

Theme: As we see the sorrow and brokenness that embracing the serpent's lie produces, we must proclaim and exhibit the blessing and peace that is found in delighting in God's design for us in marriage and as the bride of Christ.

Background: When we talk about God's created order for humanity we find ourselves pitted against the forces and philosophies of the world.

Introduction: Science and the new gender spectrum.

I. What We Are Facing – A Brave New World

A. We are all one

1. Scripture distinguishes between the Creator and the created
2. Most of the culture does not

B. "Male" and "female" are fluid

1. The fruit of the "sexual revolution" – dispensing with marriage for sexual satisfaction
2. Egalitarianism rules
 - a. We're all the same
 - b. Blurring the differences
 - c. Forget God's design
 - d. Fighting the idea of "complimentary" roles
 - e. Marriage is defined for my personal fulfillment

C. The loss of intimacy – "Hooking up" but not connecting

D. The dangers this presents

1. A distorted view of God and self
2. A denial of God's love and goodness
3. A denial of God's rule and authority
4. A sure path to destruction
 - a. For secure, stable relationships
 - b. For eternal judgment

II. What We Have Been Given

A. Designed as male and female

1. In God's image – Genesis 1:27
2. Masculine and feminine

B. A "complimentary" design (Genesis 2:18-24; Ephesians 5:22ff)

1. For marriage
 - a. Intended for life-long intimacy (Matthew 19:8, 9)
 - b. For God's glory – an expression of unity in the godhead

2. Made to order. For our good!

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 - a. Man alone? Incomplete
 - b. Woman? Providing what he lacks

3. Different mandates/roles (Ephesians 5:22ff)

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 - a. Lead/follow
 - b. Love/respect

NOTE: This is not popular in egalitarian circles, society!

4. One flesh

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 - a. Physical attraction is good (Genesis 29:17, 18; Song of Solomon 4)
 - b. Being whole is good (Ephesians 5:28-31)

III. What We Offer

- A. Hope for a world of broken promises
- B. One who never breaks his promise
 - 1. Christ is united to the church
 - a. Developed throughout the letter to the Ephesians
 - b. Ephesians 1:20-23; 2:6; 4:13; 4:15, 16; 5:23, 30
 - 2. Marriage points to Christ and his church (his bride) Ephesians 5:32 (cf. Revelation 19:6-8)

IV. What We Need

- A. Godly models for our children, and for the world around us
- B. Prayer for marriages
- C. Grace to maintain purity and faithfulness
- D. Compassion for those who struggle with sexual sins and desires

Conclusion: God's design for humanity – as male and female - reflects a distinction that bears the image of God and is necessary to live in accordance with God's will. Marriage is an essential element of that design. We call out to the culture to regain the peace and power of that blessing and distinction through lasting unions and a church that is truly submissive to Christ.