

Marriage and The Family

The Way We Think

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Tonight, we'll continue to examine the theme of the way we think and if you'll remember, we're journeying through the first 11 chapters of Genesis and hitting the highlights as it relates to the formation of our biblical worldview, learning to think biblically as opposed to just responding and reacting in terms of the culture, in terms of media. There are many influences out there and for most of us, we really aren't aware of how much we have been influenced until we come up against what we find in the Scriptures and are forced to respond accordingly. And so as we make our way through this series, we've now found our way to chapter 2. If you remember on last time, we talked about work and the way that we think about work biblically, and this time, if I can get things to respond the way that I need them to, we will look at the issue of marriage and family.

Genesis 2. First listen to this from Andreas Kostenberger in his book, "God, Marriage and Family." He writes, "Measured against the biblical teaching on marriage and the family, it seems undeniable that Western culture is decaying. In fact, the past few decades have witnessed nothing less than a major paradigm shift with regards to marriage and the family. The West Judeo-Christian heritage and foundation have largely been supplanted by a liberation ideology that elevates human freedom and self-determination as the supreme principle for human relationships. In their confusion, many hail the decline of the biblical traditional model of marriage and the family, and its replacement by new and competing moralities as major progress." It seems like maybe there's a bit of hyperbole there. Surely there's no one out there who would argue that the decline of the family is actually, in the long run, progress for us all. But that's not hyperbole. He gives an example of Arie Hoekman, used to be the head of the UN Population Fund, Arie Hoekman, a few years back, argued that the decline of marriage, high rates of divorce and out-of-wedlock births, instead of representing a social crisis, actually represent a triumph of human rights against patriarchy. In other words, this leader of the UN Population Fund argued better to see women raising children by themselves than to see families where men are heads of household because it is inherently unhealthy, it is inherently undemocratic, to use a wonderful catch word, it is inherently undemocratic to view the family the way that Christians have traditionally viewed the family, to look at the household as being organized in such a way that the man does take leadership and

exercise headship and oversight and accept responsibility for such. According to Hoekman and many others who argue similarly, this is an idea that needs to go away.

And beyond that, there are others, for example, those in the fringes of the feminist movement. One of the great ironies is that people argue the feminist movement exists because there was a vacuum; men weren't doing and being what they were supposed to do and be, so women stepped up. That is actually not only untrue, it's the opposite of the truth. The feminist movement, and I mean either the one in the 1800s or the one really popularized in the 1900s, was a rejection outright, not only of male headship, but a rejection of the family itself. Listen to this statement from one of the leading feminists of her day. She writes, "The nuclear family must be destroyed and people must find better ways of living together. Whatever its ultimate meaning, the breakup of families now is an objectively revolutionary process. No woman should have to deny herself any opportunities because of her special responsibilities to her children." She continues, "Families will finally be destroyed only when a revolutionary social and economic organization permits people's needs for love and security to be met in ways that do not impose divisions of labor or any external roles at all."

Now, we need to pay attention to this. There are many, for example, who've argued why this seeming joining of forces between the feminist movement and the LGBTQIRSTUVWXYZ, whatever, why the seeming linking of hands between these movements in particular? Well, the feminist movement since the 1960s has had as its ultimate goal the same thing that the homosexual movement has as its ultimate goal, that the polygamous movement has as its ultimate goal, and the pedophilia movement has as its ultimate goal, and that is the demise of the very concept of marriage and the family. It's only when that concept no longer exists that all bets are off. Anyone, anything, anywhere, pure freedom, zero responsibility, and no such thing as sin anymore in the area of human sexuality.

All of these movements have the same end goal in mind, and I know it's easy for us to say, "Well you know, that's true and obviously he mentioned the West and, you know, a lot of these things are, you know, problems in the West, but of course they're not problems here." Yes, they are. Yes, they are. Whether you want to talk about the imposition of these ideologies from the West by using things like the World Bank and others, by strong-arming African nations, trying to force them to change their ideologies or at least their laws as they relate to marriage and family, and particularly to homosexuality, yes, there is a carrot and stick approach being used today as it relates to these ideologies but the carrot is getting smaller and smaller and the stick grows bigger every day. It's happening right here, all around us, these same ideas and ideals. If you want to know how far things have fallen, all you have to do is turn on BBC radio. When they are not propagandizing you about Islam, they will be propagandizing you about the gay, lesbian, homosexual, bisexual, transgender, gender neutral, whatever. It will be one piece of propaganda after another, speaking about these things as though the battle has already been won, these definitions have already been established, we've already proven that these things are what whoever on the left says that they are, and anyone who stands

in the way is someone who is not worthy of participating in civilized society and these are influences that are having sway even among us here.

So as we look at these things, let us keep in mind the consequences surrounding them. Open with me if you will, Genesis 2. Let's begin to examine the text. Genesis 2. The amazing thing about this text, the latter part of Genesis 2, there beginning around 18, is that all of these issues are addressed either directly or indirectly right here in the text, and as we said at the beginning of this series, there is a reason that the attacks being leveled against the Bible always begin with the first 11 chapters of Genesis because if the first 11 chapters of Genesis mean what they say, then we're in trouble. If the first 11 chapters of Genesis mean what they say, then we have based much of what we believe in the world today upon lies that are in direct opposition to what we find in the Scripture and to what God says about the world that he created and rules as Sovereign Lord. So these things matter.

Let's look there. "Then the LORD God said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone.'" Stop. I can never read this passage without pointing out the fact that, again, an astute hearer, and remember, people would have heard this orally, an astute hearer would have heard a pattern, an almost poetic pattern. In Genesis 1, you hear over and over again, "Let there be. Then there was. It was good. Let there be. Then there was. It was good. Let there be. Then there was. It was good. Let there be. Then there was. It was good." Over and over and over again until finally, "Let there be. Then there was. And it was very good." And here in Genesis 2 and verse 18 is the first time that God says something is not good. Now, if this had been delivered in the form of an email, this would have been bold, italicized, and in a different color than the rest of the font so that it would scream to the reader, "There's something important here. It is not good."

Now, mind you, God says it is not good before the fall has occurred. Now this is important because, again, according to Romans 5 and many other New Testament passages, sin enters the world in Genesis 3 when Adam eats. Amen? We're gonna get there, but sin enters the world in chapter 3 when Adam eats. So here's the issue: there is no sin in the world and God says something is not good. How can something be not good if there's no sin in the world? Well, there are things that can be not good, but not sinful. I'll explain that as we move along and I know there's some of you Type A personalities out there who won't be able to rest until we get back to this. I just want you to know I'm going to enjoy making you wait. I know that's not good.

He says, "I will make him a helper fit for him." So first time God says something is not good, now he's going to do something about the something that is not good. Here's what's interesting: God says it is not good for the man to be alone so something is amiss here, and then the next phrase is, "I will make." So the man hasn't done anything wrong. Has God done something wrong? Because God is responding to the thing that's not good. It's not good for the man to be alone, "I will make him a helper suitable for him." Now you would think that, I mean, in all of this, "Let there be. Then there was. It was good," everything is good, for the first time something is not good, God says he is going to

address the thing that's not good so you would think that in the next line, God would fix the thing that was not good.

"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." It is not good. There is something that's not good. Can you imagine being one of the angels? God's creating the world. God's creating man. It's not good for the man to be alone. Wait a minute. Wait, something's not good. "It's okay. I'm gonna take care of it. I'm gonna make him a helper suitable." Oh, it's okay. God's gonna take care of it. "Adam, name the animals." Wait, I thought we were taking care of Adam's problem, right? It would seem that the next line would be, and so God took care of Adam's problem, but that's not what happens next. What happens next is here are the animals, "Adam, name the animals." Why does Adam name the animals? There are a couple of issues here. First, there's an apologetic issue. Let me address that first. You can't talk about this in civilized company without people sort of becoming very nervous. When you talk about Genesis 1 and Genesis 2 in a certain way and people become nervous because they think that you're one of "those people," and by the way, "those people" are the people who take Genesis 1 and chapter 2, and really the rest of the Bible, to mean what it says. And I have been on college campuses addressing this issue, not Christian college campuses, I have, but also secular college campuses addressing this very issue and it's always amazing when people will come up and say, "Wait, hold on now. You're one of those people. You actually, I mean, you actually believe this stuff, that God did this, world created in six days things and all that." And yes, he did. Absolutely, I did. And one of the problems that they have is if you believe that this happened in literal 24 hour days, and I do, then that means that you believe that, you know, Adam is created and he names all the animals, has major surgery and organizes a wedding in 24 hours. And that's exactly what happened.

But how? A couple of things. First of all, Adam didn't name every single solitary animal. That's number 1. He didn't name every single animal. Secondly, the world would only have contained a fraction of the animals that you and I know now. Only a fraction of the animals. By the way, this also addresses a question concerning what we talked about this morning, Noah and the Ark. The question is, how does Noah get all of those animals onto the Ark? And again, people are looking at all of the animals that exist today, plus all of the animals that have ever gone extinct, and they're saying, how in the world could an Ark that size fit all of those animals? It didn't have to. It didn't have to. You wouldn't have had to have a fox and a wolf and a German Shepherd, you just, you wouldn't. You would have had two general dogs, two general dogs that contained all of the genetic material necessary to derive all the other dogs that we have seen since then from those two dogs. You wouldn't have had to see the lion and the cheetah and the house cat and, you know, again, you wouldn't, It wouldn't happen that way. It wouldn't have been necessary. Two cats with all the genetic material necessary so that from them you could derive all of the different types of cats that we've seen. And the same with the rest of the animals.

By the way, this also answers the question, how do we get people of all the varying ethnicities from just two human beings? Huh? Same thing happened with us that happened with the animals. God did not create the entire ethnic spectrum of people, he created Adam and Eve and they had all of the genetic material necessary to derive from the two of them all of the various ethnicity. Notice I didn't say races. There's only one race of people. You could argue spiritually there's two, the race of the first Adam and the race of the last Adam, but there's only one race of people. Folks, if we were different races, we would be different kinds. If we were different kinds, we wouldn't be able to reproduce with one another. There's one race of human beings. There are multiple ethnicities, but one race and we all came from the same two human beings. Just like God got all of the ethnicities of people from these two human beings, with all of the various categories of animals, he only needed two representatives with the necessary genetic material for him to derive the rest of the kinds that we have seen from them. Now when you realize this, the question is not how'd they get all those animals on the Ark, but why is the Ark so big? But enough of that.

Finally, Adam actually named categories of animals. As we read the text, as you read the text in Genesis 2, it becomes clear that he's naming categories of animals. So when you recognize this, there's absolutely zero problem with Adam getting this done in a 24-hour period. Couple that with the fact that his mind would have been perfect and not tainted by the fall and there's a whole lot that he could have gotten done. Amen? But then there are theological issues. There are some concepts that Adam would not have understood. For example, the concept of alone. How does he know he's alone? He doesn't know anything else. How do you know you're poor? You meet somebody who's not. Amen? Then all of a sudden, it's like, "Wait a minute, wait, wait, something, are we poor?" That happened to me as a boy. My mother was a single teenage mother, and we didn't have a whole lot, and there were certain things that we did, certain things that we ate, and certain things, you know, I just thought everybody did the same thing. I thought the patches that were put on my clothes were a style, not that we were trying to make them last. And we went and visited some relatives who were not poor and I remember going back home with my mother and asking my mother, "Mom, are we poor?" She says, "Boy, you didn't know that?" Adam would have no concept of alone, right? He would have no concept of need. Of course, all of his needs are met. So God demonstrates here that marriage is his idea, not man's idea, which means man does not have a right to redefine the thing. It did not come from us, it came from God so we don't get to mess with it. Amen?

"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." That phrase there, "there was not found a helper fit for him," was God trying to find a helper fit for him among the other animals? No. God knows what he's going to do. God has already said what he's going to do. So this phrase here, that there was not found a helper fit for him, indicates that during this naming of the animals, Adam is recognizing that among the animals there are these unions that exist and he doesn't have one. Everybody has somebody and nobody looks good to him. Amen? He would now understand alone. He would now understand need. This is why the naming of the animals happened precisely at this place. He needed to know what God did and why.

"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 [or fashioned] into a woman." It's interesting that the words used there for what God did when he made Adam is a much simpler word. Just kind of made him, you know, it's kind of took some dirt and just made him, but the word that's used for what he did for Eve is much more elaborate. Her, he fashioned. Amen, hallelujah, praise the Lord.

"Then the man said, 'This is at last.' Interesting, you put those two things together, something was not found for him. God's not looking for something. He's looking for something. It wasn't found. He wakes up. Eve has been created. He sees her and he says, 'This is at last,' which means that there was something before that hadn't worked but now this at last, finally, this is not like everything else. 'This is at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman [or Isha], because she was taken out of Man [or Ish].'" And hence In this text, we have something that many people look right over because we talk about the whole idea of male headship and so on and so forth, and that is absolutely true, but before we talk about this, we have to talk about the fact that the man and the woman were made and fashioned by the hand of God, and the woman was made from the man, and the man calls her "bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh, she is what I am." There is complete equality between men and women. She is everything he is. She is not less than he is. She is not of less value than he is. She is not of less worth than he is. She is not of less significance than he is. In fact, God makes her a corresponding part to him.

This is important to note for there are cultures in the world that do not believe or practice this. They do not believe that women are of equal value as human beings to men. They do not believe that women are of equal worth as human beings to men. There are places in this world where a woman's voice in the courtroom does not count the same as a man's voice in the courtroom. There are places in this world where a woman can be raped by a man, and if she brings charges with her lone voice and not with four others to verify what she is saying, then she could be the one who is disciplined for promiscuity, because she cannot prove the rape because her voice is not worth what a man's voice is.

This is not what we find in Genesis 2. Adam says, "This is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh. She is what I am. She was taken from me." What was taken from him, he got back and so much more. Amen? And so biblically we see that whatever headship is, it has nothing to do with worth or value, but God does in this same instance establish headship, male headship. Again, there are many who try to argue that male headship doesn't come until the curse to Eve in chapter 3 and verse 16. We'll look at that if we have time. But we see male headship here. Again, any astute reader, the woman was made after the man, male headship. The woman was made for the man, male headship. "I will make him a helper suitable for him," male headship. The woman was made from the man, male headship. The woman was brought to the man, male headship. Then, if none of those other things were true, the only thing we would need is the last one, she was named by the man. This is the other reason we have the naming of the animals. You see, the man is

exercising dominion over all of the other creatures. He is exercising headship. Amen? "Adam, exercise your headship." How? "Name all these animals." He didn't say, "Adam, I'm going to have each animal come up to you and tell you what his name is. Remember it." No. He says, "Adam, exercise your headship, exercise your dominion as my vice regent and name the animals."

God makes Eve from the side of Adam. Adam wakes up and immediately he names her like he named everything else. Male headship. And we hold these two ideas together, that men and women are of equal worth before God, of equal value before God, of equal standing before God, but within the context and confines of marriage, there is male headship. This is a uniquely biblical view of marriage and the family, complete equality in worth and value and dignity, and yet for the sake of order, headship and submission.

God also gives marriage its purpose and I want us to think about this. As we think about marriage, this is perhaps, again, there are these other nuances, right? Who is a man? Who is a woman? What is the worth of man? What is the worth of woman? What is their relative worth, value, dignity to one another? These are important issues in our worldview but from a more practical level, I would argue that the more important issue is what's the purpose of marriage? It's been said, and I don't know where I heard it first, but I've repeated it so many times that I hold it as my own, if you don't know the purpose of a thing, you will eventually abuse it. If you don't know the purpose of a thing, you will eventually abuse it. If we don't know the purpose of marriage, if we don't know the purpose of the family, we will eventually abuse it. And it is being abused all over the world but for our purposes and more importantly, it's being abused all over Zambia, it's being abused all over Lusaka by people inside the church and outside the church who don't know the purpose of the thing, or who believe what the culture says about the purpose of the thing. And so the purpose is my happiness, and if I'm not happy then my marriage is no longer fulfilling any sort of purpose and I can just throw it away because I'm not happy.

Oh, how often has this been the case even with people in the church? I can't tell you how many times I've had conversations with people who were claiming on the one hand to be Christian and on the other hand that they were about to walk away from their marriage. Why? "Because I'm just not happy," and then this is what follows, "and I don't believe God would want me to stay in a marriage and be unhappy." There's a person who doesn't know the purpose of the thing. "I just don't believe that God would want me to be unhappy. I got in this so that I could be happy, and I'm not happy, therefore I should get out of this." Again, let me see if I understand this correctly, the spotless, sinless Lamb of God, the Son of God who has had complete and utter unity and harmony with the Father, perfect, unbroken love with the Father for all eternity, God crushed and killed for his own glory, but you he wouldn't want unhappy. Who do you think you are? The sinless Christ dies for sin, not his own, but you can't be miserable.

So what is the purpose? I'm glad you asked. By the way, it's not misery. Three main purposes that we see here: procreation, illustration, sanctification. Again, procreation, illustration, sanctification. Let's look at these in turn. First, in terms of procreation, okay?

There were a lot of things that Adam could have done had Eve not come along. Procreation is not one of them. Amen? God's first command to man is be fruitful and multiply, and by the way, this is not a command as though, you know, he's commanding man to do something that he wasn't willing to do. It is more like a command of liberation, "Enjoy, be fruitful, multiply." Now, unfortunately, in the day and age in which we live, God would have to give it in the form of a command to people who don't want to do it because there are so many things that we consider far more important and so we've gone from God saying to us, "Enjoy, be fruitful, multiply," to us saying, "God, no more. No more.

This involves bearing and training children. We see this from the cultural mandate because the cultural mandate is something that cannot be carried out by Adam and Eve alone, it has to be carried out by their descendants, which means that they have to communicate to their descendants this same mandate. We'll see the exact same thing in Ephesians 6. And spreading the image of God throughout the earth. This is a big world. Amen? It's a big world God created and he created two people and said, "Fill it up." Amen. Of course the good news is they wouldn't have been able to tell how big the world was. Amen? Now, if he had taken them, you know, out to space and let them look at the whole globe and then said, "Fill it up," that, yeah.

Secondly, not only procreation, but illustration. Illustration, what is it? A physical model of a spiritual reality. Marriage is a physical model of a spiritual reality. It's also a triune representation of a Triune God. Remember I said I was going to answer that question for you? God said it's not good for the man to be alone so God creates man in his own image. The one God who has existed for all eternity in three persons, one God in three persons, the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the Son eternally begotten of the Father, the Spirit eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son creates man in his image and says, "It's not good for the man to be alone." So proceeding from the man is the woman, and proceeding from the union of the man and the woman is children, a triune representation of a Triune God. That's why it wasn't good. "Well, wait a minute, does that mean that if I'm not married that I'm not part of that representation or if we are married and we don't have children?" Listen, if you're here, you were born from a couple, which means you completed the triune picture regardless of what happens to you in the future. Amen? And we also learn later on in redemptive history that it is a redemptive picture, it is a picture of the relationship between Christ and his bride, the church, who was so precious to him that it is for her that he lays down his life. Amen?

So illustration, marriage exists for procreation, and again, procreation is about fulfilling the cultural mandate and spreading the image of God abroad throughout the world. Illustration, it's about a physical picture of spiritual reality. And finally, sanctification. Sanctification. As one author put it, God didn't give you marriage to make you happy, he gave it to you to make you holy. Amen? He gave it to you to make you holy. Sanctification, and I put these in two categories for the sake of seeing them. Active sanctification, the idea of avoiding sexual immorality, enjoying God-honoring sexual relationships within the confines of the marriage. 1 Corinthians 7 would be a great example and picture of that. So that active sanctification, also the active sanctification in

the way that we learn to deal with one another, Ephesians 4 Then there's the passive sanctification, just the fact that we have to learn to live with another imperfect sinner in the closest proximity imaginable. Amen?

Whenever I do weddings, I always make it a point to remind the bride and the groom that idea that they have in their heads of this being a fairy tale, and them being married, and always hearing music in the background, and walking on clouds, and I always remind them that that won't last through the reception. Amen? I always tell them, "You all are going to make each other mad before this night is over." Amen? Then you wake up in the morning, you won't look like this. Maybe you did but for most people, when they wake up the morning after they got married, they don't look like they did at the altar. Amen? You wake up next to someone and their makeup is not just perfect and flawless, and he's not in his tuxedo, and so on and so forth. The music is gone, there are no violins, there are no, people's breath is, you know, needs to be addressed, and all of these things. The fantasy is just over. Amen? But beyond that, there's the idea that this is an imperfect sinner and that oftentimes the very things that are so unique and so special are the things, after a number of years, that drive you crazy. That'll sanctify you unless you run away from it and oftentimes this is what we do. God brings us into close proximity with another imperfect sinner and by his grace, he gives us this union, this physical picture of a spiritual reality and he begins to chisel away at us and conform us to the image of Christ, and he begins to use our spouse to chisel away at us in areas that other people have never even seen before, and it's uncomfortable, and sometimes it's painful, but it's making us more like Jesus, and oftentimes, our tendency is to say, "Enough! I'm leaving because I don't like the process of being conformed to the image of Christ."

If you don't know the purpose of a thing, you will abuse it. By the way, most Christians have a very difficult time arguing against same-sex marriage. "Well, why not?" Well, because God made Adam and Eve and not Adam and Steve, and you'll get a laugh out of that or a chuckle, but not for too long. "Why not? What is wrong? What is wrong? Who's being hurt here? They're not hurting anybody." Isn't this what you hear? I'll tell you what is wrong: the purpose for which God created marriage, procreation, same-sex marriage categorically cannot procreate; illustration, the picture of the relationship between Christ and the church is blasphemed by a same-sex marriage; and finally, sanctification, God gives us a holy place and context for our desires to be fulfilled and homosexual unions bring something that God calls an abomination into that same context, saying that somehow that which is sinful is going to be made right. It's wrong on procreation. It's wrong on illustration. It's wrong on sanctification. And God defines marriage, not us. It must be rejected. Must be. Must be.

The real culture war. Listen to this, this is from John Calvin. "Moses now relates that marriage was divinely instituted, which is especially useful to know for since Adam did not take a wife to himself at his own will, but received her as offered and appropriated to him by God, the sanctity of marriage hence more clearly appears because we recognize God as its author. The more Satan has endeavored to dishonor marriage, the more should we vindicate it from all reproach and abuse, that it may receive its due reverence."

Listen, folks, this is a central issue. This is a gospel issue. If we are wrong about marriage, we are blaspheming the gospel. If we are wrong about who a man is and who a woman is and what a man is what a woman is, we're blaspheming the God who created men and women. If we are going to destroy the very definition of marriage and let any and everything stand in its place, then we're essentially saying that the cross work of Christ is not important enough to be defended. This matters. This matters. There are people's lives being destroyed. People are undergoing sexual reassignment surgery younger and younger and younger every day. What they don't tell you about is the astronomical suicide rate for people who undergo gender reassignment surgery, or so-called gender reassignment surgery. Nouns have genders. People have sexes. Amen? Gender is a linguistic thing. We have sexes. We're men and we're women. Two sexes, not two genders. The term gender is introduced so that it can be bent and shaped any way people want it within legal avenues and now you have even Christians who are referring to male and female as genders as opposed to sexes. Words matter. The meaning of words matter.

Here's the other problem when it comes to that particular issue. When a man says that he knows that he is a woman on the inside, here's the problem: how do you know what it feels like to be female if God made you male? "Well, because I feel like..." No, no, no, you don't understand. If you're not that, how do you know that what you are feeling is the thing that is the essence of what it means to be one of them? I'm not Zambian. Amen. I know some of y'all are shocked. Couldn't tell by my accent, huh? I'm not Zambian. Praise God for Zambia. I love Zambia. I love being in Zambia, but I'm not Zambian, and it would be an insult for me to stand up here and say, "I know what it feels like to be a Zambian." It would be an insult. No, I don't. That's far too complicated a thing. And by the way, that's not your essence, that's just where you were born. Amen? When we talk about male, female, we're talking about your essence. How can I say that I know that what I am feeling is the essence of who you are? That's insulting and yet, we have some of the smartest people in the world saying, "Yeah, that's true." No, it's not. It's utter foolishness. No man knows what it feels like to be a woman No woman knows what it feels like to be a man. You therefore cannot say that you are one sex on the outside and another on the inside. You have no way, no way whatsoever of classifying or clarifying such a thing. You can't. "I am homosexual. I am bisexual." Really? Prove it. You can't. You can't. You can't.

These things are real. These things are now and our children are growing up in a world where what they believe about what it means to be male and what it means to be female, what it means to be married what it means to be a family, is being defined by the blaspheming God-haters at the BBC and other places and not by the Scriptures. Or it's being defined by family or tribal traditions and not by the Scriptures. It's being defined by cultural traditions and not by the Scriptures. It's being defined by what's accepted in the West and not by the Scriptures. All of these things are problematic. There is no culture in the world, there is no tribe in the world, there is no nation, no tongue, no people in the world who get to define what a man is, what a woman is, and what marriage is. God has already done so and we are obligated to agree with him regardless of what's being said around us because if we don't know the purpose of a thing, we will abuse it, and this

thing points us to the reality of who God is and to the essence of who we are as created in his image. This matters. Ah, there's so much more that we could say about this but for now, we'll hold here.

Let's pray.

God, how we thank you for your goodness and your kindness and your mercy toward us, even in the fact that you haven't left us to wander aimlessly in the dark and figure out what it means to be men or women, husbands, fathers, mothers, wives, sons, daughters, but you have given us a clear witness in your word. Grant by your grace that we might hold to this witness in spite of changing ideas, in spite of changing morals, in spite of political pressures, academic pressures, job pressures. Grant by your grace that we might hold to your truth, not in order to be contrary but so that we might give your name the praise that it is absolutely due. Protect our sons and our daughters as the world tries to take away from them even those simple distinctions of being sons and being daughters. Grant by your grace that we would continue to raise young girls to be godly women and feminine, and that we would raise our boys to be godly men and masculine, so that as the world continues to deteriorate in these areas, when the time comes and someone asks where the truth is, there's always a place and always a remnant where we have held on because if we don't know what manhood is, how do we understand what it means that you so loved the world that you sent your Son? If we don't know what marriage is, how do we communicate to people what it means to be the bride of Christ? How do we communicate to people what it means that you've gone to prepare a place for your bride? How do we communicate to people what it means for the new Jerusalem to be preparing herself like a bride coming down out of heaven prepared for her bridegroom? How do we continue to communicate these truths if we bow the knee to a world that wants to eliminate the very meaning that helps them make sense? For the sake of the gospel, for the sake of the gospel grant us your aid. In Jesus' name. Amen.