

English Transcript

Foundations of the Christian Faith – Course 2

Lesson 3 - Mankind (Part 3)

Welcome back to Foundations of the Christian Faith, Course 2. We are continuing with Lesson 3, which is The Doctrine of Mankind, Part 3. We will begin on page 18 in your handout.

God did not need to create man, yet he creates us for his own glory. Man is made in God's image, which means that man is like God and represents him (Genesis 1:26). In Lesson 2 we learned that the image of God in man is distorted but not lost because of the Fall into sin and it is being restored through redemption in Christ (2 Corinthians 3:18). We also learned in Lesson 2 that man is most like God in his moral, spiritual, mental, and relational aspects.

When God recorded his act of creating humanity, he was careful to specify and emphasize that humans were created in his image, that they were created as male and female. This indicates that there is some distinction between the image of God in males and females. In this lesson we will explore those differences and what they mean.

When teaching this course with a group, there is a group activity to start this lesson. I break the class into two groups with men in one group and women in the other. The men are asked to describe how women display the image of God differently than men. And the women do the same for men displaying the image of God differently from women.

Each group reports out their findings and we begin to listen. We find that there are always common traits reflecting the shared attributes of God that are present in both male and female. Yet there are also differences in roles, differences in personality, and differences in responsibilities.

Read Genesis 1:27.

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

We see the creation of male and female explained on Genesis 2:18-25.

¹⁸ The Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."

¹⁹ Now the Lord God had formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds in the sky. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. ²⁰ So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds in the sky and all the wild animals.

But for Adam no suitable helper was found. ²¹ So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and then closed up the place with flesh. ²² Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

²³ *The man said, “This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called ‘woman,’ for she was taken out of man.”*

²⁴ *That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh.* ²⁵ *Adam and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.*

That helps us to explain how God made Adam and Eve male and female in his image. There was a creation order that was important to God. Adam was created first. God intended for Adam and man to fulfill certain roles within the marriage and family as well as within the church. Sin has impacted and created dysfunction in relationships, in marriage and even in the church. Praise God for the transforming work of the Gospel in which everything is being renewed back to the image of the Creator, by His grace.

Male and female genders were designed, in part, to help make men and women “suitable” for each other. The creation of man as male and female reveal God’s image in at least three ways:

1. First, they are created as equals in personhood and importance.
2. Second, there are differences based on role and God ordained authority.
3. Third, male and female can exist in harmonious interpersonal relationships.

Turn to the top of Page 19.

God designed men and women as equals.

The equality and importance of men and women are based squarely upon God's creation of both in the image and likeness of God.

Genesis 5:1-2 repeats what was stated in Genesis 1:26-27,

This is the written account of Adam’s family line. When God created mankind, he made them in the likeness of God. He created them male and female and blessed them. And he named them “Mankind” when they were created.

This equality is stressed throughout Scripture. Because many cultures minimize or devalue the role of women, let us see how the Bible elevates women to an equal footing or value and importance as men.

Proverbs 31:10 and 31: 28-31 powerfully state the value and dignity of women.

A wife of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than rubies.

Her children arise and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her: “Many women do noble things, but you surpass them all.” Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised. Honor her for all that her hands have done, and let her works bring her praise at the city gate.

Jesus ministered prominently to women and many of Paul's early converts were women.

Luke 8:1-3

After this, Jesus traveled about from one town and village to another, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God. The Twelve were with him, and also some women who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases: Mary (called Magdalene) from whom seven demons had come out; Joanna the wife of Chuza, the manager of Herod's household; Susanna; and many others. These women were helping to support them out of their own means.

Acts 16:14-15

One of those listening was a woman from the city of Thyatira named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth. She was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message. When she and the members of her household were baptized, she invited us to her home. "If you consider me a believer in the Lord," she said, "come and stay at my house." And she persuaded us.

The book of Acts quotes from the prophet Joel to describe the pouring out of the Holy Spirit on both men and women.

Acts 2:17-18 quoting Joel 2:28-29.

In the last days, God says, "I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy."

Peter tells husbands to honor their wives and treat them in an understanding, respectful way as the physically weaker partner and because they are equal, co-heirs together.

1 Peter 3:7

Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.

Paul also emphasizes that men and women are interdependent.

1 Corinthians 11:11-12

Nevertheless, in the Lord woman is not independent of man, nor is man independent of woman. For as woman came from man, so also man is born of woman. But everything comes from God.

Galatian 3:28

There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Men and women may have separate roles, however in importance, personhood, and spiritual significance they are equal before God. Even where distinct roles are emphasized in the Bible, the intrinsic equality of men and women remains the same for both.

How does your culture agree or disagree with the biblical truth that men and women are equal in God's sight?

What can be done to reinforce this within marriages, families, communities, as well as within the church?

The second doctrinal point is God designed men and women for separate roles.

God declares that differences in roles between male and female and husband and wife reflect differences in roles within the Trinity as well.

1 Corinthians 11:3

But I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.

John 10:28-30

"I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. I and the Father are one."

Luke 3:21-22

When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened²² and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."

Although there are separate roles within the Trinity, there is equality of personhood and importance and a perfect unity of the three persons in one God. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are co-equal, fully God, worthy of honor and praise. Yet we see distinct roles and godly submission, within the Trinity.

The Son submits willingly to the Father, even though they are equal. The Holy Spirit submits to the Father and the Son, willingly, even though they are each co-equal.

Since we are made in the image and likeness of God, male and female are also equal in personhood and importance yet male and female have differences in roles and authority.

The relationship between husband and wife in marriage is a helpful illustration of this equal yet different principle. Men and women made in the image of God likewise have separate roles. God has given man the role of spiritual head, just as the Father has that role in the Trinity. God created Eve to be a helpmate, one who would come alongside Adam to complete and complement him. Successfully conducted, these roles between husband and wife reflect and glorify the careful love, consideration, deference, and trust found in the Trinity. Ephesians 5:22-33 is a key passage to reinforce these God-ordained differences.

Marriage roles existed before the Fall and have continued since, but these roles are often distorted because of sin. Adam's place as a first created human is mentioned in the New

Testament in 1 Timothy chapter 2:13-15. *“For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner.”*

Eve was created as a helper for Adam in support of his leadership.

As a result of the Fall in Genesis 3, the curse of sin distorted original male and female roles. Genesis 3:16 says, *To the woman he said, “I will make your pains in childbearing very severe; with painful labor you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.”*

God is not commanding Adam to rule over Eve. God is stating what will tend to happen because of sin. Adam should have been leading. Eve should have been yielding to his leadership. You can make the point Adam was passive. He should have stepped in and led spiritually. Eve took on the responsibility that Adam should have been fulfilling. One consequence for sin will be the tension in relationships in marriage with competition, harshness, and self-ambition.

Redemption though, reaffirms the order of the roles going back at creation. The work of Jesus on the cross is meant to redeem a believer's entire life including the marriage roles and responsibilities.

The instructions in the New Testament concerning marriage are meant to reestablish the role of husbands in God's original plan for marriage.

Colossians 3:18-19

Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them.

Ephesians 5:22-33,

²² Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. ²³ For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. ²⁴ Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.

²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her ²⁶ to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, ²⁷ and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.

³² This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church. ³³ However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

1 Peter 3:1-7

Wives, in the same way submit yourselves to your own husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives, ² when they see the purity and reverence of your lives. ³ Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as elaborate hairstyles and the wearing of gold jewelry or fine clothes. ⁴ Rather, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight. ⁵ For this is the way the holy women of the

past who put their hope in God used to adorn themselves. They submitted themselves to their own husbands, ⁶ like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her lord. You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear.

⁷ Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.

This plan involves love, humility, submission, mutual trust, openness, servanthood, and respect. It is designed to be an experience of complete openness between a man and a woman without shame in a picture before sin. Within this relationship the roles of headship and submission are practiced with great mutual respect, consideration, and trust.

How does this make you feel about your family relationships?

Are the ways in which you might reflect God more effectively in the way you relate to one another in your home?

How does the Bible's teaching on differences in marriage roles compare to the attitudes expressed in the culture around you?

We have stated that men and women are equal in personhood and importance and they are also created with differences in role and authority.

The third doctrinal point is that God designed men and women for relationship.

God said it is not good for man to be alone in Genesis 2:18. God decided to make a helper suitable for Adam. From this statement we learn that humanity was made for relationships.

While we are capable of many kinds and levels of relationship, none is as significant in importance and intimacy as marriage.

In marriage the man reflects the image of God by his masculine personality and role as a spiritual head of the home, honoring and caring for his wife. The woman reflects the image of God through her feminine personality, a role of honoring and complimenting the man or husband.

Their union together is a harmonious marriage relationship, mysteriously reflecting the relationship between Christ and the church.

Although the analogy is inexact, something of unity, trust, and intimacy that exists within the Trinity can be seen in a harmonious marriage.

When God blesses this union with children, the process of procreating and raising those children is a further opportunity to express the image of God and to bring God glory.

Can the Christian life be conducted without relationship to other Christians? No.

We are created for relationships. We are part of the body of Christ. There are more than thirty “one another” commands in the New Testament that we could never live out unless we are in relationship with one another. Though we are many, we form one body and each part of the body is to work together. We are interdependent, not independent.

Can the Christian life be conducted without relationships with unbelievers? No.

God has called us to be ambassadors, to be witnesses. God has chosen to make known the mystery of the Gospel through the church. The church will make known the mystery of the Gospel to the world around us by how we live and the words that we share to proclaim the good news.

We need fellowship within the body of Christ, and we need to be in relationship with those who are outside of Christ because how else will they come to know the way to the Father.

Humans are made in the image of God. We are also individually unique. This includes the fact that God made men and women to reflect the image of God differently. Because men and women think differently and reflect God's image differently, we are created to complement one another.

In this relationship, it is important to remember that while occupying separate roles, men and women have equal value in their personhood, importance, and spiritual significance. We were designed to complement one another. It is also important to remember that the primary purpose in relationship is to reflect God and to bring him glory.

This concludes our three lessons on the doctrine of mankind. When we continue with Lesson 4, there will be two lessons on the doctrine of Sin followed by two lessons on the doctrine of Salvation.