

WHAT WE TALK ABOUT WHEN WE TALK ABOUT SUBMISSION**TYLER VELIN | FEBRUARY 27TH, 2014 | EPHESIANS 5:21**

We have just about 5 weeks left in the book of Ephesians, and the following four weeks have to do with the way we as humans relate to each other.

Hopefully you guys enjoyed ONEnight last week, but if we were to stretch our memory back to two weeks ago, we ended with a transitional verse: **Eph 5:21**.

There are two things in this passage which stand opposed to our culture. The first is submission. We hate submission. We will not be subject to laws, we will not be subject to views, we will do what it is we want to do with authoritarian power in our own lives. The only thing our culture will be subjected to is their own desires. But as we will see in Ephesians 5, male, female, masters, workers, children, even Christ himself are all caught up in a beautiful web of submission.

Culture says submission kills. Scripture says submission gives life.

The second is far more shrouded than the first. We are to be subjected to “one another.” The Christian culture is rooted in “one-anotherness” that has been a drum that Paul has been going ape on this whole book. We are concerned for others, we in the church labor and minister to one another, because Christ ministered to us.

And we would think that our culture of “tolerance” would be the greatest proponent of “One-anotherness” but when we begin to look at the events in our world today, we can see that our culture cares very little about others. Millions of babies are killed each year, because they are not us, and they can encroach on my lifestyle. Belgium just became the first country to remove age restrictions from euthanasia. That means that an 8 year old with cancer, as long as his parents are ok with it, can decide to end his life. In the name of peace, and freedom, there has been a devaluation of life, not a celebration of it.

The world’s “one-anotherness” not only changes how we treat one another, but it changes how we view one another. In this text Paul will use words like: Husbands. Wives. Male. Female. In Ephesians, and in so much of Paul’s writing, he sees two primary distinctions in creation. God and man. Male and female. And while Male and females are equal in their interaction with God, they are different in their interaction and roles towards each other.

This distinction is being removed in our culture today. And the Biblical position on gender is becoming increasingly hostile. But it is not only from outside the church that gender and gender roles are being diluted, but inside the church there is an increasing amount of hostility towards roles and relationships.

And so what I want to do before we get into roles and relationships. I want to stop and pause and look at gender. Because if we don’t understand God’s design, God’s purpose, and God’s desire in gender, then we will be caught up in a debate, because we have nothing concrete to stand on. But when we look at God’s glory in gender, we can begin to see our relationship towards God in a right way, and when we view God correctly, we are in a position to view ourselves and others correctly.

Pray

What I want to do tonight is set the table for the remainder of Ephesians by looking at 4 ways in which gender reflects God’s glory.

But what I want to do first, is read a portion of Genesis 2 which depicts the creation account of Man and Woman. It’s not up on the screen, if you have a Bible you can read along, but I really want you to hear this story. **Gen 2:5-9, 18-25**.

The first point tonight is that **Gender is: Ordained for the Glory of God.**

Now we just saw the story of God creating a man, and then subsequently creating a female. Genesis 1:27 says, “Male and Female” he created them.

Now I want to add some weight to this fact. The fact is, God made males, God made females. But why is this so glorious? Look at **Eph 1:3-4**.

What does this verse have to do with gender? Well we see that God’s plan for us was not arbitrary. It was predestined in eternity in the mind of God. That means that God’s creative act was purposeful and thought out. God didn’t sneeze the universe into existence and say, “Oh, shoot, I better makes some people to live in it.” God’s plan was male and females before creation began.

What was God’s plan in creation: **Is 43:7**

Ok, here we go. This is where we see the intimacy of God’s glory. God is saying here that those who are his he called for his glory. God’s people are instruments of his glory. Now what is one way God’s glory is made manifest in his people? Through God’s creation.

God formed you for his glory. God made you male, or God made you female, not out of apathy, but out of a passion for his glory.

Ps 139:13. Gender is no accident. Gender is no trifle. Gender is God’s fingerprint of glory imbedded in our very DNA.

Paul has talked a lot about thanksgiving and worship in this book so far. And when we start seeing the depths of God’s glory thankfulness becomes more natural to us. How many times have you met another Christian, or another person and been floored that God made them male or female for his glory? But why shouldn’t we do this. It shows the sovereign plan and the creative goodness of our infinite God.

But that’s not all. Not only has God made us different in Gender, but **Gender is Distinct for the Glory of God.**

That distinction is a result of God’s comprehensive creativity. Gender is distinct genetically, it is distinct anatomically, it is distinct visually.

Think about it this way. If you were to take a baby boy, and a baby girl. And you were to remove all external factors. All influences from their lives. No barbies for the girl, no G.I. Joes for the boy, and you were simply to let them grow, you would see a distinction in gender. Hair, body features, size, different.

Think of how much effort you have to go through to hide the simple features of external gender. Make-up, hair-cuts, clothing choices, surgeries, postures. It takes work to cover up gender because we naturally grow towards it.

God created men and women distinct in their roles. We saw in Genesis 2, the Adam was set to work the fields, name the animals, subdue the earth before Eve was even created. And when Eve was created, what was God’s purpose, to create a helper fit for him.

Eve’s role was not to be and Adam, and Adam’s role was not to be an Eve, but they had distinct roles in creation. You know what Adam’s name means...Man. In Genesis 3:20 Eve is named, and her name means, “life giver” because she is the mother of all living.

There is a nurturing component that is not nearly as strong as in men. My wife was never a baby person, and I always considered myself a baby person. But now that we have one, it’s not that Sarah just likes Owen, but every baby in the world is hers. With me, not my baby not my problem.

We are distinct in our roles and relationships towards each other, and those things happen naturally. Next week we will talk more in depth about these roles, but right now I want to talk about why we have these roles.

Gender is Complimentary to the Glory of God.

This is the part that I love. Because again it show the creative power of God. **Gen 2:20-22.**

Now one thing I want to make clear before I move on. In Genesis 1:18, the text does not say “It is not good that man should be alone.” It says “It is not good that the man should be alone.” God looked at Adam, and said for this man, for Adam it is not good that he be alone.

Genesis 1:18 is not saying that all people should get married. Paul pushes back against that thought in Thessalonians. But it does show that there is a goodness to marriage. Now if we go back to verses 20-22 we see that God gave Adam all the animals, he gave him a perfect jungle to run around Tarzan style in. He had everything, but he did not have a helper. There was nothing that God created which was a helper fit for man.

God’s solution was not another man. God’s solution wasn’t a dog, or an xbox, or Siri. God’s solution to man’s need was a woman. God saw that it would be good for Adam to have a helper, and God made woman to fill the specific void that Adam had.

That means that in a relational context, God explicitly made men and women as compatibility partners for each other. It is what we were made for. And this relationship of male and female also contributes to human flourishing. It is the most effective joint relationship. Eve was made from Adam for Adam, and Adam was made to take care of Eve.

This joint venture is called marriage. Where do we see marriage established? Is it in the church? Is it a medieval idea designed to subdue to masses and empower the authorities? No, it was established on the second page of scripture. **Gen 2:24-25.**

How is marriage, how are complimentary roles connected to the glory of God? Why should we care about marriage in the public square? Look at what we will be going over in two weeks: **Eph 5:31-32.**

You see gender, roles and marriage matter because when God established them at the beginning of creation, he was setting them up as a shadow of things to come. Who we are and how we relate to one another in terms of gender, points towards the greatest man, coming and dying to make for himself the church.

Gender matters, because the gospel is hidden within it.

Gender is Evangelistic to the Glory of God.

The thing that I love most about Biblical gender roles is that when the Bible talks about them, it’s really just giving us a context for understanding the gospel. The gospel matters with gender, and gender matters to the gospel.

In the context of marriage, the gospel is extremely important, as marriage is a representation of it. But for you in here today, gender as a single person is still evangelistic.

Look at **Gen 1:26-27.**

God created man, humans in a corporate sense in his image. What does that image look like: male and female he created them.

You see gender is absolutely necessary to view yourself correctly. But gender is even more necessary when it comes to depicting God accurately.

Men reflect the glory of God, the image of God in a certain way. And women do so in another. God made both, so that in different ways, yet in the same way, who we are and how we act presents the full glory of God.

Gender reflects the image of God.

Why is this important, because the gospel is important.

Facebook just made changes a couple weeks ago. There are now 50 different ways you can describe your gender on Facebook. The three standard ones are “male,” “female,” and “neither.” You can have your notification say wish “him” “her” or “them.” A happy birthday.

Some of the options for gender are: Gender Fluid, Female to Male, Male to Female, Trans Man, Trans Female, Two Spirit , Neutrois, Non binary, Neither, Genderqueer, Transperson.

As much as I wanted to laugh at these at first, it really grieves my heart. They are trapped in a life detached from God's glory. Detached from God's good. Detached from God's gospel.

What they need is not gender, what they need is the gospel, and the gospel restores gender. There are people in our church who struggle with same sex attraction. This side of the fall, we are burdened with sin, our hearts desire things contrary to God, but the beautiful part is that the gospel corrects sin regardless of your sexual preference.

Jesus said that we will be hated as Christians because of our Christ. But I never thought that we would be hated as much for having the willingness to say you are a male and you are a female. What was once a hard science has now been turned into a personal decision. Your gender is a choice.

But we as Christians need to take a hard stance on this not because we care about gender. But because we care about God's glory, and God has chosen to exhibit his glory, for our good in how we relate to one another as male and female.

We don't take stands in arrogant and self-righteous ways, but we do so out of a desire to show others the glory of Christ. We seek to relate correctly to one another inside of our gender because we want the gospel to be proclaimed with our actions.

We take bold stands, and face the criticism because the salvation of lost souls is worth it. The weight of gender is tied up in the gospel of glory, and because of that, we as the church seek to worship the God who creates it, recognize the roles he designed for it, and live evangelistically in the life he gave to us.