

Grand Design or Great Deception?

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[0 : 00] Scripture passages, and as I mentioned to you last week, for those of you who were here, I want to just quickly review with you the motivation that I had to bring this message today, like perhaps thousands of my brothers in arms across North America and perhaps around the world who are answering the call that came out through a number of different Christian organizations regarding the attack from the homosexual community on a biblical understanding and ministry of sexuality as God designed us as men and women.

So I'm one of many, many pastors who are standing in the pulpit, locking arms together to herald God's view of what it means to be male and female and why that's important and why it's a hill to die on for God's people.

Canada recently passed a bill, Bill C-4, and I want to share with you several elements of it very quickly and then move into sharing with you how this has come home to us as well.

So I want you to look as I move along through this. In the preamble of this particular bill, Bill C-4, it says that anyone who believes, or the belief that heterosexuality, cisgender identity, and gender expression that conforms to the sex assigned to a person at birth are to be preferred over other sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions, is a myth.

According to Canadian laws of January 8, 2022, the belief in God's design for marriage and sexuality will now be seen as a myth.

[2 : 00] The bill defines conversion therapy as Well, heavens, we can't have that, can we?

Repress or reduce non-heterosexual attraction or sexual behavior, repress a person's non-cisgender identity, or repress or reduce a person's gender expression that does not conform to the sex assigned to the person at birth.

You go against any of that and you're in trouble. The definition is intentionally broad and it can be clearly used against any preacher or elder who either speaks against homosexuality, transgenderism, or who counsels a person to obey Christ and abandon their homosexual, transgender actions and lifestyle.

This means as of January 8, 2022, it will be against the law in Canada to preach, teach, or counsel regarding God's design for marriage and sexuality.

Friends, if you've been waiting for the day that has been prophesied in Scripture for people to begin to outlaw what it means to be a Christian and to live as one, you're living in it.

[3 : 28] And it's going to get worse. Now that does not mean, let me say up front, that Christianity has lost the battle. We can't. We can't lose. They can kill us.

And it won't stop God. It won't stop the church. As we're learning on Thursday nights, the Lord has made the church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it.

The church will stand. It will stand its purpose and design until God takes the church into heaven. So we're in the winning team and on the winning team.

We don't have to worry about that. But we have been called to fight, to struggle against personal sin, individual sin, and against the sin that owns and wars against the lives and hearts of the people we love and care about.

Now, I don't know if this issue is personal to you. I don't know if you have people in your extended family or friends or people in the community or at work that you know that are dealing with this.

[4 : 30] But we are called, as I will show you later, we are called as Christians to bring the message of hope, grace, and forgiveness against this great deception that is the LGBTQ community.

We are. They are living in a lie. And we need to do something about it. This legislation that I have just read to you deals with banning or with making illegal what the LGBTQ community labels conversion therapy.

It's happening in Canada, in the UK, in Ireland, in Sweden, and even now here in the United States. And it is spreading rapidly. We just talked with a missionary living in Belgium.

She's been there for 30 years. In the 30 years that she has been there, ministering, evangelizing, sharing the gospel, she says, I know of one Belgian national that even comes close to having a like-mindedness with me about the Bible.

I'm pretty sure he's a Christian. But we're not on the same page theologically along certain lines. 30 years of ministry, one convert that she knows of.

[5 : 53] Folks, we're living in dark times. Dark times. Speaking the truth in love to counter sexual sin. Sharing the gospel of God's grace in Christ as an answer to sexual sin.

Or even speaking directly about the Bible's mandates, commands against homosexuality, lesbianism, and other sinful expressions of sexuality, which all call people to a holy life, by the way.

These ministries of the church and pastoral care are being hijacked and criminalized by secular lawmakers and the homosexual community.

Lives are at stake. Souls are at stake. Eternity is at stake. These people are effectively redefining evangelism and truth-telling in a pastoral counseling and church ministry setting by relegating them to a therapy or a technique to subvert and manipulate a person's will towards embracing a biblical view of sexuality and marriage, which they label as myth.

So make no mistake, friends, and understand what is at stake here. We are criminally guilty by coercing and manipulating people, and we are guilty of leading them to live according to a myth.

[7 : 33] That is, according to Scripture. That's what we're being accused of. That is what's being assigned to us as we do pastoral ministry and Christian ministry and try to share with these people the hope of forgiveness for sin in Jesus Christ.

We are sharing nothing more than a myth, and we are subverting and coercing and manipulating people. And they want it outlawed. What the gay community is demanding in these laws goes way, way beyond protecting people from abuses by those who would weaponize the Bible and or attempt to coerce and control personal change.

Does it go on? Yes. Has it gone on? Yes. Just like in secular communities, there are people who want to use the power that they have in a counseling or pastoral or authority context to lord it over people and to manipulate them.

That happens. Why? Because we're sinners. Because we're sinners. Should there be laws that help protect against that? Absolutely. What the gay community has done is hijack pastoral ministry and put it under that umbrella of abuse to call it and label it something that it's not and then criminalize it and tell you, if you do it, you're going to jail.

If you support it, you're going to jail. If you do it, you'll go for at least five years. If you support it and know about it and don't report it, you'll go for two years.

[9 : 10] That's Canadian law. It's on the book right now. It's coming here to us. Here are some other examples of what is happening in the UK.

Right now, it is compulsory that all students be taught the government's version of sex education called relationships and sex education.

RSE. Regardless of whether they are in public schools or fee-paying schools. And this is something that I want to quote for you.

Relationships education will mean teaching young children about different types of relationships, which could include homosexuality, transgenderism, and same-sex marriage.

RSE would include teaching on sex, sexual health, and sexuality. And then here is a headline about what is going on in Wales.

[10 : 15] This is what it reads. Quote, No such thing in Welsh society as male and female.

And if there is on any context or at any level, it is just one of many choices that you have to express your sexuality. Now, you and I look at that and listen to that and say, Well, what else is there?

You have male and female. I was in a conversation not long ago with someone who told me that they were not a male or a female. And so the question that I asked at a later point was, If you're not a male or a female, what are you?

They shrugged their shoulders, looked at me, and cocked their head. I don't know. I'm just not one of those. What a wonderful place to be, right? Then look at this.

Al Mohler, president of Southern Seminary, warned, LGBT activists are not simply calling for a change in the law on a single issue, but also seeking to criminalize and sanction and make illegal any confrontation on biblical terms of their own new morality.

[11 : 34] So much for tolerance. These bills, he argued, could have the effect of restricting the liberty of the pulpit in Christian churches and may even result in outlawing certain kinds of conversations between parents and children already happening in the United Kingdom.

Already happening. Mohler went on to offer this chilling forewarning. If the government can tell you it is illegal to teach biblical truth on the issue of human sexuality, that is, the array of LGBT issues, then understand two things.

It won't stop with LGBT. And then understand, eventually, it means the criminalization of whatever Christian speech is no longer politically attractive.

And that eventually will mean everything that is revealed in Scripture, most essentially the gospel of Jesus Christ. Right now, they're criminalizing you for acting like a Christian.

Get ready. Pretty soon, perhaps before we die, those of us in my age group, we will see it on the books. It will be illegal for you to be a Christian.

[12 : 57] It's coming. I don't know if it will happen in my lifetime, but it's coming. Jeff, how do you know that? Nazi Germany. Saddam Hussein.

Every single despot and tyrant throughout history. That's how I know it. Such is the heart of every single human being on the planet and why we so desperately need Jesus.

Now, in case I'm just rehearsing some of this for you before I get into a couple of truths that I want to share with you from Scripture. In case we are in any doubt about this agenda being pressed here in our country, just last week, I received an email from Dale Johnson.

He is the executive director for the Association of Certified Biblical Counselors. This didn't just come to me. It came to all people who are members of or involved with ACBC.

Greg, did you get that email? Did you see it? No? Here's what Dale Johnson said. I am writing to inform you of an ongoing development that could have significant ramifications for biblical counselors.

[14 : 21] In West Lafayette, Indiana, a city ordinance has been proposed, Ordinance 3121, which if passed, would ban any attempts by biblical counselors to speak biblical truth in love to minors wrestling with sexual orientation or issues of gender confusion.

Now just pause there before you read any more with me and let me just ask you this. Now I don't know about you, but I know that when I was a teenager, I struggled with my sexuality.

I had questions about who I was as male Jeff. I had issues that I dealt with about how am I supposed to act toward those who are of the opposite sex than me, what is appropriate for me, what is inappropriate for me, how do I manage this heightened sense of desire that I now find happening in my life that as a little boy I didn't have any of that, now I have it.

What do I do with it? Do you think that most human beings come to a place in their development where they're struggling at some level with their sexuality? Maybe they're just a tad bit confused about how to manage what's going on inside of them and the physical changes that are coming over their bodies?

You think? Yeah, me too. Me too. Now this is what gets me angry. They want to criminalize the way that we want to work with people to help them through these times.

[15 : 53] But they are the ones passing laws that want to exploit and manipulate these people at a very vulnerable time in their lives. Now that gets me.

That gets me. Because I want to take up arms, metaphorically speaking at this point, especially the scriptures, and say, well, we won't let you do that to the children that we live with in our nation.

It's crazy. If passed, it would ban any attempts by biblical counselors to speak biblical truth in love to minors wrestling with sexual orientation or issues of gender confusion.

My goodness. The moronic nature of this is, you know, I hope you prayed for my wife because, boy, did she get it this week.

I'm telling you. I'd read a little bit and get up and walk around and walk outside and... Rob, I got my chainsaws out and I wore four of them out.

[16 : 58] This ordinance is threatening to fine counselors and counseling centers up to \$1,000 per day. As many of you know, Faith Church is one of our training centers through ACBC and a faithful advocate of biblical counseling.

Faith Church and other churches and ministries in the area would be impacted if this ordinance were passed. One more paragraph here. While various legislative actions have been taken against what is often called conversion or reparative therapy in the United States over the last decade or so, this ordinance differs from the current legislation on two significant fronts.

Number one, this ordinance specifically targets unlicensed counselors. That would be me and Greg. Conversion therapy as defined by this ordinance has been given a far broader and ambiguous definition compared to current legislative action.

That's it. Make it more broad so that it can take in more. Right? Now look at this. To be clear, the fundamental tenets, practices, and goals of conversion therapy in no way reflect a biblical approach to counseling.

We're not out to convert anyone through coercion, control, subversion, manipulation, intimidation. We don't want that. That's not what we do. But, the intentional ambiguity of this ordinance would hold pastors and biblical counselors, both licensed and unlicensed, in violation of this ban if they attempt to counsel a biblical sexual ethic to a minor struggling with same-sex attraction or gender confusion.

[18 : 35] You see what's happening? That's in Indiana. What the gay community is demanding in these laws goes way, way beyond protecting people from abuses by those who would weaponize the Bible as I said earlier.

That is not what we're about here in our counseling ministry. It's not what most of the people that I know of are about on any level at all.

If anything, any struggle we have with those folks would be, are we as like-minded as we would like to be with them in their approach to counseling?

But certainly not abusing and coercing and manipulating and intimidating people. Well, Greg mentioned it earlier, 2 Timothy 3, 16 and 17.

Will you turn there with me? Okay. The book of 2 Timothy. Now, I'm going to have you deliberately busy this morning turning to different passages of Scripture instead of just putting them up on the screen.

[19 : 44] All right? I want you to go to your Bibles and see them in the Word of God with me. 2 Timothy 3, 16 and 17. All Scripture is inspired by God or as Greg said earlier, breathed out.

That is created by, authored by God. And profitable then for God's people in these ways. For teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness.

That, or so that, purpose clause, the man of God, the woman of God, may be, my translation says, adequate. Adequate. Equipped for every good work.

That's full-orbed. That's complete. This is one of our Scripture memory assignments for this month. Now, folks, we believe, here at Grace Church Williamsburg, we believe that the Bible, the entire Bible, is God's Word to us as His people so that we are bound to believe and to behave by what it teaches us.

We don't just give it lip service. We seek to strive to obey Scripture. Yes? I hope that's what we're about. And I hope that when we find in our lives that something in our life isn't lining up with the truth of Scripture, that we're willing to bow to the truth of Scripture and by the power of the Holy Spirit to change our life, to line up with the truth and express the truth, whatever it is.

[21 : 23] God's design for human sexuality.

know and relate to God and to others. Now, I want to address two primary truths in my message this morning. So, it's a message honoring God's design for human sexuality or for what God says is right and wrong, good and evil, healthy and unhealthy, freeing and damning about living and relating by His design as men and women or living against it in rebellion against it.

All right? From the opening verse and pages of the Bible, friends, we are confronted with the direct language and clear priority of God's design for men and women from the very, very start.

So, here's what I want to do. Let's begin at the beginning. Doesn't that make sense? Let's begin at the beginning. So, truth number one of two, the Genesis of gender.

The Genesis of gender. And we will go to Genesis chapter one. Genesis chapter one.

[22 : 59] The question that I want to ask as we read this verse together is this. What does it mean to be human? That is the question that is at the center of all of this issue regarding sexual morality around the world.

What does it mean to be human? And Genesis one one tells us in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

This question, what does it mean to be human, drives straight into the heart of gender identity because it brings us face to face with what makes each one of us who we really are.

You can't get any more core for who you are than your sexuality. Now, I'm going to show you that as we go along. This question, what does it mean to be human, stands us in front of our creator to give an account of ourselves for how we answer and live out this question.

So the Bible is the source for these answers. Now, I realize most of the world doesn't believe that. This is all taken in faith, isn't it? By the gift of faith, you have been made a new creature and converted to Jesus Christ.

[24 : 31] You live and breathe and have your being according to your relationship with Jesus. So the Bible is precious to you because Jesus is precious to you. God's word is precious to you because God's son is precious to you.

We hold to scripture and we believe the Bible is the source for these answers. Would you turn with me to Acts chapter 17? We're going to come back to Genesis.

Acts 17. We are talking about the fact that God is creator and deserves to be worshipped and bowed down to as such, to be understood in terms of our life before him as our creator.

Acts 17, beginning in verse 24, as Paul speaks to these people in Athens at the Areopagus.

That is the central marketplace where people, philosophers, different people would speak and he comes to verse 24 and says this in his sermon speech to these people, these philosophers.

[25 : 48] The God who made the world. See that? Verse 24, the God who made the world and all things in it.

Since he is Lord of heaven and earth, he does not dwell in temples made with hands, nor is he served by human hands as though he needed anything, since he himself gives notice to all people life and breath and all things.

And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation, that they would seek God if perhaps they might grope for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us.

For in him we live and move and exist or have our being. As even some of your own poets have said, for we also are his children.

It's just a statement of fact from Scripture that God made all things and made all things for himself and owns all things and all things live and move and exist according to God.

[27 : 09] Even unbelievers. Even non-Christians who deny him and live against him, they cannot deny in reality the truth that God made them and stands as their creator.

And that's the point. Back to Genesis 1-1. In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

Now, friends, that is critical to human understanding of origins. Is it not? But also of our knowledge of our originator, our creator of where we came from and why and who and how.

In the beginning God. Those are the opening words of the Bible laying the foundation for everything else in Scripture.

God is. Period. In the beginning God. nobody created God. Can you understand how something has never needed creating but has always existed?

[28 : 26] You want to ask the question, well, where was God's beginning? No such thing. Now, that's who saved you. That's who created the universe by speaking it into existence.

God is. And he made this as his world. world. The first two chapters of the Bible tell us all of this in very plain language.

All right, now let me take you to Genesis 1 verse 26. By this time the Bible has told us that God has made all the different things on the earth.

He separated the land from the waters. He's made all of the beasts and animals and birds and fish. He's made the sun and the moon and the stars. He set the seasons in their course.

And now we come to verse 26 in scripture. Then God said, let us make man in our image according to our likeness and let them plural rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.

[29 : 43] Verse 27, God created man in his own image. In the image of God, he created him male and female. He created them.

Verse 28, God blessed them. Wow. And God said to them. Now to this moment, God has been speaking, but he's been speaking things into creation.

Now he turns to his creation and speaks directly into the lives of these two people. What does he say? God blessed them and God said to them, be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and rule over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.

Notice what God is doing. What does it mean to be human? folks, these verses are critical information in answering that question, don't you think?

Leave this out and you've got a big hole in your life and you fill it with things like this. Well, what happened is long, long ago, perhaps billions and billions of years, planets and all kinds of stuff were just kind of rolling around out there in space and they banged together and out of that bang came the possibility then for some primordial ooze to produce what would become you.

[31 : 22] Now, what I want to ask them right off the bat is where did the planets come from? What made the Big Bang? How'd that all get started? What were the chemical processes that were involved in that?

Where'd those chemicals come from? Where'd the ooze come from? What made all that possible? And they want to believe that out of that ooze came the complexity of life on our planet.

We can look for billions of miles out into space and we can't find another planet like ours. We can't do it. Haven't done it.

It's crazy to me all of the talk from the documentaries I've watched about how the earth is going to be uninhabitable soon so we better find a way to get to Mars or the human race will end.

Well that's not what scripture says. So don't believe that nonsense. That's just hooey. Keep everybody fearful. We don't go for that stuff.

[32 : 22] I know we're not scientific. We're just a bunch of religious nuts. That's alright. That's what they call Paul. That's what they call Jesus. That's what they killed all the apostles for.

We're in good company. We're alright. God made us. God made the world. People are living images and image bearers of God himself.

And unlike any other aspect of creation you are not a higher animal. You are an altogether different creation. Creature. you're not an animal.

You didn't come from monkeys. You didn't crawl out of the mud. God fashioned dirt himself as the potter and made us and breathed life into us as the scripture will tell us in just a moment.

We are living image bearers of our creator. He made us and he made the world for us and he made us to rule over what he made for us which is amazing.

[33 : 36] Look this isn't my world or your world it's his world. He's sharing it with us and he made us to help rule over it. Wow. Notice then with me friends in verse 27.

Look at verse God created man in his own image in the image of God he created him male and female he looked God repeats for emphasis the heart and soul of his design in relationship to mankind here in the first 30 verses of Genesis 27 26 27 28 he's repeating this over and over look at how it plays out.

Look up here on the screen for me and if you're listening to this sermon online hopefully you're doing it on our website and on our website you will find these slides that you can look at and follow along on this particular slide you'll see that I've underlined God created man.

The verse goes on to say in his own image in the image of God notice he created him male and female he created them what's the point God created here is the originator or creator making molding measuring his design.

this is the activity and purpose and design of almighty God. We don't have to guess we don't have to wonder we don't have to do scientific experiments.

[35 : 06] Our creator has told us this is who you are. This is how you got here. These are your origins and now I'm about to show you more of the purpose of why I made you and it's glorious.

It's glorious. It's it's sin that wants to rob us of the glorious purpose that God made us. Anything less of living for the purpose that God made is playing with mud pies.

We don't want to do that. I want you to notice next what he says. God created man in his own image in the image of God he created him male and female he created them.

Now folks here the Hebrew word Adam man is without without the article. So it's not the man it is mankind or humans as distinct from the animals.

All right look at this as human beings as human beings we are set apart by our nature of being made in God's image by our function to rule over creation and most importantly by our distinct relationship to God.

[36 : 21] Do you understand the animals are no other aspect of creation. We're made by God to relate to him in the way that we do. It is unique to us. What did Peter say?

Peter said even angels long to look into this salvation that puts you in right relationship with God the father. Even angels long to look into that.

We are very very distinct and unique creatures. Creatures we are made in the image of Almighty God. Well what about then this maleness and femaleness being introduced to us here as God's design?

What about that? All right look again at verse 28. God blessed them and God said to them be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it.

And then he gives us a little detail about what that means. Verse 28 connects the dots for us folks. Look at this. God blessed them and God said to them be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it.

[37 : 33] You see that? Now let me ask you a question folks. Have you noticed this before? What were the very first words God spoke to his newly formed man and woman?

What were the very first words God spoke to them as a couple? Thank you Jim. Be fruitful. Be fruitful and multiply.

That's a command for us to fulfill and it's a command for us to fulfill as a blessing and responsibility in our relationship with God.

It's part of our DNA. It's how we express ourselves as created beings to our creator.

That's a command. Be fruitful. Multiply. Fill the earth. Subdue it. Wow.

[38 : 39] Look at Genesis chapter 2 verse 7 and we have some added information. This is not a separate event. This is some added information that helps to round out God's instruction and design and purpose for creating men and women.

2-7 Then the Lord God formed as a potter wood with clay man mankind of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living being.

Then look over at verse 15 of chapter 2. Then the Lord God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it. The Lord God commanded.

Now here's the first thing God said to Adam prior to making Eve. The Lord God commanded the man saying, from any tree of the garden you may eat freely but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat for in the day you eat of it you will surely die.

Then the Lord God said, God still speaking, it is not good for the man to be alone, I will make him a helper suitable for him. Out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and bird of the sky and brought them to the man to see what he would call them, whatever the man called a living creature, that was its name.

[40 : 06] So this here, this is about authority and ownership. The man gave names in verse 20 to all the cattle, birds of the sky, every beast of the field, but for Adam there was not found a helper suitable to him.

Now listen to me carefully if you would please, because this is what he's saying. Adam couldn't find a mate among any aspect of creation to this point.

Okay? So God made him one. And when Adam saw this new mate, after looking at all the other aspects of creation and naming them, think of that, think of the brilliant, brilliant mind you would have to have to bring names to bear on all of these critters and creatures across the globe that God has made.

Boy, then he put Eve in front of him. And he said, oh, this ain't like nothing else I've seen. This is good. Really good.

This was in Hebrew, if you'll allow it. Oh, wow. Oh, wow. Now, I hope every man in here who's married has had that moment.

[41 : 23] Oh, wow. I remember Suzanne coming down the aisle when I married her. And I thought, oh, wow. one of my groomsmen came up to me as she walked down and put his arm around me and whispered, she is beautiful and you are one lucky man.

And then he walked back to his place. And I think I just stood there like this. Oh, wow. Oh, wow. This is God doing what God does.

verse 21. So the Lord God caused because he couldn't find a helper suitable for Adam that God wasn't confused. He knew this. He's allowing Adam to experience all of this.

He's putting the fine point and the exclamation point on the issue. He caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man and he slept and then he took. God took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh at that place.

The Lord God fashioned, formed, created, built into a woman the rib which he had taken from the man and brought her to the man and the man said this is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh this is the moment when Adam was like here is a creature nothing like anything else she's of me wow this is so good and unique she shall be called and just like he named all the other critters he names this particular wonderful help mate and creature made exclusively for him she shall be called woman why because she was taken out of man now these two people are co-regents equals in the sight of God to reign over the earth of equal value of equal worth for this reason then because she was made for him and him for her for this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife and they shall become one flesh and the man and his wife were both naked and they were not ashamed well why should they be they they were made for each other all right they fit together by

[43 : 34] God's design and it's holy and beautiful it's wonderful it's like nothing else Adam could have experienced if God had not made her for him and we should celebrate it and we're given leave to celebrate it my friends please don't ever shy away from or be scared to talk about the fact that we are made as sexual beings God has a lot to say about it in scripture help your kids to understand it rejoice in it look forward to it and be blessed by it tell your boys man one day may bring a woman honey God may bring a godly man into your life sweetheart and you will know a kinship and a friendship and an endearment that the world can't touch exalt the wonder of human sexuality and the way God fashioned us to love one another in his image the very first words

God spoke to Adam before God made Eve concerned the command to avoid death by not eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil right in God's goodness and love he then fashioned the word literally means built God built a woman from Adam for Adam and God then gifted her to him for this reason a man and a woman will leave their parents to form their own marriage and family and carry out the designs of God for their lives as a new family and that's right and that's good Jody was just saying to me earlier this morning as we were discussing family she said that's why we raise them to launch right we don't raise our kids to hold on to them we raise them to launch and have their lives we want to help them do that in the

Lord so he built a woman for Adam and all of this is according to God fashioning them for each other now folks let me hasten to add this not all people will marry not all people are married you may be single for a number of different reasons right now I don't want to go into all of that but singleness look singleness can be a godly reality for you not all couples can have kids of their own so the question is can singles and childless couples honor God and the answer is most certainly yes they can and they do right absolutely but the emphasis here is this only only a man and a woman can experience God's opportunity to multiply and to live as one flesh hear me carefully even unbelievers experience these things in their lives don't they they can have kids and they can consummate their relationship in a physical interchange as one flesh or one soul this is what makes one night stands and sexual immorality so cheap and stupid because we're not living according to

God's design non-Christians lack the gift of the Holy Spirit living in them and of making their one flesh relationship about serving God by serving each other in the love and grace of Jesus that's what they lack that's what marriage is at its very core it's two people serving each other modeling and mirroring the service of Jesus to the church and the church to Jesus that is the highest boy when Suzanne and I were getting married we didn't know a lot of stuff we did not know a lot of stuff but boy what something was being burned into our hearts was are we getting married for the glory of God are married to join together in a holy union that will see us better able to serve the purposes and designs of God for our lives we really didn't we we struggle with that wrestle with that talked about that my pastor talked to me about it we didn't know a lot but we were dealing with that because that's what marriage is only a man and a woman can experience whether unbeliever or experience the spiritual oneness which

God blesses and then progresses as they worship and serve him over the course of their lives together I want to ask you couples in the room do you feel like in your marriage you're more spiritually mature and more advanced in your expressions of holiness than you were when you were first married see think about that because you should be there should be a spiritual maturity about you say Jeff we're not perfect no Suzanne and I aren't either but are you growing in holiness in your marriage does your marriage express a holiness toward the Lord your marriage your bond together with your spouse that is more mature and well rounded and defined and rooted than it was when you first got married that's how God works to progress us unbelievers can't experience that progression because they don't worship and serve the

[49 : 40] Lord now friends please hear me God's design for one man and one woman in marriage and in obedience to Christ is filled with beautiful opportunities for expressing our maleness and our femaleness as blessings which reflect God's goodness for relationships whether you're serving one another sacrificing for one another being intimate with one another all of those aspects of your life together as a married couple reflect the blessings and character and goodness of almighty God because God made you to do that be that serve one another in that way come together in those ways and you know what he said it's all very good very good boy I want to shout that from the mountaintop our very design is such that

God structured us to be his living image bearers and to take great great joy in relating to each other and relating to him as male and female according to God's purposes so folks listen there is a grand purpose in this grand design of man and woman but something marred scarred this design in a deep way so enter deception sin and death oh no oh yeah now we're not going to rehearse it but that's what Genesis 3 is largely about the fall of mankind man and woman into sin now please hear this there is a grand perversion in this great deception that we call sin that is how sin entered the world through deception human beings were deceived into thinking and acting one way when the other way was the truthful way that's what deceive is right there is a grand deception there is a grand perversion in all this this is where the

LGBTQ community across the globe gets it tragically wrong because of our sin nature the principle of lawlessness and rebellion in the human heart every single part of every person is corrupted sin ruined and redefine our nature as against God that's what happened all the way back in the garden our sin nature please hear me carefully our sin nature makes us criminals against God a person's sin nature explains the reason the world sees God's design of sexuality as oppressive as something to throw off this is perversion this is deception let me show you this look up at the screen if you would this is the lie against

God's truth giving birth to so many counterfeits like LGBTQ and the list goes on people express live out and give hearty approval to these counterfeits according to Romans 1 and this is why we are seeing laws come into being in support of this anti-God lifestyle you get into conversations with other people and the question of why why are they pressing this agenda why are they making these laws well the scripture tells you clearly and there it is up on the screen and we'll rehearse it from scripture in just a moment one of the tragic consequences of people living these lies is that God gives them over to what they pursue and embrace now hear this carefully God turns them over to what they effectively give themselves over to sin and in this case sexual immorality will you turn with me to

Ephesians 4 please turn to Ephesians 4 I told you this was the challenge as I prepared this was narrowing down all that the scripture has to say about this topic if you look with me in verse 17 we are seeing this played out in scripture that God turns people over to what they effectively give themselves over to you Paul says in verse 17 so this I say and affirm together with the Lord that you Christians you you Ephesian Christians in the Ephesian church walk no longer just as the unsaved the Gentiles also walk in the futility of their minds being darkened in their understanding excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them because of the hardness of their hearts that's what sin does and they having now become callous look have given themselves over to and isn't it interesting what they've given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness now that describes sexual sin right down to the core it is pure unadulterated greed greed this is what's going on in the lives of people as they give themselves over to sensuality that is sexual lust sexual lust now

[56 : 40] I want to say this as clearly and carefully as I know how and I want to be on the record with it from scripture as in terms of what we just read friends people are not born homosexual and they do not live trapped as men in women's bodies and vice versa God tells us what is really happening in the lives minds and hearts of these people in the LGBTQ community it's tragic it's heartbreaking it's real Romans 1 let's go to Romans chapter 1 together you knew we were going to end up here it it doesn't do us any good to candy coat the reality beginning in verse 21 for even though they knew

God even though these people who are suppressing God's truth and the reality that all of creation is screaming God God God is even though they knew God they did not honor him as God or give thanks but they became notice futile in their speculations and their foolish heart was darkened you saw that in Ephesians but look at this professing to be wise they became fools why because they exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and forfeited animals and crawling creatures pause there throughout the history of mankind people have fashioned statues and images of false gods to bow down to to include images of our anatomy and you've seen this and it's across ancient cultures and they bow down to those things and they give their allegiance and loyalty and heart to them such is the power of sin now look what it says as it moves on verse 24 therefore

God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts you see that and he gave them over to impurity so that their bodies would be dishonored among them that's what we get when we turn ourselves over to chasing sexual immorality and false gods for they exchanged the truth of God that is about themselves as sexual beings for a lie they worshipped and served the creature rather than the creator who is blessed forever amen now notice for this reason a man shall leave his father and mother doesn't that sound familiar this is an entirely different thing for this reason God gave them over to degrading passions for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another this is this is the heart of the issue are these desires burning in people's hearts men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the penalty of their error just as they did not see

God gave them over to a depraved that is a moronic mind a useless mind to do those things which are not proper not proper in whose sight God's being filled with all unrighteousness wickedness greed evil full of envy murder strife deceit malice they are gossip slanderers haters of God insolent arrogant boastful inventors of evil disobedient to parents without understanding untrustworthy unloving unmerciful my goodness what a list and although they know the ordinance of God that those who practice such things are worthy of death they not only do the same but also give hearty approval to those who practice them then Romans 8 Romans chapter 8 beginning in verse 5 those who are according to the flesh set their minds according to the flesh means unsaved unbelieving carnal in their appetites not trusting

God not following God they set their minds on the things of the flesh but those who are according to the Holy Spirit that is trusting Jesus born again in Christ the things of the spirit for the mind set on the flesh is death but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God for it does not subject itself to the law of God for it is not even able to do so and those who are in the flesh cannot please God and folks if you can't please God you're headed to a devil's hell and and they want to tell us that we can't tell this message to those who are in sexual immorality in the sight of almighty God well that's not going to happen we're not going to abandon these people to a devil's hell because we were too cowardly to tell them the truth and point them to Jesus Christ and beg them from our heart of hearts to turn from their wickedness trust

[62 : 43] Jesus Christ be born again in him and have an eternity in heaven with God we won't abandon that mandate they can make it illegal if they want to but we have a higher authority and calling from almighty God look these people chase the lies they live the counterfeit their minds then become useless as products of the grand deception and they take pride in what they should be ashamed of they boast about what is enslaving and wasting their lives while at the same time demanding that both the laws of our land and the liberties of others bow to their distortion deviance and defiance against the will and the ways of God and they effectively turn you into the pervert and the deviant and the criminal for speaking the truth in love for calling people away from sin and death to be rescued out of love for

Jesus Christ that's our world because we are sinful criminal and deceived mankind desperately needs what will be this next truth let me introduce it to you in Ephesians 4 Ephesians 4 20 through 25 this is on the heels of Paul telling these Christians that people who are living a life apart from faith in Jesus they are living a life excluded from the life of God because their hearts are hard they become callous they've given themselves over to sensuality that is sexual immorality and practice every kind of impurity with greed now look at verse 20 but now he addresses these people directly in terms of the change in their life but you

Ephesian Christians you did not learn Christ in this way if indeed you have heard him and you have been taught in him just as notice the next phrase truth is in Jesus that in reference to your former manner of life you lay aside the old self which is being corrupted in accordance with the lust of deceit or deceitful lust see there it is there's the issue and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind and put on the new self which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth you see how the truth keeps coming up here that's because there is a grand deception going on and it's through deceitful lust we lie to ourselves and we pursue the lie and so what we want to do as we live the lie and our minds become useless in serving that false master is this we want to criminalize the truth and that is what is at stake and people please don't ever forget that these people are not our enemies these people need to be rescued by the power and love and grace of

Jesus the enemy is the lie perpetuated by our great enemy Satan he owns these people and the only hope for them is to turn from their wicked master to embrace the truth of the Lord Jesus Christ and let him love them into heaven my friends listen human sexuality needs rescuing and redeeming by the grace of God in Christ we are mandated by God as his redeemed creation to speak God's truth in love and genuineness to each other and that's the second truth that I want to hasten to add for you notice this on the screen then the genuineness of gender the genuineness of gender for people who are chasing all kinds of lies and counterfeits and falsehoods and only finding deeper and deeper levels of emptiness we need to offer them the genuineness that

God brings in his design for gender that's hope that's hope God's word on gender is genuine so here in this point I'm thinking of authenticity God's design as being real true good trustworthy you can stake your life on this you can build your life on this you can build your marriage on this you can build your singleness on this God says there is right and wrong in how we understand express and respond to him and each other regarding our gender and sexuality alright notice this on the screen God's design of gender his design of male and female is good so that his design is legitimate and foundational to being human now here's what I want the folks in our lives to hear us say to them with great grace and mercy and patience it is impossible to be other than male or female in our orientation to

[68 : 59] God and each other because God himself built our gender into who we are going all the way back to the first human beings this is the way it started and this is the way it continues you cannot be who you aren't that's pretend that's fake that's not reality and that's why you feel the emptiness that you do when you try to live this out if you look with me then at Galatians 3 26 through 29 I didn't promise you this would be short but I hope that you will find it to be biblical there will be way more here than any of us can process this morning but I wanted to go on record along with my brother Greg about where we stand as we seek to evangelize those who are caught up and imprisoned in sexual sin

Galatians 3 beginning in verse 26 Paul now is arguing for this faith in Jesus apart from trying to make your own way and create your own worthiness before the Lord especially through rule keeping and law keeping and he comes to verse 26 for you are all sons of God how through faith in Christ Jesus for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourself with Christ a beautiful metaphor for there there is neither Jew nor Greek there is neither slave nor free man and notice this friends there is neither male or female for you are all one in Christ Jesus and if you belong to Christ then you are Abraham's descendants heirs according to the promise now folks here is the new expression of a new humanity this is being recreated or reclothed to use the metaphor that he did in the righteousness of

Jesus Christ so this is God's answer to Genesis 3 when Adam and Eve abandoned God's truth bought into the deception fell into sin realized they were naked started to deal with the fact that now I have all this guilt and shame and desire to hide from my creator well here is God's answer to remedy all of that it is the righteousness of his son Jesus Christ so that each person deceived and imprisoned in sin can know freedom truth and peace by the grace of God through faith in Christ that's our message isn't it God's remedy here this is astounding God's remedy is a renewed relationship with himself you say what in the world's God's stake in all of this I mean he let all this happen didn't he that's the kind of criticisms you hear well why did he if he's in control of everything why did he let all this and that people want to just that's the rebelliousness in them rather than seeing the beauty of the holiness of God in the lengths

God went to what's God's stake in this well nothing short friend of giving the life of his own perfect son to rescue you from sin and death that's what God then is giving us himself Christians have been recreated into a new humanity through faith in Jesus so that we can know and live as God's created being and God is our creator and savior that's how he originally designed us before sin and death so friends this is what it is this is spiritual recreation we call it salvation from deception sin death it's the renewal of personhood by God's favor and it is not limited by ethnic religious social or sexual discrimination please hear me now verse 28 look at it with me again if you would there is neither

Jew nor Greek there is neither slave nor free man there is neither male nor female for you are all one in Christ Jesus you will not be surprised to hear that there are those in the gay community who want to use this verse claiming to be Christians to say see we told you now I want you to see that isn't at all what's going on here verse 28 here's what it means whatever you are in life as a sinner in need of God's saving grace whether you are a Jew a non-Jew someone owned by another person someone free whether you are a male person or a female person now look at the end of verse 28 what does it say you are all one in Christ Jesus you are all one in Christ

[74 : 40] Jesus and now look at verse 26 for you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus verse 28 doesn't undo or diminish God's design for male and female does it no what does it do it celebrates God's power over sin and death by saving to the utter most those who put their faith in Jesus Christ Jew Gentile slave free person male person female person and now verse 29 how does he cap it if you belong to Christ whether you're any of those things or all of them in some way then you are Abraham's descendants heirs according to the promise that is you are heirs to the righteousness you are heirs to eternal glory like Abraham who was justified by faith and that's you you stand in good stead with

Abraham you have found favor in the sight of God just as he did because of faith faith in a time when women and slaves and non-Jews were all terribly discriminated against God says that they are of equal spiritual value to him as they trust in Jesus to forgive them for their sins they have a new spiritual family and status as God's children despite their gender or their social or religious backgrounds that's this series of verses it's beautiful and it's powerful I want to give you one other passage just to look at as then I'll make some statements in my closing elements here 1 Corinthians 6 9-11 I'm showing you the good news here there is hope and good news in

Christ 1 Corinthians 6 9-11 or do you not know that the unrighteous now the unrighteous are all of those who are not putting their faith in Jesus so that they have been seen by the Lord to be perfect blameless holy these people will not inherit the kingdom of God in other words they won't go to heaven now notice what does he say next in your Bibles friends do not be deceived do you see that there is a great deception going on today that wants these people to remain comfortably convinced that they can go their own way apart from the truth and relationship with Jesus Christ and be just fine just fine and here we're seeing do not be deceived about what neither fornicators nor idolaters nor adulterers nor the effeminate nor homosexuals nor thieves nor the covetous nor drunkards or revilers or swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God notice verse 11 such were some of you but you were washed you were sanctified you were justified in the name of the Lord

Jesus Christ and in the spirit of our God you see such were some of these people living in that kind of sin and God by grace delivered them from the deception and set them in the truth folks here is our hope for being saved from an eternity without God an eternity of hell because we chased that great deception instead of embracing God's grand design now I want to make some closing statements several paragraphs and I want to speak directly into the reality I don't know that anybody anybody from the LGBTQ community would ever listen to this sermon online and why in the world they would get this far in the sermon apart from God's grace apart from the Holy Spirit drawing their heart to something deeper something truly meaningful hopeful and helpful but if you're listening and you're at this point I want to speak directly into your life now folks I just want you to know this is personal to me very personal and so I have people in mind and this is what I want to say to them gender identity gender roles sexual preference and sexual expression are all so much more than issues of sexual morality of what is right and wrong about our sexuality it is that but it's more these are

God's designs for our very being giving expression to the uniqueness of persons made in the image of almighty God their creator we are more than our anatomy yes but we are certainly designed by God to live out our sexuality in harmony and obedience to our maker's purpose for our maleness and our femaleness now I'll put this next one up on the thing for you to read with me your sexuality then friend is not a product for sale it's not a commodity it's not an advertisement of your prowess it's not a weapon it's not a discovery as if it was some inner elusive entity you must find and then fashion for yourself and your sexuality is certainly not your own play thing used to manipulate and control others or to whimsically wield in whatever ways you think most stimulating for yourself your sexuality is who you are as designed and purposed by your gracious and loving creator you cannot unmake what God made the gender

[81 : 23] God assigned to you at birth is engendered in who you are so friends changing your name denying obvious male female distinctions and roles choosing and changing your sexual preference your sexual orientation changing your manner of dress your clothes your mannerisms or even surgically changing your anatomy which God assigned to you at birth none of that will change who God made you to be as either a male person or a female person and none of that will bring peace or hope to your heart that is a lie and a deception you are a man or a woman at the behest of God and at the core of your personhood and this is God's gift for you not your enemy your sexual biology is a manifestation of God's inner reality about you as created in his image you are who God made you friend and you do not have the power to change that reality about yourself no matter what lengths you go to so hear me carefully and consider this being at war with who you are is due to you being at war with

God as your creator and with who he made you to be and so we as Christians in the Christian community we prayerfully and humbly appeal to you to turn to Jesus Christ sin in your heart is your enemy and your enemy is deceiving you and leading your heart on a fool's errand of wasting your life now and for eternity the reality that you would want to alter what God made you as male or female expresses the true nature of your heart's unrest you are seeking to thwart God's design for you and go your own way because in your heart you are a rebellious sinner against God as your maker and the most tragic reality of all is that your heart knows this and deep down you are miserable for knowing it now those

Christians who love you plead with you to turn away from this deception and to put your faith and hope in Jesus Christ to celebrate what God made you to be you will find in Jesus the renewed fulfillment and the peace you desire in which only Jesus can give for there is salvation in no one else for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved to God be the glory and may he gain a great victory in the hearts of these people let's pray almighty God in heaven we thank you so much for your truth and we thank you so much that you are patient and long suffering with us as we struggle against these grand deceptions and great evils that want to reign and rule our hearts and so it is that each of us now bow before you as creator and God and savior our only hope from sin and death and we pray we pray for these people we know people in our workplaces in our extended family throughout our lives we pray for them and we pray for those who we don't know and have not met who are caught up and imprisoned embracing the lies chasing the deceit the greed the lust only to find one shallow hollow emptiness after another we pray

God that you would deliver us and deliver them that you will give them hope in Christ and help them to see their need for faith in Jesus help them to see his beauty and his goodness help them to come to be at rest in their souls with who and what you've made them to be we seek you God for deliverance and for hope we rejoice in the joy that is ours because you have redeemed us and cleansed us and made us holy as your people thank you for this congregation and for their patient listening and thank you that we as a congregation can go on record to say run to Jesus and flee from sin and find in him the love and the hope that you so desire for your heart it's in his name that we pray and for his glory amen