could do. In creation of animals in Genesis 1 we don't see a differentiation between male animals and female animals when they were created. You don't have that differentiation explained like it is in Genesis 2.

You have a distinct order here. And there are two different times in the Bible, New Testament, that points back to why this is significant. One is 1 Corinthians 11:8 which I mentioned earlier: "*Man was not made from woman, but woman from man.*" This is the New Testament saying this is important. And then the other one is 1 Timothy 2:12-13. Paul is talking about leadership between men and women in the church and Paul's pointing to male leadership in the church and he says remember Genesis 2: "*For Adam was formed first, then Eve.*" This is the New Testament saying it's important. There's theological meaning to the order of creation. It wasn't just arbitrary. This was not just a divine flip of the coin, okay, what do we do, male or female first? But this was by intent that God created man and then woman.

Second, the design of creation. So take that a step further. Not only when woman was created but how woman was created. God created man from the dust of the earth, breathed life into him.

But woman is not created right after that. Instead, what does God do? God takes all these animals and parades them in front of man for him to name them. And man goes through this process of identifying names for all of these animals based upon their nature; names which match their nature. And the whole point of that in this story is to make it clear that out of everything, there was nothing that matched the nature of man. Everything else was different. There was no one—nothing—like him.

So the whole effect of that is when you get to chapter 2, verse 20, *"But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him"* (Gen. 2:20). It's kind of this depressing moment where Adam, man, realizes that he is alone and there is no one—nothing else—like him. So God says, "Why don't you take a nap, bro? Just go to sleep." And so Adam lays down and takes a nap and God performs the first surgical operation, takes a rib from his side, closes it up, and there He forms woman, so that—you can just picture it—when Adam wakes up from his sleep and he kind of rubs his eyes and he opens them up. And needless to say, he is thrilled.

Here is a man who just spent who knows how much time naming all the beasts of the earth and looking at all of them and matching names with them. And then he opens his eyes and he sees woman. And literally, verse 23, he starts to sing. It is poetry. That's why it looks that way in your Bible. It's like he is going bananas. *"This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man"* (Gen. 2:23).

So this is the picture, design of creation, intended to show... Now God could have breathed life into the dust of the earth just like He did with Adam in order to create woman but instead literally takes part of Adam from Adam, from the man, to create woman. She is made from man. A helper suitable for man. That's what verse 18 and verse 20 are saying, which then leads to number three, the naming of woman.

So she's standing there. He says, "You shall call her woman for she came out of man." This is key because... And we could go through verse after verse in Genesis alone; much less the rest of the Bible, where we see that naming someone something else is a recognition of authority. This is when God changes peoples' names; this is when parents name children. This is always significant as we walk throughout Scripture. People who are reading this would have clearly seen, yes, this is a picture of authority over someone to name. We haven't even gotten to Genesis 3, at the end of that where Adam names his wife Eve. Now it's just woman. This is a picture of authority, the naming of woman.

Keep going on. Next, the naming of the human race. So God, when He speaks of male and female, describes male and female as man. You go back to Genesis 1:27 and we saw this in the first chapter. *"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them."* Man is pictured as representing male and female—naming of the human race. And you see this even more so in chapter... Go over to chapter five real quick. In chapter five it says, *"When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God. Male and female he created them, and he blessed them and named them Man when they were created."* Did you see that? He named them, plural, male and female— "Man" —when they, male and female, were created. "Man." Now clearly God could have said, "I will name male and female humanity." If He had desired to be politically correct in the 21st Century, He would have done that. But clearly, He did not for a reason.

Naming of human race leading to, next, related to that, the representation of man. This carries over in the New Testament where you see man described there and Adam described as a representative of all mankind, both male and female alike. 1 Corinthians 15, Paul says, *"In Adam all die"* (1 Cor. 15:22). In Adam all people have died. Not in Adam and Eve all people have died in their sin. In Adam. You get to Romans 5—through one man came sin into the world and death

to all men through this man who sinned. That's the whole picture. Now we're about to see in Genesis 3, Adam and Eve obviously both sinned. In fact Eve, from all we can tell, sinned first. But the picture is—representation given to man, according to the naming of man.

Keeping going next. Not just the representation of man, but the responsibility of man. This is where I want us to wade slightly into Genesis 3. It says... This is the fall—entrance of sin into the world. It says: *"Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made"* (Gen. 3:1a). Listen to verse one, second part. *"He said to the woman, 'Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?"*" This is where we pause and we remember, God gave that command to who? To man, Adam, before Eve was even created. All the way back up in verse 17. And man responsible for passing on and carrying out this command in his family.

Temptation continues here in chapter three and they fall in verse six. *"So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked"* (Gen. 3:6-7). Their innocence gone. Verse eight says, *"And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden"* (Gen. 3:8). Listen to verse nine: *"But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, 'Where are you?'"* (Gen. 3:9).

I mentioned earlier that obviously we each have responsibility before God for His image in us and our sin against Him but I want you to notice when God comes to confront His creation for the first time in sin, He goes directly to man. Though the whole story really before is about Eve and Adam just kind of plays a minor role in it. What happens is God comes to man and directly holds him responsible and we see abuse of this relationship with woman begin right after that as He starts to blame the woman for this or that. This is a responsibility that God gave to man. It's why in Adam all died. Sin came into the world through man. Because the primarily responsibility for sins, ultimately in a sense, is put on the shoulders of man, not woman.

All that leading to two more: The effect of sin. We'll look at this more next week, but you read verses 16 through 19 and God pronounces the effects of sin upon man and woman. Discipline for sin upon man and woman and how their sin would affect their relationships with each other, their work in the world. And some people have chosen to say, "Well, now this is where...and of Genesis 3, after sin entered the world —this is where headship and helper came into the picture. This is where you have this man and woman submits to man as a result of sin." Now, obviously, I hope we've seen that that is not at all the case, that that was clearly evident in Genesis 2. This is not the introduction of new roles here in Genesis 3. Headship, helping, already clear in Genesis 2 before sin even entered in the world. Instead of being the introduction of new roles—this is in your notes—this is the distortion of previous roles.

You read verse 16 through 19. We'll dive into it next week. It is an abuse of those roles. You see male headship in Genesis 2 and then in Genesis 3 you see that that will be used to abuse authority in relationship with woman. And you see woman created as helper in Genesis 2 and you see how woman will, as a result of sin in the world, usurp that authority. And you see this design of God marred and distorted. Distortion of those roles that were already given.

All that leading to, the redemption of sinners—last reality here. Think about this with me. If male headship, female submission were bad things, products of the Fall of man, then wouldn't we expect in Christ and in our salvation, for that reality to be addressed and switched around. So now everything's equal. Now that you're in Christ, effects of sin, Fall—gone. Now you both have the same role. No. Instead, when you get to the New Testament you see this picture of headship

and submission—headship and helper—reinforced in much more beautiful ways in places like Ephesians 5 when it says the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church. Husbands love your wives like Christ loved the church. Wives submit to your husbands. This is what we do in Christ. Same thing in 1 Peter 3:1-7.

So here's the picture. You put it altogether, it's clear. Man was created to be head in a way that woman was not; in a way that woman was created to be helper, in a way that man was not. Man with loving authority over woman; woman with glad submission under man's authority. Now as soon as that is established, we think, "Isn't that demeaning to women? Isn't that at the very least slightly offensive to women?" It's not. I know that as soon as I say that you say, "Well, of course not. You're a man." And I get that. But this is where I want to show you... I want to raise your thoughts high, high, high above yourself and see this third truth and I pray that it will seal this deal in your heart and mind. God created men and women with equal dignity. He created men and women with different roles.

God Created Men & Women as a Reflection of the Trinity

And third, God created men and women as a reflection of the Trinity—as a reflection of Himself. And this is where we see the beauty of both our equality and our differences. So here's the deal—mystery of the Trinity. God exists in three persons. One God, three persons: God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit. Not three Gods—one God, three persons. I want you to think with me about the Trinity, about the very personhood of God. The persons of the Trinity, God the Father, Son and Spirit are equally divine. Right? Is the Father God? Yes. Is the Son God equally? Yes, absolutely. Is the Spirit God? Without question. All persons of the Trinity are equally divine, equal worth, equally worthy of praise, glory, honor, adoration. None is higher than the other in worth. Equally divine.

At the same time, the persons of the Trinity are positionally different. They have different roles and even different authority. Follow with me here. This is clear all over Scripture. We accept this all over Scripture. The Father has authority over the Son, right? The Father sends the Son into the world. The Son is obedient to the commands of the Father. Jesus says, *"My will is to do the will of Him who sent me and to finish His work."* The Son is subject to the Father. Father, authority over the Son; the Son is subject to the Father. Always, even now. The Son sits at the Father's right hand (Romans 8:34, Hebrews 1:3, 13; 1 Peter 3:22). The Father never sits at the Son's right hand. The Son is at the Father's right hand, which is why 1 Corinthians 11:3 (which I mentioned earlier) says, *"The head of the wife is the husband [don't miss the correlation] and the head of Christ is God."*

That's not saying they do not have equal dignity, equal worth. Christ, God, Son and Father both have equal dignity, equal worth and yet one is the head over the other. The Father the head over the Son, in a way that man head over woman—husband head over wife. So this whole picture of the headship and submission is in God. So is it bad? Is that chauvinistic of the Father? Is that offensive to the Son? Not at all, it's good.

We're so programmed in our culture to think authority is bad, domineering; that submission is negative, makes you inferior. It's not true. Look at God. See Him. Authority in the Father, submission in the Son. Neither of them inferior or superior. Neither of them domineering or denigrated. Together as one; loving and being loved. Leading and being led. The Son never goes to the Father and says, "Well, you've been reigning 50 billion years now, why don't you give me a try?" No, there's glad submission. This is loving authority and glad submission in the context of beautiful relationship. It always has been this way in the nature of God and it's always been good. Beautiful relationship.

Now it's been distorted—our ideas of authority and submission—distorted in so many ways because of the effects of sin, but we cannot just throw out God's design because of distortions. Realize at this point that to balk against authority and submission is to balk at the very character of God Himself. To believe feminism on this one and to say that this is bad—the authority/submission picture is bad—to believe feminism in our culture on this one is to say, "I believe feminism, not God."

One writer put it this way, "We can say then that a relationship of authority and submission between equals with mutual giving of honor is the most fundamental and most glorious interpersonal relationship in the universe. Such a relationship allows interpersonal differences without better or worse, without more important or less important. And when we begin to dislike the very idea of authority and submission—not distortions and abuses, but *the very idea*—we are tampering with something very deep. We are beginning to dislike God Himself." Authority and submission are good, a part of God's good design in a creation. A part of the very nature of God Himself. So that leads to three conclusions.

Three Conclusions Concerning Manhood & Womanhood

All of This is Good for Us

All of this is good for us. Good for man and good for woman. This is good. Both in the likeness of God; both with different roles. In the words of Genesis 1:31, it's very, very, very good on so many different levels. This is expressed so clearly in God and the beauty and the wonder and the community even we see in the Trinity between the Father and the Son. This is unity in diversity. We are attracted to one another—now think about it on our level.

Unity in diversity: we are attracted to one another by our differences. Think about it. Remember the title of that well-known book, *Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus*? We are different—man and woman—and it's good that we're different. It's challenging at times but it's good. And what makes it good is that we are not the same but that our differences are what make it good. Heather and I joke all the time about it. If both of us were like me, we would be the most boring people in the world. And it's true. What attracts me to her is not that she's like me; it's that she's not like me.

That's what unity in diversity...that leads to equality amidst intimacy: we honor one another as we enjoy one another. We honor one another as equals and we experience intimacy through our differences. Now you think about this, particularly in light of Genesis 2:24, "*Man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.*" This one flesh union. And I don't want to go into too much detail here because I've not prepped you for a Song of Solomon sermon, but this right here is so clearly displayed in the physical act of marriage.

Unity in diversity amidst a husband and wife. We are attracted to the parts of each other that are most different, by God's design. And our unity with each other is found at points where we are most different. Unity and diversity and equality amidst intimacy. We honor one another as equal while we enjoy one another's differences. Glory to God for this one-flesh union! And think about it: from that one-flesh union the most astounding physical thing happens in the world—the creation of another human being made in the image of God. This is decidedly good for us, the design of God. It's good for us.

All of This is Glorifying to God

All of this is glorifying to God. In what ways? Well, first, we reflect His character. We've talked about this. Obviously the Trinity is reflected in this relationship between man and woman. But on

a deeper level—so go with me even deeper than that, as if that's not enough. But think about man and woman, man as head, woman as helper. Both declare the glory of God, reflect the character of God. Obviously God, our Head, to show us it is good to have loving authority. It's good to submit to loving authority. We all submit to His authority as our Head and at the same time to know that our Head... Well, one of the verses our boys have been memorizing recently is Psalm 121:1, *"I lift up my eyes and look to the hills. Where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth."* To know that our Head is also our Helper and to see both facets of the character of God reflected in male and female.

You see how if we undercut these, ignore these, disregard these, we're missing out on seeing the character of God? He's designed us this way for a reason, all leading to... Well, we resemble His character and we trust His Word. We trust His Word.

Brothers and sisters, this is one of those areas in our day where the Bible comes up totally against the patterns of our culture and we are forced to make a decision. Are we going to believe the Word of God or not? Are we going to trust a culture of feminism that says personal worth and personal role are linked together and if you have a different role, then that clearly diminishes your worth? Your worth is not found in your role. Your worth is found in the fact that you have been created in the image of God. So are we going to trust God, who says that we have worth being made in His image with different roles for His purposes that eventually exalt Him?

Who are we going to trust? Either the Word is our authority or the ideas of culture are our authority and obviously I want to urge us to trust His Word, to reflect His character and glorify God as men and women according to His design. All of this good for us, glorifying to God, and all of this is the essence of the gospel.

All of this is the Essence of the Gospel

This is the thought we'll close with. A thought that we'll talk more about when we get to Ephesians 5 but I want to go ahead and point it out here. The foundation here that we are seeing laid in Genesis 2 is not just happenstance or coincidence. This is purposeful. Ephesians 5 says what's going on here in Genesis 2 is a mystery. What Paul means when he says it's a mystery in Ephesians 5, he doesn't mean it's something you can't figure out, he means it's something that's hidden here that will be uncovered and revealed more later. That's what he's doing; he's uncovering and revealing the picture in Ephesians 5. And what Paul says there in Ephesians 5 is that man was created this way, woman was created this way—male and female, head and helper—in the design of God so that in this relationship between man and woman there would be a clear visible picture to the world of God's love for His people, Christ's relationship with His church.

This is where we realize that this whole manhood and womanhood thing is so much greater than just how this affects this or that in our lives, as important as that is, and we'll get to that next week. But the reality is, we are in a divine drama on a divine stage where God has chosen to create man this way, woman this way, marriage to look like this—so that the world would see a loving picture of a groom for a bride. A groom that is trustworthy to lead a bride well, and a bride that loves her groom well. Christ is our sacrificial groom. He did come at the bidding of the Father.

So this is where, especially if you're not a follower of Christ and you've been hanging with me through to this point, hang with me. See this: the Son of God came at the bidding of the Father to die on the cross for our sins, to save us from our sins. The Bible describes Him as a groom that makes it possible for us to be... We are His submissive bride in a relationship where we live to serve Him, where we can trust a Head to lead us and guide us well and we find our life in

submission to Him. That's the whole point. That's the whole point, that we would see Christ and His relationship with the church in man and woman and their relationship in marriage.

This is why, when you see this in Scripture, you will in your mind and your heart as you have opportunity, you will fight against ideas, policies in our culture that threaten to undo this because you know there is something much more at stake than man, woman, marriage. The glory of Christ is on display in a picture of man and woman together. So you fight that with zeal because God has designed the headship of men and the help of women to display the glory of Christ in the salvation of the church and we want His glory known. And we submit our minds and our hearts and our lives.

We embrace complementary differences between man and woman because we know that a right understanding and practice of biblical manhood and biblical womanhood, now you see it, is essential for passing the gospel on to the next generation. How can boys and girls see the gospel in us if we undercut the very picture of God in man and woman and marriage? It's essential that we embrace these things.

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