

A MANLY REVOLUTION

WHY GENDER MATTERS TO GOD

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.

In Genesis 1-2 God's creation was accomplished by specific acts over six distinct days. Each step of God's creation was marked by separation. Rather than a uniform world of boring sameness - God's creation was full of variety. At each turn God drew clear distinctions.

In fact, Genesis begins when God "divides the light from the darkness." The first strike of creation is to separate... Next, God divides the waters under the atmosphere, from the waters above the atmosphere...

Afterward, God gathers the seas, and separates them from the dry land... God then creates a myriad of vegetation - yet in keeping with the structure of creation - each plant multiplies after its specific kind.

God's creative power didn't just splash components and color together in a homogenous fashion to end up with a beautiful whole. No, creation was accomplished along narrow lines. God draws out boundaries and parameters, and then He colors between the lines.

On Day Four God again separates - this time the day from the night... He creates fish, and birds, and beasts; but again within very exact biological boundaries...

Each order, or genus, or family is narrowly specific. And every living thing reproduces after its own kind.

Genesis tells us God fills the sea until it teems with life, but each species multiplies after its unique brand.

In fact, the terms "species" and "specific" are from the same root word. Obviously, God places a high priority on maintaining distinctions within His creation.

And understand God Himself - His very nature - is an example of oneness, but with a distinct separation.

Deuteronomy 6:4 was the Hebrew call to worship, "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one!"

The word translated "one" in Deuteronomy is "echad." It speaks of a compound unity. My fist is an "echad" - one fist that consists of five distinct fingers.

And this is the type of oneness we find in God. He is one God, but He exists in three distinct persons: *Father, Son, and Holy Spirit*. Christians refer to this truth as "the triune nature of God"... or the *Trinity*.

All three members of the Godhead are equal in substance and importance - but distinct in the role they play... The **Father** sits on the throne in heaven, as

sovereign over creation... The **Son** comes to earth and becomes a man to redeem and to save...

The **Spirit** takes up where Jesus leaves off. He points people to the Son. The Holy Spirit lives within the believing heart and imparts to us God's power...

The fact the Son submits to the Father, and the Spirit promotes the Son - doesn't make the Son inferior to the Father, or the Spirit less divine than the Son.

All three members of the Trinity - Father, Son, and Spirit - are equal in nature, but distinct in their roles.

And there is no competition or friction within this arrangement. The Son doesn't complain, "*Oh, the Father is worshipped, while I suffer on a cross...*"

The Spirit doesn't buck for more attention - "*Why do I have to lead people to Jesus? Can't I grab a few headlines of My own?*" You never see members of the Trinity question or complain about their specific roles.

God exists and functions in diversity, yet harmony.

Back to Genesis 1-2... God reaches the apex of His creation, it's cap and crown... He creates man, but again His work comes with a significant distinction...

We're told in 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.**" God separates mankind into two specific genders - *male* and *female*.

Gender mirrors the Trinity. The distinctions of male and female reflect God's image. The *unity of our humanity* blended with the *diversity of our gender* is one way humans were made in the image of God.

Apparently, **Gender matters to God.**

The Bible teaches that masculinity and femininity are not just the result of society's nurturing, and educating, and the conditioning of the sexes. Gender differences are the result of creation. God designed maleness and femaleness, and the specific traits unique to both.

It's interesting, in Ephesians 5, in 1 Timothy 2, in 1 Corinthians 11 - whenever the Bible speaks of gender it always reverts back to Genesis and God's creation.

I believe God is saying that **gender is a much deeper issue than first century customs. Gender roles are entrenched in the make-up of the sexes. Masculinity and femininity result from the creation - not culture.**

Once, there were two pastors who lived next door to each other. One of the men led the local Methodist church - the other pastored the local Baptist church.

These two families each had five year old children. The two kids were best of friends. One of the children was a little boy, and the other was a little girl. Every Sunday morning the two kids would wave to each other

as they drove off to their respective church. On Sunday afternoon they would play together in the front yard.

One blistering hot day the kids were playing in the sprinkler. Their clothes were soaked, so they took them off, and laid them out to dry on the hood of the car.

Of course, the two children were both innocent - they were just five. But when the little boy saw the little girl without her clothes, he stood there scratching his head. Later he told his dad, *“Wow, I didn’t know there was so much difference between Baptists and Methodists.”*

Of course, Baptists and Methodists are alike in a major way – *they’re both Christians.* Nevertheless, they have their subtle differences... And the same is true with males and females. We’re alike because we’re both human beings and made in God’s image, but God would never want us to overlook our distinctiveness.

When God created us He did so male and female. He designed men to be men and women to be women. God chose to separate and create us with distinction.

He shrouds each of the sexes in their own glory, and expects us to celebrate and maintain our differences. Let me say it again, **Gender matters to God.**

As a friend of mine - an elderly lady at CalvaryCSM - is fond of saying, *“Pastor Sandy, I long for the day when men were men and women were proud of it.”*

Yet this is not the prevailing mood and push of today’s society. Godless religion - paganism of old and New Age thought today - abhors distinctions between the sexes. The pagan ideal is an asexual society.

The priority of today’s media-driven, popular paganism is the opposite of God’s creation. God stressed separation and specificity. All God created was about distinction, diversity, and variety - whereas, the pop-religion of Oprah is all about oneness.

Neo-paganism abolishes any distinctions. Everything is one. Even God and His creation are one. Here’s the mantra, *“All is in God, and God is in all. Don’t look outside of yourself for God. Look for the god within...”*

The religion of evolution teaches that all life is qualitatively the same. The only factors distinguishing mankind from the algae growing in the retention pond are simply chance and development. Human beings are of no greater nobility than a plant or an animal.

This is why the neo-pagans consider it evil to kill an animal for its fur or sport - or to cut down a tree to produce lumber - or to dig up plants to build a house.

And this insistence on oneness extends even to gender. This is why paganism is unisex and gender-neutral. It denies any distinction within nature - even when it comes to the sexes. Supposedly, we’re all one.

In fact, this is why the celebrated sacrament of today's paganism is same-sex marriage. It glorifies oneness. **Homosexual marriage erases the boundaries and distinctions God weaved into the fabric of society.**

Homosexuality is all about *unity with no diversity*. Under the LGBTQ rainbow distinctions get denied. It's oneness run amok - and an assault on God's order.

Sameness was never God's plan. The Creator is infinitely creative. The true God is separate from His creation. And He works within nature to divide, specify, and establish roles. And this shows up in gender...

God made the sexes not to *compete*, or *clash*, or *cancel each other out*, but to complement one another.

Heterosexual marriage honors the distinctiveness found in God's creation and *in His very nature*.

Let me say it again, **"Gender roles matter to God."**

Now let's head back to Genesis and talk more about God's creation of man. **Genesis 2:7 tells us, "And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being."** Notice God created man first.

This is a vital point... In the NT when Paul instructs Timothy on how to order the church, he tells him, **"I do not permit a woman to teach or have authority over a**

man..." why? **"For Adam was formed first, then Eve."** Here's the biblical order... Man was formed first.

In the Bible special prerogatives and responsibilities were always given to the firstborn. This is why Jacob wanted to usurp the authority and position of the firstborn from his older brother, Esau. The title **"firstborn"** didn't just refer to birth order, as much as it did to privilege and authority and blessing in the family.

In Colossians 1:15 Jesus is called **"the firstborn over all creation."** When it comes to God's created order Jesus has firstborn status. He's from eternity past. He had no beginning, yet here He's refers to as **"firstborn."**

Jesus is the head over every created thing... And in the case of the human race, Adam was also made the **firstborn**. He had authority over the human family.

This honor involved privilege **and** responsibility. I mean, *heavy responsibility*. Later, when sin enters the world, it's Eve that sins first - not Adam. **Yet guess who God holds responsible? It's Adam!** This is why sin passed down to all men through Adam - not Eve.

A human mom made Jesus a man, but for Him to be sinless God had to be His father. Man's propensity to sin was inherited from the very first man, Adam.

This is what theologians call **federal headship**. One man takes authority over a family or a race. *One man*

acts on behalf of *all men*. Romans 5 tells us we are all condemned *in Adam*, so we all can be saved *in Christ*.

When a man becomes a husband and a father - and takes on the *headship* of a family - this becomes a grave, serious, weighty responsibility. It's enormous.

In one sense, Eve's sin was not Adam's fault. Yet God made Adam accountable for her actions. This is biblical headship - it's taking responsibility for what's not my fault. A man covers his wife and kids. As we mentioned last night, Ezekiel 22:30 tells us that a real man, a manly man... stands in the gap for others.

Men, your wife bears scars and hurts from past relationships. Her wounds and the dysfunctions they cause are not your fault, but now that you're married to her they've become your responsibility. As the head of your home you are now God's healing agent...

Yet sadly, some husbands are only a voice of condemnation. He's an evil echo of his wife's shameful past. He's a constant reminder of her past failings. *If that's you, gentleman - shame on you.*

To be the head of your home you have to *man up!* You need to build into your wife honor and dignity. Cherish her until she begins to value herself. Love her until she becomes more lovable. Jesus redeems his bride, He doesn't condemn her. *Let's be like Jesus.*

When you married, your wife may've brought a *kid with an attitude* into your life. He too is not your fault.

But a manly man, *like Jesus*, takes on responsibility. Headship is being accountable for what's not our fault.

A lot happens in life that we can blame on our wife, or child, or dog... But a true man won't bellyache about what's not his fault. A man takes on responsibility - *to pay her debt - to forgive their sin - to fix the break.*

A real man shows his family a better life. He is like Jesus to his family. *Does this describe your influence?*

I'll never forget the fellow who approached me after a Bible Study and said he'd decided to join our church.

He'd been coming several years, so I figured he already felt CC was his church home. I asked him why he'd reached his decision at this particular time.

He said, *"Pastor Sandy, I've been watching your wife."* That's a little creepy! Somebody is watching your wife, but then he added, *"She seems healthy and happy, and since she thrives under your leadership, I figure my family will do the same."* Wow, I still didn't like him watching my wife, but he had some wisdom...

Husband, do you smother and stifle your wife - or do you allow her to flower and flourish? A husband needs to enhance his wife and kids - physically, and emotionally, and spiritually. Here's the bottom line, do you see your family as the answer to your needs or are

you the answer to theirs? *Adam was created first, but with authority came responsibility.*

Its interesting God knew that it was not good for Adam to be alone, *long before Adam was aware of his deficiency.* God had to awaken in Adam his need.

That's why God paraded before Adam all the animals. In Genesis 2, **“every beast of the field and every bird of the air... to see what he would call them.”**

In antiquity the privilege of naming was a function of dominion and authority. *How odd would it be if I came into your backyard - and named your dog?* It's not my place to name somebody else's pet - or child.

Last session I stated God made men for dominion. A *manly man* takes charge of his environment. He builds walls - *a marriage, or a family, or a business, or a church* - then he protects and mentors what he builds.

Here Adam expresses his dominion by naming the animals. And Adam does a very impressive job.

Genesis 2:19 reads, **“Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field.”**

Imagine, naming thousands of species of sea and land creatures. Adam's brain - the first brain - untainted by sin - had capabilities that far exceed brains today. I can't recall the twenty-one birthdays I'm supposed to remember, let alone myriads of insects, fish, and fowl.

It reminds me of the man who needed a new brain. He went to the doctor for a brain transplant, and there were numerous choices... He whittled down his options to either the brain of a former Calgary Flames fan, or the brain from a former Edmonton Oilers fan.

It was a tough decision, but it ultimately came down to price. The brain of the Flames' fan was 100 bucks, while the brain of the Oilers' fan was \$10 million.

He asked the salesman why the brain from a Oiler's fan was so expensive. He replied, **“Well, it's never been used.”** Adam had this unspoiled, powerful brain that ran on all cylinders. Naming the animals was easy.

Yet Adam ran into a problem. When the animals strolled by to be named, they came in pairs. There was Mr. and Mrs. Zebra, and Mr and Mrs. Rhinoceros, and Mr. and Mrs. Kangaroo... *But where was Mrs. Man?*

Verse 20 reads, **“But for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him.”** As he surveyed the animals it was painfully obvious there was no companion **“comparable to him.”** Everyone had a partner but him.

Think of Adam in the grandstand. **The giraffes walk by and Adam says, “No, there're not for me. I try to gaze into their eyes and I'll get a crick in my neck...”**

The pigs stroll by, “Nope, I’d rather go shopping than play in the mud...” Little did he know what awaited him.

And then the dogs... He thought, “I can’t marry them they’re man’s best friend.” Adam went to sleep that night frustrated. Everyone had a partner except him. For the first time he realized he also needed a sidekick.

But here’s a vital point you shouldn’t miss - before he played the *name game* with the animals, Adam’s own soul was content with God. Adam was a *manly man*. He needed no other person to complete him.

Some men think the answer to life is a wife. Some women think the answer is a husband. After marriage they’ve got so many new problems they’ve forgotten the original question. When two *needy* people marry real problems start... Marriage ends up like a screen door. You’ve got the flies on the outside trying to get in, and the flies on the inside desperately trying to get out.

If a person gets married expecting from a spouse what only God can supply - it’ll be frustrating for that person, and unfair to their spouse. Everyone should realize only God can fill their *inner emptiness*.

Later in Genesis 2 God gives us the details on Eve’s creation. And once again, God divides. He splits open the man, takes out a rib, and makes the woman.

I like one fellow’s comment on Eve’s creation, “This was the first splitting of an Adam, and it unleashed a force into the world that has never been contained.”

Genesis 2:21 reads, “The LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place...” Actually, the Hebrew word “*rib*” means “something curved.”

Whether Eve was made from an actual rib, or an extra organ, *or...* (*I know it doesn’t sound as romantic, but*) a piece of cartilage - whatever it was God used, after the surgery something was missing from the man.

Adam was no longer as God created him. He was no longer whole. And it comes as no surprise to most women, to realize their husband *is not all there!*

He’s missing some parts. One woman told me marrying a man is like purchasing a swing set. You bring home the box - take everything out - start putting it together - then realize you’re missing some pieces.

It could be that the original Adam was a blend of *masculine strength* and *feminine sensitivity*. He was a hunk who could talk like a poet. Adam could chop wood or crochet equally well. *A real renaissance man!*

But to turn Adam into a social creature God took the tender gland out of his side to fashion a woman.

Now the post-op Adam needed Eve to balance him out. She supplied him with heart. She gave her husband *the gentleness, and sensitivity* he no longer possessed on his own. There's an old country song written by Collin Ray, entitled, "Little Rock." I like this line from the song, "Without you, baby, I'm not me."

That's how Adam saw Eve, and that's how every husband should see his wife. God made the sexes to *complete* each other - not to *compete* with each other.

Once I was performing a wedding ceremony, and I meant to say, "God gives the woman to complement a man, and the man to complement a woman."

That's what I meant to say... But that's not what came out of my mouth. Sadly, I actually said, "God gave the woman to complicate the man..." Oops.

It's actually true, but it was not the point I was trying to make at the time. A good wife who complements her husband is worth any complications that might arise.

The Jewish rabbis had a beautiful teaching. They said a man is restless as long as he's missing the rib taken from his side. While the woman is restless until she gets back under the arm from where she came.

A man finds what he's missing in a woman, while a woman finds her greatest fulfillment helping her man.

A man can do it all... career, success car, mansion, adventure - but none of it matters without the missing gal near his heart... A woman can have it all... career, success, car, mansion, *maid for the mansion* - but she's still longing for her place back by her man's side.

1 Corinthians 11 is another passage that speaks to gender roles among Christians. It too brings up Eve's creation as evidence for male headship.

In fact, all the gender-related passages in the NT: Ephesians 5, 1 Corinthians 11, 1 Timothy 2 take us all the way back to Genesis and God's original creation.

I believe God is saying that gender is a much deeper issue than first century customs. Gender roles are entrenched in the make-up of the sexes. Masculinity and femininity result from creation, NOT just culture.

As Harvard Zoologist, E.O. Wilson puts it, "Much of what we ascribe to men and women as socially constructed roles are deeply embedded in our genes." There's lots of research now affirming that conclusion.

1 Corinthians 11:8-9 reads, "For man is not from woman, but woman from man. Nor was man created for the woman, but woman for man." Again, Paul goes back to Genesis - Eve was *from* and *for* her husband.

She was taken *from his side*, and her purpose was to stand *by his side*. This is the basis of *male headship*

and *female partnership*. This doesn't mean women are inferior to men, or will be dominated by men. It simply means that women should let their husbands lead.

In the same passage Paul writes, "I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God."

Obviously, God has a chain of command. The Father has ultimate authority. The Son is submitted to the Father. The husband is subject to Christ, and the woman is to live under the leadership of her husband.

And realize, the fact that *God the Father* is head over *Christ the Son* doesn't diminish Jesus in anyway, or make him inferior. And likewise a man's headship in the home and church should never diminish a wife. She should grow, flower, and flourish under his love.

Notice after Eve's creation it was God who "brought her to the man." Apparently, the first wedding was a garden wedding - *in the Garden of Eden*. God walked the bride down the aisle, and presented her to Adam.

And what did Adam say when he first laid eyes on this gorgeous creature? He shouted, "Wow, man!" "Woe baby!" "Woe man!" "Woman" - the name stuck.

Adam whispered to Eve, "Baby, you're the only one in the world for me." And she was... *figuratively* and

literally. This is how Adam felt about his wife. She was the most gorgeous creature he had ever laid eyes on.

We usually think of Eve as a knock-out... long legs, hour glass figure, shapely, pretty features... But who's to say she wasn't bow-legged, 5' tall, 400 pounds?

At this point, Adam's only standard of beauty was his wife! His only comparison was an *aardvark* or a *chimpanzee*... And I don't care how ugly a woman might look - compared to an *alligator* - she's beautiful.

It's amazing, how over time standards of beauty have changed. What society deems attractive today isn't the same standard held in the 1920s or 1520s. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder. Pretty is relative. And all men need to possess this kind of relativity.

Every man sets his own standard for beauty. If you're married you need to make your wife the measure... not the office beauty, or the pretty mom of the kid on your baseball team, or the cutie at church, or the flirtatious neighbor - or worse a porno snapshot...

Here's how some single men think... Until I find a wife I'll just enjoy a few photos. Once I get a wife, I'll lose the pictures. *I hate to tell you, it's not that easy...*

When the wife comes, you still have the pictures. Maybe not under your bed, or on your computer - *but*

in your mind... Pornographic images are with you for the rest of your life, and they'll haunt a marriage.

How does a real wife compete with make-believe?

I don't care if your wife is a former Miss America she won't be able to compete with a digitally-enhanced, photo-shopped, air-brushed picture of a teenage girl half her age. *Be careful if your eyes start to wander.*

And a married man is perhaps more vulnerable than a single fellow... One day your wife isn't as frisky as you'd like her to be. *Yet rather than be a man and love her through it, or love her until she wants to love you...* You take the easy way out - you opt for a shortcut.

You log on a website, or stop by a strip club, or call a prostitute, or just find a girl who'll act like a prostitute after a few drinks. Rather than protect your wife until she feels secure, and heal her until she's healthy enough to give, and liberate her from her past until she's free... rather than build into your wife - you do what's *easy and lazy*. You're act like a boy, not a man!

A *manly man* seizes dominion. He takes charge. He overcomes - and the first place he rises up and takes responsibility is in his own private thought life. **Paul wrote 2 Corinthians 10:5, "bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ..."** Real men stay *focused on and committed* to their wives.

Your wife should remain your only standard for beauty and sexy. If your wife is tall - *then sexy to you is tall...* If she has a big nose - *then you're into big noses...* If she's blonde - *then pretty to you is blonde...* Unless she changes hair color next week... *then read the color on the bottle, that's what's pretty to you now.*

Here's my perfect "10" - 5'4", &^%# pounds, cuddly soft, short blonde hair, cute nose, mid-60s, and really nice legs... *I come home to her every night!* All men should think his wife as the world's prettiest woman!

One day a little boy went to the department store to buy his mother a birthday present. He walked into the clothing department, but he had no idea where to start.

He told the clerk he needed a gift for his mom. He said, **"I don't know her exact size, but mom is perfect."**

The clerk handed him a size 8 blouse... The next day a lady walked up the counter with a return. She said she could never wear a blouse so small. The *"perfect mom"* swapped the size 8 for a size 18.

Men, regardless of your wife's size, you need to train your eyes to see her as **"perfect,"** and condition your *mind* to think of her as **"all you'll ever want."**

Adam and Eve did have the perfect marriage. Think about it this way, ***Eve never had to hear about his***

mother's cooking. And Adam never had to hear about how much money her daddy had made. It was perfect.

Actually it really was... Adam wakes up from a nap. He finds himself in a garden paradise, with tons of fruit to eat, alone with a naked woman. And God just told him to multiply! *What more could a man want?*

And look at what Adam immediately does to satisfy Eve - *he sings a love song.* Why is it, women are always falling for musicians? *They've got no money. Lack a real job. But a guy sings and women swoon.*

When I was growing up a singer named Barry Manilow was the romantic crooner. The guy was as ugly as a beaver, but ole Barry would sing, and women would go nuts. Which just goes to prove if you want to please your wife serenade her with a love song.

And that's what Adam does in verse 23, he sings, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called "Woman, because she was taken out of Man." Notice Adam calls his wife "Woman" - it's the same word as "Man" but with a feminine suffix. In Hebrew "Man" is "Ish" and "Woman" is "Ishah."

Remember naming was a symbol of dominion and authority. Adam now has God-given authority over his wife, but he doesn't use it harshly. He lovingly bestows on Eve his own name, and treats her as his equal.

This was a beautiful gesture. Man is the head of the woman - at home and at church - but he loves her, and protects her, and honors her. In fact, he uses his authority for the woman's benefit and blessing!

I love the heart-warming line by Matthew Henry, "The woman was taken from Adam's side - not from his head to rule over him, nor from his feet to trample on - but from his side to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected, and from close to his heart to be loved."

Granted, in Genesis 3 life changes dramatically for Adam and Eve. Sin enters the picture and spoils the party. Eve no longer wants to be naked. She's now into clothes. She goes to the mall to spend Adam's money!

For Eve, the bliss of sex turns into pain in childbirth... **For Adam**, he has to work overtime among thorns and thistles just to put fruit on the table. *The rib that came from his side - becomes a thorn in his side.*

After sin entered the world a lot changes for the first couple, *and for all mankind*, but God's will doesn't change! Man is still the head of his wife, and the wife still should stand by her husband. In fact, from this point onward the gender roles created by God for male and female don't become less important, but more so.

In our next session, we'll discuss the impact these gender roles - or the lack thereof - have on a society.