

XIV. God's Blueprint in Biblical Perspective
Foundations From Genesis
"Biblical Masculinity and Femininity and Singleness"
I Corinthians 7
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We will be looking at Biblical doctrine on singleness for the next few studies and not looking to the psychology of the age or the philosophies of the age but looking to God's Word to establish that. Let's back up for a moment to see where we have been. This has been a personal conviction I've had as we have tried to address these issues because we live in a culture of insanity, absurdity, immorality and lethality, all rooted in profitability. In other words, a lot of money is made on this cultural chaos. I want to bring some clarity to it by looking at God's Word. There are some convictions I'll be sharing with you that will be important to affirm.

We have been doing this by looking at the most attacked book of the Bible by the world, liberalism and to some degree progressivism and that is the book of Genesis. Genesis is either ignored, isolated or discounted in the realm of even the evangelical church today and many times avoided yet all the crucial issues for the framework of the foundations of life are found in this book. This is why I've called it God's Blueprint. In the book of Genesis, foundational sanctities are established such as the sanctity of marriage, the sanctity of family, the sanctity of creation, the sanctity of Divine revelation, the sanctity of God and the Sabbath, the sanctity of work and property, the sanctity of gender – all of that is built and initiated out of the book of Genesis and then elucidated throughout the whole counsel of God in His Word.

Most recently we have been looking at the sanctity of gender, where God made man – male and female. While everyone of us bears the image of God – male and female – there is something unique about God's image being profoundly displayed by male and female in this world. Male and female is that which God said is required to give a full expression of His image in this world through those who have been made in His image – humanity, male and female, in the two genders male and female. There is nothing in the Bible about FaceBooks 59 genders or whatever it might be in the culture of insanity and absurdity for you have no concept that medicine would fabricate a profitable industry that claims gender reassignment yet all it actually does is bodily mutilation and chemical machinations. Why are those things happening in our culture as it stands in rebellion against God?

It's important that we understand on all of these issues that are creating this culture of insanity, absurdity, immorality and lethality that we come at it from a Biblical world and life view. We have not only established the sanctity of gender but we do so carefully. We do understand that in a fallen world there is such a phenomenon as gender dysphoria – people having to work through what it means to be male and female. We also understand the dynamics of how the sin nature draws people away into sexual anarchy and sexual immorality. I want to give you a Biblical world and life view on how all of this should be understood, where the distortions come from and what the solutions are to the distortions of man's rebellion. That of course, is the Gospel solutions that Christ has established.

Up to this point in our series I have said there is creation masculinity and femininity. In other words, God made man – male and female – in the act of creation to properly fully image God in this world. Both male and female are image bearers but it is the heterosexual dynamic and heterosexual existence of male and female that gives the full expression of God's glory

through His creation. God made man to protect, provide and to produce as He gives man His creation mandate – subdue the earth, be fruitful and multiply and rule over the creation. Man cannot do that alone so in order to accomplish that mandate God says it's not good for man to be alone so He makes the woman from the man's side to come along side of him so that the two from equality, bearing God's image now as one they are able to accomplish the creation mandate together in serving the Lord. Thus, the woman comes along as the helper/completer and to nurture in all those completed dynamics of Biblical masculinity and femininity.

We hear a lot today about toxic masculinity and not so much but toxic femininity. We don't deny that. We do deny the world's philosophy that masculinity is toxic but we don't deny there is a toxic masculinity. We find it in Genesis 3 as Adam abandons his responsibility to properly provide and protect his wife under the temptation of Satan. Then the woman's autonomy is being established so then comes the curse which is toxic femininity when it says her desire will be for her husband. The word desire here is actually given as a word picture used when God tells Adam Satan is crouching like a lion and he is its prey – he is its desire. The curse of sin upon the woman is a predatory nature of the man's position in humanity, to deny his role and assume his role in the very categories of life in humanity. The man's response is that he will rule over the woman so in the curse this is translated that the man will tyrannize the woman. So toxic masculinity either isolates, ignores or intimidates the woman who wants his position.

When the Gospel comes it does a redeeming work not only to save men and women but to change men and women so that the sin nature can now be addressed. The sin nature can be addressed as original sin where the power is broken and actual sins can be put to death. The picture of the redeemed man in Biblical masculinity (Christian manhood) and Biblical femininity (Christian womanhood) is the man is called to be strong and courageous to embrace his responsibilities of life and he is called to be sensitive and compassionate to engage in the relationships of life. This is where we get the Western Civilization denominator of men, 'gentlemen' or as you look to the Savior who is both lion hearted and lamb like. The woman then is restored to being the helper/completer with her nurturing gifts and she brings order into the relationships of life.

Some would say a woman also brings ardor which I am married to woman who brings both ardor and order into life but I want to reserve that when we get to marriage in our series because I want to point out that the man when he is doing Biblical manhood actually created the environment of love in the home, not that the wife doesn't participate but he leads the way and the woman actually brings order in her relationship with her husband. That then is multiplied to children, their parents and relationships outside of the home, but that is something yet to come later in this series. As this pans out it brings the work of grace in the categories of life through redeeming grace and common grace.

Where do men and women as Christians, where do they function in the categories and spheres of life? In the next few studies, we will look at how Christian men who embrace Christian manhood, not perfectly but intentionally by God's grace, and Christian women who embrace Christian womanhood, not perfectly, what it looks like when we show up in singleness, in marriage, in the family, in parenting, in the church, and in the world. All of this could take up five or six many sermons each but I'm not going to do that. I'm looking at two to three studies to show how Christian manhood and Christian womanhood functions during the period of life that is singleness. Then I will do similar for the other areas I just mentioned as well.

I believe the key to life practice that honors the Lord is faithful, Biblical doctrine so I will not be jumping into a psychology of singleness or a philosophy of singleness. I will first be taking steps in a theology of singleness – a doctrinal understanding from God’s Word in singleness. The things I will be giving you for singleness will be crucial for our understanding of our relationship in marriage and our relationships in the family, parenting and the church. I will be giving you five things in this study that I think are crucial in establishing a theology of anything. We have to have a renewed mind to understand these things. What is it that we need to have foundationally to embrace this renewed mind?

Let’s start by looking at Psalm 103. This is one of my favorite Psalms because it guides me in worship. Psalm 103:1-5 says *[1] Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name! [2] Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, [4] who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy, [5] who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.*

God doesn’t necessarily deal with all of our sins to perfection now for that is called progressive sanctification, but He has dealt with our sins by the blood and righteousness of Jesus which is called definitive sanctification or justification. He restores our bodies in the world but ultimately it is appointed once for us to die and that will be fully fulfilled in the new heavens and the new earth with our perfect body which will be like unto the transformed body of the resurrected body of Jesus. You’re not in hell right now and there is only one reason – it is because of God’s grace who brought that judgment upon His Son for you. Our Gospel is not a Gospel of cope but a Gospel of hope and our hope is always renewed down to old age and hoary heads. God satisfies us with good. As the saying goes ‘God is good all the time, all the time God is good.’ God doesn’t say everything is good in a fallen world but He is good in the midst of this fallen world to His people. Remember this because all of this will come back in the five principles, I will be giving you but I have one more passage to look at from Psalm 103.

Psalm 103:13-19 says *[13] As a father shows compassion to his children, so the LORD shows compassion to those who fear Him. [14] For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust.*

[15] As for man, his days are like grass; he flourishes like a flower of the field; [16] for the wind passes over it, and it is gone, and its place knows it no more. [17] But the steadfast love of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him, and His righteousness to children's children, [18] to those who keep His covenant and remember to do His commandments. [19] The LORD has established His throne in the heavens, and His kingdom rules over all.

I believe this is so crucial especially for those who are single for in the pain of singleness, the disappointments that surround it, or the questions that come to it like does God really care about me or love me, why doesn’t He do something about this or how many times in a marriage are these questions asked. Although in our society we have embraced the horrific no-fault divorce, but even though that is legal, as believers we don’t embrace that. We know that there are only two Biblical grounds for divorce (adultery and abuse) and those aren’t remedies and solutions but they are protection devices. Sadly, in marriages today people walk away from them because they still think it’s all about them and their needs – the culture of self and autonomy shows itself in marriage, family, parenting, the church and all these areas. In all these areas we have to have a theology that addresses brokenness in a sin broken world and that’s why

we go to that first. Whenever you start with a theology on singleness, marriage, family, parenting, and the church instead of a psychology or philosophy then healing will come.

So the first of the five principles is no matter which one of those categories but certainly in singleness we have to understand our first step is to develop a theology in life and that means we need an understanding of God and His Word. You cannot have a clear, accurate theology of God without a right theology of God's Word. It's impossible. The doctrine of God does not come from our imagination or our invention but it comes from Divine revelation. God has given us His Word because He is life and His nature is to reveal Himself. Now that He reveals Himself as One God in Three Persons as Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer and Consummator then we can look at the issue of singleness. The God in whom we hope is the God who is revealed in His Word.

I had a young man come up to me recently wanting to ask me some questions and he said 'Don't get too uptight about these questions because they're not theological questions.' I said, 'Then they are insane questions or 'no' questions because all of life is theology.' We don't have as the world proposes a sacred secular. Our relationship to God is not in the private compartments of a building called a church or within the walls of our home. Our relationship with God is in the public square and encompasses everything. As Abraham Kuyper rightly said 'There is not one square inch of creation or one event in all of humanity that God does not say 'that's Mine.'" He is sovereign of all, over all, and in all and that's one of the blessings of being saved, is you say 'no' to the sacred secular dichotomy and 'yes' to the singularity that God is the Originator, Redeemer, and Sustainer of your life. He is my life and my life is His. All of life is theology.

To be practical here, when we get to parenting, we are not going to buy Benjamin Spock's book on parenting that ruined an entire generation. We will go the Bible, and the books of Proverbs, Ephesians, Colossians and Hebrews. God is the One through His Word who gives us our way of life by telling us who He is – our theology of God that comes from God's Word, the Bible. You can inaccurately interpret God's Word and present a false God but by rightly handling God's Word we can embrace a true doctrine of God.

The Westminster Confession of Faith is one of our church's standards and in my early days as a Christian I wrestled with the sovereignty of God, predestination, and the reformed church but realized I was one of those guys who believes in the Westminster Confession as a faithful distillation of Biblical doctrine. It is not inerrant for only the Bible is inerrant and as I first took a look at it the first chapter was the doctrine of Scripture. The next chapter was the doctrine of God. In my early days as a Christian, I wondered why they started with the Scripture instead of starting with God. Chapter one tells you why we start with the Bible and it's not because the Bible is God but you can't know God without the Bible. You can't know God until He lights the lamp. Psalm 119:105 says [105] *Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.* The lamp is the Word of God. God's Word is that special revelation of God that guides us in **all** of life. God gives us the framework, principles, precepts, channel markers for all of life.

The second principle is God's Word is inerrant, infallible and authoritative. God's Word is absolutely trustworthy. That doesn't mean there aren't challenging places in terms of what things mean because they all have to be worked through, but we start with the fact that our God makes no errors. Romans 3:4 says [4] *By no means! Let God be true though every one were a liar, as it is written, "That you may be justified in your words, and prevail when you are judged."* Since every word in God's Word is true then there is an answer about that challenging text.

The third principle is the perspicuous nature of the Scriptures. This does not mean the Scripture sweats. This means the Scriptures are clear. The Bible is not opaque or clouded, for it is clear on all the essentials of the faith. The Bible is clear on primary doctrines whereby clarity comes to the secondary doctrines and to the tertiary doctrines. It is clear on all that we need to understand. Not every passage is as clear as every other passage.

II Peter 1:21 says [21] *For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were **carried along** by the Holy Spirit.* Carried along here means they were ferried, like a ferry boat, by the Holy Spirit. God used the human authors in all of their humanity but He carried them so that He is the Author through the 40 plus authors. Peter goes on to say in II Peter 3:15-16, [15] *And count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, [16] as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. **There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures.*** Peter puts Paul's epistles on the same level as Scripture – Old Testament and New Testament. Peter also says that some of Paul's writings are hard to understand so I'm not saying all of Scripture is clear but all the clarity of Scripture is all that we need in order to understand the challenging texts.

The sovereignty of God and the free moral agency of man are not easy things to understand. Understanding the sacraments and the signs and seals of the Covenant are not easy things to understand. The doctrine of God – one God in three Persons – and saying 'no' to tritheism, Arianism and modalism are not easy and still maintain Biblical faithful truth. Every time you come to a doctrine of Scripture it comes from God and God is supernatural but we are not. God is also suprarational and at best, we are sinfully rational so every time we come to a doctrine that God has revealed it's like it's too much. How are we to understand these things? God doesn't need counselors, for He needs to counsel and teach us. God's Word is gloriously suprarational and never irrational. God's Word is supra-logical but never illogical. God's Word can be rationally communicated but God's Word can never be fully comprehended by us. We can know God's Word accurately and communicate it accurately but we can never know it exhaustively or communicate it exhaustively. That is why we get to be a student of God's Word for eternity. You will never get to the bottom of it. Our God is glorious, beyond us, infinite and eternal in His being, wisdom, holiness, justice, goodness and power.

The fourth principle, therefore when we use God's Word, it breaks the heart for it's the hammer that breaks the rock – the balm of Gilead. God's Word is the rock that the speculations and rebellion of humanity in culture will be broken as they crash upon this Rock. So, how do you handle the Scripture as you build your theology? We are starting on singleness and you don't find singleness in Genesis 1 and 2. It doesn't show up until Genesis 3 and 4. So how do we handle that dynamic, that challenging reality? We see Paul's application of redemption to singleness in terms of calling, providence, trust and sanctification.

When we come to difficult texts, we don't dismiss them or avoid the challenges. When we find something in the book of Kings and repeated in Chronicles but it's not quite the same, we don't just set it aside or avoid it nor do we resort to harmonization. We go all the way down to who is writing it, why they are writing it – for we go into exegesis. What is the text saying historically, grammatically, doctrinally, theologically and turn it into a homiletic presentation of a sermon which is what you all support me to do each week. The term we use is *analogia de fida* and it's Latin for the analogy of faith. By faith we believe the Bible is the Word of God and that it's inerrant, infallible, authoritative (our only rule of faith and practice), and that all that is

essential is clear. For the texts that challenge us we do the analogy of faith by taking what we believe from God's Word about God's Word because we didn't believe until God's Word gave us faith as faith comes from the Word of God and knowing that God cannot contradict Himself we go to the clear passages to understand the not so clear ones.

Whatever the difficult text is saying it cannot contradict this so I compare it gently, fearfully and with trepidation to the few moments that I stayed awake in geometry. I learned in geometry if you want to solve what is not clear from the problem you have to apply the axioms rightly. That's what we do in Scripture. We pray, call upon the Spirit and we go to the clear texts in order to understand the difficult texts. We will be doing all of that in all the areas we will be tackling starting with singleness. How does God give us a promise that He will be a God to us and to our children yet some of our children are not converted? That is one we will look at when we cover parenting and the family. So, our fourth principle has to do with the *analogia de fida*. This leads to the fifth principle which is so important today.

The fifth principle is liberalism in the mainline Protestant church attacked the inerrancy of Scripture and any doctrine that was supernatural in order to appease the modern mind of the enlightenment, whereby reason replaced revelation but in progressivism that is currently making its inroads into the evangelical church, the attack is not inerrancy because progressives don't feel any need for integrity. In order for progressivism to promote what they are believing even if it's error, they are willing to compromise the truth for the time being. They say 'we'll leave things in if it means getting what we want because we have bigger fish to fry so it's okay to compromise with truth in our promotion of error.' In Biblical Christianity we don't have that luxury. In fact, we see that as theological suicide. For the success of truth we can't compromise with error.

We have enough sense to understand primary, secondary and tertiary doctrines. We know that nobody is perfect in their theological affirmations and that everyone is in progress on these matters if they are serious about their theology. We also know that some things are more important than other things, but we can't knowingly compromise with theological error. We understand the difference between theological error and apostasy and theologically falling down and theologically falling away. You can make primary errors of interpretation when you accept secondary errors of doctrine through those primary errors and then they will be used against primary doctrine.

So, we not only have to embrace the inerrancy of the Word but we have to embrace the sufficiency of the Word to reveal who our God is as Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer. This is crucial. We believe in the sufficiency of God's Word to reveal the sufficiency of God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – as our Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer. We do this because we are in a broken world and it's not always going to make sense all the time. I am going to hurt and challenged in this broken world and I have to have an Anchor for my soul. The Anchor is the Almighty and I know Him through and by His Word. The Almighty is my Father and He knows my frame of dust and frailty as we saw from Psalm 103. He has redeemed me so the God that I'm going to trust in singleness, marriage and family is a God who is my heavenly Father. God knows me exhaustively, accurately, intimately, personally and lovingly.

His Son created me. How many times did the Son of God as the Son of Man in the wilderness in His humanity say 'how long will the Father leave me here'? The Father led Him in there for He was led by the Spirit, so when will He lead Him out of there? On the cross, as the wrath of His Father falls on Him as He becomes us and bears our sin, yet He would know that He was His Son in whom He was well pleased. It is this God who is His Father, revealed in the

Scripture that sustains Him. These are just some applications to take away from this study and to start us off for the next study.

Secondly, our heavenly Father loves us and has a purpose for us. Our Father is self-governed by two non-negotiables in our life. Number one, everything in our life will ultimately be for His glory. Number two, everything in our life will ultimately will work out, not for our immediate good but will work together for our eternal good.

A third takeaway is that God knows your eternal good and is unalterably committed to securing for you because you belong to His Son and He finishes every good work that He begins. Whatever it is, God knows how you will glorify Him and we wouldn't always choose to glorify Him. Jesus told Peter if he knew how he would glorify Him in his death Peter wouldn't choose it. He also knows how our eternal good will be secured as He works on us, through us and in us.

The fourth takeaway is, our God can do what He promises to do for us, in us and through us. Our God has promised that everything will work in our lives for His glory and that all things work together for our eternal good in that glory. And our God can deliver. He is faithful and He is the Almighty. He is able to do for us what He has promised to do on us, in us and through us.

The last takeaway is, the reliability of God's Word tells us that God's power is unmatched and His sovereignty unstoppable when it's challenged. God's sovereignty is assured in accomplishing all His purposes and God's grace is greater than sin. We can live in that confidence before the Lord. Our God knows everything about us. God knows us exhaustively, accurately, personally, intimately and irreversibly. In every category we will be studying this is the foundation in which theology is going to be built.

The reason I know this is true is because you are saved from your sins. There is no other explanation for you to be redeemed than God's sovereign, irresistible grace. He didn't need you, He just loves you irresistibly, unstopably and resolutely. His grace was sufficient. His power is unstoppable. You're not in hell now that you are saved. The only reason we're not in hell now is that this God has chosen to love us with all of His power and sovereign rights. He has saved us always and ultimately unto His glory. This was all accomplished for us through His Son whom He gave.

When you think about the spouse you want or the children you have and what you'd like to happen and all those things, they have real solid heart desires, passions, pain and all the dynamics, but what I flee to is God. He may not give us all things that we want but He will give us all that we need for His glory and our eternal good. Here is the passage that tells us of God's everlasting love for us.

Romans 8:31-39 says [31] *What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? [32] He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? [33] Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. [34] Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. [35] Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? [36] As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered."*

[37] No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. [38] For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, [39] nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Let's pray.

Prayer:

Father, thank You for the moments we could be together in Your Word. Thank You for the privilege to serve You with my brothers and sisters. Thank you that as married, single, older, younger, male, female, we are Yours and You are ours. We know You from Your Word. You know us in and through Your Spirit and that Word. You know us to the depths of our souls, our hearts, our hopes, our hurts and You are enough. Now, teach us Lord, how You meet us, how You save us, how You sustains us, for Your glory in Jesus' Name, Amen.