

The Majesty of Mankind: The Sixth Day (Part 2)

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Date: 17 December 2023

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[0 : 00] I want to rehearse this verse here with you. Boy, I tell you, I don't want to rush through these songs. These are just amazing.

Long lay the world in sin and error, pining till he appeared and the soul felt its worth. Evolution can't touch that. Evolution is the lie that preaches against that truth that we just sang. Till he appeared, the soul couldn't feel its worth.

But when he did, the soul knew. This is my hope, my joy and my peace. Isn't it beautiful? We praise the Lord for the glory of being able to sing the truth back to him. We care about what we say, don't we? To the Lord. Praise God. Praise God.

[1 : 04] Well, I won't preach the songs. Let me get over here and get behind the pulpit. Let's get busy with what God put on my heart for this week. The majesty of mankind.

The sixth day. And we're doing part. Oh, there it is. We're doing part two. For what we want to talk about in the sixth day.

And I'll tell you, the sixth day may turn into a four or five parter. The way it's looking right now. There's just so much here. This has been a really stimulating but very difficult time for me. Because I've had to read things that have angered me. Disgusted me. Grieved me. As I've had to read many, many different things dealing with what's being taught and proposed in our school systems.

And in our museums. In different places of higher learning. Where we'll take our children. And where our kids will grow up and go to college.

[2 : 16] And the kinds of things that they're being taught in these higher institutions. That fly directly in the face of what we're going to read about this morning. And I've come to believe that evolution is the most poisonous.

And worst lie ever perpetuated on mankind. Now I know that's a bold thing to say. With all of the different poisons that we have to face as human beings through the centuries.

But as I've studied this and been refreshed in God's word in it. I've come to realize just how much Satan has labored to make this lie live.

And it's around the world. It's everywhere. In an article titled, What Does It Mean to Be Human? Which, by the way, came very close to being the title for the message this morning. What does it mean to be human? Because that's what I'm dealing with. That's what the text is dealing with. But in an article titled, What Does It Mean to Be Human?

[3 : 22] The Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History answered this way. Human evolution is the lengthy process of change by which people originated from ape-like ancestors.

Scientific evidence shows that the physical and behavioral traits shared by all people originated from ape-like ancestors and evolved over a period of 6 million years.

Humans are primates. Physical and genetic similarities show that the modern human species, Homo sapiens, has a very close relationship to another group of primate species, the apes. Humans and the great apes. Large apes of Africa, chimpanzees, including bonobos or so-called pygmy chimpanzees, and gorillas, share a common ancestor that lived between 8 and 6 million years ago.

What does it mean to be human? Human. The highest level of academia, the highest level of thinking in the world answers in that quote.

[4 : 49] Now let's ask someone else what it means to be human. And in two verses, let's hear what he has to say.

Look with me, if you will, at Genesis chapter 1, verses 26 and 27. Then God said, Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness, and let them 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.

God created man in his own image. In the image of God, he created him. Male and female, he created them.

Now let's back up and put this in the greater context and read through the end of the chapter. But let's begin in verse 24, where we see the sixth day of creation starting.

Now remember, we've gotten five days under our belt so far. And now we're on day six. The world is only five days old.

[6 : 07] And on the sixth day, this is what God's going to do. Then God said, verse 24, Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind.

Cattle and creeping things and beasts of the earth after their kind. And it was so. God made the beasts of the earth after their kind.

And the cattle after their kind. And everything that creeps on the ground after its kind. And God saw that it was good. Pause there and just note with me.

God is making a big deal out of telling us that as he makes these different things, he then goes on to make them after their kind.

There is a pattern that's being established. I create and I create after the kind that I made. And it will replicate after its kind.

[7 : 02] And that pattern will go on and continue after its kind. Now notice with me again from verse 26. Then God said, Let us make man in our image according to our likeness and let them rule over the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, the cattle over all the earth, over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.

I can't read that enough. I'm telling you. God created man in his own image. In the image of God, he created him. Male and female, he created him. How many times in verse 27 does it say God created man?

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.

Then God said, Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of all the earth and every tree which has fruit yielding seed.

It shall be food for you. And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the sky and to everything that moves on the earth which has life, I have given every green plant for food.

[8 : 22] And it was so. And it was so. God saw that all he had made. Behold, it was very good. There was evening and there was morning.

The sixth day. I have given you. There is no need for the earth to evolve because God has given everything that the earth needs to be sustained in his design and purpose to include mankind. Amen. There's no need for struggle. There's no need for fighting or striving or dominion. There's no death. There's no lack.

There's no selfishness, no greed, no pride. There is innocence in God's perfect design, purpose and creation. This is the beauty of what this text is putting before us as God brings mankind into this wonderful, wonderful place.

Friends, teaching human evolution, teaching the doctrines of Darwinian naturalism, is dehumanizing. Not only does it devalue our understanding of ourselves as human beings, but it also deceives people with its lies of our origins as it robs us of the truth that every person is made in the image of God and it has stood that way since the first human came to this planet by God's decree.

[10 : 05] We are either made in the image of apes or we are made in God's image. We cannot have it both ways. And for those of us who believe in Jesus Christ, we choose God's design.

We choose God's testimony in Scripture by faith that this is the way we came into this world as human beings, as mankind.

My friends, evolution. And I'm not saying these things because, boy, Jeff, are you getting on this because you know about people in the congregation that believe in evolution.

I don't know of any of you that believe in evolution or that struggle with God's design for origins or anything like that. But this is the world that we witness in. This is how we traffic in the different places that we go to in our sphere of influence.

We're going to be running into people and we do run into people who have been indoctrinated with this idea that they are nothing more than random amoebas that were able to raise themselves up in primeval struggle to become what we are today.

[11 : 20] Nonsense. Absolute nonsense. And it flies in the face of Almighty God as the creator of mankind. And it steals purpose and hope from people and leaves them with no joy.

Evolution works against God's truth. It works against the truth that sin has marred but not destroyed His image in us.

The randomness of evolution's pseudoscience leaves people without true hope. While at the same time giving these same people the empty false hope that by personal struggle and by personal triumph they pull yourself up by your bootstraps mentality they can somehow undefined by the way rise above the vacuous existence evolution creates and still find some semblance of meaning for their lives.

Ridiculous. And we see these people in counseling. We encounter these people in the lines and buying groceries and moving hither and thither in our lives.

We run into these folks. The implicit message of evolutionary doctrine is that each of us must vie for the place of apex predator in our domain.

[12 : 52] That's code for look out for you and yours. That's code for be all you can be. And step on anybody that gets in your way.

Peace on earth and good will toward men are things we are told we must pursue but in reality which prove elusive and ultimately unachievable.

Under evolution's dogma we come to realize that we can't have it both ways. We can't be kings of our little world and have peace with all the other kings wanting to rule their little worlds.

It just doesn't work. And so who do we read about this morning? Who do we worship? Who do we praise? Who do we sing to? There's only one king of the universe.

There's only one king of my heart. There's only one king of this church. His name is Jesus Christ the Lord. Now that is straight and pure and simple. That is something that I can put my feet in.

[13 : 56] That's something I can get up every day. I know who I am. I know what I'm about and I know what I need to do. Whatever's going on around me, whatever's happening in the world, in my family, with people that I love and care about, that doesn't change who I am and what God's called me to be and do as I worship Him because He hasn't changed.

The world fluxes. The world falters and stumbles and feels the pain of the weight of sin since the fall in Genesis 3.

But there's one great reality that you and I hold on to and will never ever surrender. Jesus Christ is the Lord of glory and by Him all things are upheld and sustained.

That's what we hold on to. That's what keeps Grace Church together is that there is a God in heaven. He sits on the throne and He lives in our hearts.

He made us. He designed us. And He has given us purpose together. Not just as an individual, but as part of a greater family with a greater mission to bring the message of His hope to a world that is desperate for it and doesn't even know it.

[15 : 09] They're chasing their tails. And Jesus stands ready to save. And His purpose is to save. We can't have it both ways.

But we are told that we need to cope. I hate that word. I truly do. When we have counseling sessions at times we tell people as we introduce our counseling ministry and philosophy to people we are not here to help you form coping strategies.

We want to blow those out of the water and teach you to live with joy and hope and peace in Christ. And that's a long way away from coping. We are told that we need to cope because after all this is the way that it's been for four billions of years.

And this is the way it's going to always be. You and I are told we must constantly reinvent ourselves or die. That is the heart of evolution's message to humanity.

Reinvent yourself death or die. Rise to the occasion or die. You and I can say this.

[16 : 32] There are worse things than death. And we don't need to fear death. They put death as the ultimate thing to be afraid of to try and get around to try and avoid.

Well we understand death's the enemy. But we also understand that we have a great Lord who's conquered sin and death for us. So we're not afraid of death. I don't look forward to dying.

I don't. But I'm not afraid of death. Dying is a horrible process is it not? That's not God's original plan was it? Death is the enemy.

Jesus has conquered sin and death for us. And so while it may be hard for us to struggle through the pains and the grief of dying death ushers us into the hope of eternal life with Jesus Christ our Lord.

What is evolution's message? This is all there is. It's struggle and it's fight and it's try to get to the apex of everything that you can muster for your life.

[17 : 41] Enjoy it while you can and then it's gone. Let's read it again because I can't read it enough. Verse 26. This is God's answer.

Let us make man in our image according to our likeness and let them 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 and God created man in his own image.

In the image of God he created him. Male and female he created them and then God goes on to bless them. Friends the majesty of mankind which I've used in my title for my sermon.

The majesty of mankind refers to the regal dignity of man made in God's image to reflect God's character. Man is God's apex of creation.

creation. We don't have to fight to be something God's already made us to be. We are the apex of his creative power.

[18 : 52] We are the only things in all creation with the privilege of reflecting his image. And as we'll see man's regal rule submits to and reflects God's sovereign rule over all that he's made.

We've been given the privilege of sharing in what God already rules over. Any disconnection from or denial about the literal meaning of our origins that's clearly clearly taught in the creation account does terrible terrible violence to the sovereignty of God and salvation and sanctification and all the other major doctrines of the Christian faith.

You cannot divorce our salvation testimonies in scripture. You cannot divorce the major doctrines of scripture from the creation account and the doctrine of God as the sovereign creator of all things.

Who made those doctrines? Who gave us these beliefs? Who gave us the foundation salvation that we can stand on in faith in Christ?

God as maker. Again, I'm going to say it. You do terrible violence to the sovereignty of God and salvation and sanctification and all the other major doctrines if you try to disconnect or deny the literal meaning of our origins given in this account in Genesis 1.

[20 : 24] Why? Because our life with God begins with him as our maker. And then it must, it must, due to the reality of sin, it must then move to a saving relationship with him by God's grace alone through his gift of faith alone in Christ alone.

That's what God's designed as the process. So I want to put this up and have this just jump out, I hope, at us. our need for Christ's cross is set and sealed in the theological cement of creation.

And we just cannot hear at the beginning of scripture budge one iota from what God is revealing to us about himself and about the process that he chose to bring all that we know into existence.

We need to take him at his word, don't we? We need to believe this in a literal way because it's presented to us in a literal way and there's no reason not to. Grammatically, syntactically, doctrinally, theologically, even historically.

So we're talking then this morning about God's good way, the sixth day, land animals and now we're going to focus on mankind. We did the land creatures last time. We're dealing with the good of God said.

[21 : 52] This is all good according to God. And now we're going to focus on mankind. Friends, this passage has several important truths that we'll need to unpack together.

Not the least is this, that God is speaking, have you noticed? He is speaking in plural pronouns. Did you notice? He uses us and our to refer to himself in creating mankind.

Then God said, let us make man in our image. Now some of you have studied this. Some of you have maybe even heard a sermon or two about this and so you know where this is going.

This is so important to how the Lord wants you and I to understand and live out, listen now, the distinction, the distinction he makes between humanity and every other aspect of creation.

within these plural pronouns is our first hint at how God is distinguishing us from the critters. And we need to capture that and own that and rejoice in it.

[23 : 03] What am I talking about? Well, this is how God is beginning to give us the clue that nothing else in creation is made in God's likeness as is mankind.

mankind. We are truly majestic in God's creation. Now we're going to say more about these plural pronouns as we maybe move towards some other messages in the near future, God willing. But here in the moment this morning, we want to focus on what is clearly being revealed about this plurality in the Godhead as it's connected to us as God's image bearers.

What does the plurality in the Godhead have to do with you and I as image bearers? Well, we want to talk about that. We bear God's image by reflecting in our lives this plurality described in the Godhead.

we are talking then about personal relationships, especially relationship with God, with the Holy Spirit, and with Jesus Christ.

[24 : 17] We're going to talk, we're going to find out and talk about in the near future this plurality in the Godhead that consists of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. So here, while we don't see the Trinitarian doctrine we believe in spelled out in detail, we can see the beginnings of what will be that doctrine, can we not?

Well, what I'm zeroing in on is this. That plurality helps you and I understand one of the most significant distinguishing features about us being made in God's image.

We were made for relationship. We are imitating God in that plurality of relationship by being relational creatures.

believers. And we relate to each other in unique ways, do we not? Sometimes that's not so good. But many times it is, and Jesus makes it possible for us to relate to each other in self-sacrificial ways, self-denying ways.

Do you see that in the animals? Do you see one gorilla stepping aside and let the other gorilla say, no, you take the banana. You eat the plant. No, really, go ahead.

[25 : 30] I'm good. No, no, no. They don't. You don't see any of that. They live by instinct. And what's their instinct? Me and mine. That's right. Survival, man.

I'll eat you to survive. And what evolution wants to do is to take that entire reality that has happened due to the fall and put that onto and into humanity.

and tell us we're just a little higher form than that. Ridiculous. That's not what God's word says. Please understand the spiritual foundation and nature behind what we're talking about.

This is a spiritual war. These are spiritual lies perpetuated on the human race to keep us bogged down in self.

To keep our eyes on us. This is satanic through and through. And we need to be willing enough and courageous enough to stand up and say, this is satanic because it is not thus saith the Lord.

[26 : 38] It is a lie against thus saith the Lord. It's not neutral. It's a lie that combats the truth that we were made in God's image. image. And in that image we have hope and we can know joy through Jesus Christ.

So again, we're talking about personal relationships as reflected in the Godhead that now we reflect by God's image bearing and that distinguishes us in many, many ways from anything else God made.

Now notice also in this, we're going to ask and begin to answer from scripture, does this text teach outright or even allow that humans are simply a higher form of animal among God's creatures? Can the Bible bear that out or even allow for it in even small ways? We want to ask those questions. We're not afraid of that. Are you afraid of that?

I'm not afraid to ask those questions of the Bible and see where it takes us. Well, the first thing that we want to do in answering that and fleshing that out as it were, the first thing is that the text makes clear that mankind is made by, notice what it says in verse 26, this is the pattern you've seen in every single day of creation, then God said.

[28 : 02] Then God said. It's made, all of this is made, it being creation, by God's speech.

Mankind's no different. Mankind is made by God's speech, his speaking. We have that in common with every part of creation.

The sun, the moon, the stars, the earth itself and all its creatures were made by God speaking it into existence. But the passage crescendos at the making of mankind.

Man stands as God's only creation made in his likeness, designed to reflect that likeness within his or her very being.

Now, what does this mean? What more does it mean? What more can we say about being made in God's image? This is the critical distinction setting us apart from every other aspect of creation. [29 : 06] So it's extremely important for us to understand this, especially as we testify to other people about the reason for this season. We should rejoice at being human.

We should rejoice at the fact that God became human. I don't even want to get in, get into asking why didn't God become an ape and evolve and show us how all that worked and then and then become Jesus and then go to that.

You know, you let this stuff go in your mind and you think it's just it's so ridiculous that it's hard to even think about it. It's painful. That's why I say I grieve. I have to read this stuff and I just.

All right, look, let's answer this question a little bit more this morning about what does it mean for God's image to be in us, that we are image bearers of God. Now, we're talking about being image bearers even as unbelievers.

You were an image bearer of God before you were born again. By faith in Christ. Yes, we're all made that way. So this is what we're talking about. All right. Well, look, there are ways that we are like God and reflect him and there are ways we are not like God and cannot cannot be like him.

[30 : 19] Theologians refer to God's communicable and non communicable attributes. So communicable communicable means his qualities of his nature that we can reflect even after the fall.

We're going to talk about those in just a moment. The non communicable attributes. Those would be like his omniscience. His all knowing his omnipotence is he's all powerful.

You're not all powerful, are you? You're not all knowing. Neither am I. And his omnipresence that God is everywhere at once and maybe his self existence attributes like that, that we those are non communicable for us.

But then there are many that are, if you were transferable and we can reflect those in the way that we are as human beings. We are like God, for example, in that we can reflect his wisdom.

We do that, don't we? We reflect his wisdom, his holiness. We reflect God's truth, his goodness.

You and I reflect his kindness, his compassion, his love, grace, mercy, patience, even his righteousness among many other qualities.

[31 : 40] Folks, where do you think all that came from? Do you think that we evolved that or invented it? Did you invent righteousness? Did you invent wisdom?

The Greeks didn't invent wisdom. They didn't even discover it. There's wisdom going on long before the Greeks. God made us wise.

There are people who are writing now about how wise, how wise Adam and Eve were as the first two humans on the earth before sin had its corrupting influence on them.

We'll probably talk about this when we get there. I'll just mention it. Have we any capacity at all to fathom what it would take in terms of intellect for Adam to name every creature that God had made to that point and just come up with a name and name them and interact with them.

Just the wisdom, just the sheer intelligence. It's off the charts for anything that we would know. Can you imagine a mind uncorrupted by sin? A perfect mind, perfect reasoning intellect.

[32 : 55] We can't, can we? We can't get there. Well, that's not all we can reflect. We can reflect God's creativity, diversity. We can share in God's love, in God's justice, his beauty, his moral uprightness.

We can love what God loves. We, we have the capacity to value what God holds dear. We can reason, solve complex problems.

We can build incredible things. We can go to the moon. We can go to the sun. We can go to the outer planets. We can discern right from wrong, choose good over evil.

We can delight in and sometimes even grieve over the matters of life. Now, think about all that.

Animals can't do any of that. They don't do any of those things in the high and holy ways that mankind can, right?

I mean, it's not even close, is it. I watched a movie last night with Suzanne. I told her, I said, I want to feel good movie. I need to feel good movie.

[34 : 05] So we watched this movie. I don't know if you've seen it. Secretariat? Spoiler alert. If you haven't seen it, I'm fixing to ruin it. The very last race that they want to feature in this horse's life, which has been dubbed the greatest race horse of all time up to our day.

In the last of the triple crown races, I think it was the Beaumont, it's a long endurance course. The previous two races in the triple crown secretariat had won, and the horse had won those two races by about two and a half lengths.

In that last race, the horse won the race by 31 lengths. The horse came around the last turn and started up the last stretch toward the finish line, and you still couldn't even see the other riders as he came toward that.

He was so far ahead. Evolution and the animals aren't even close. They're so far behind the high and holy ways that you and I have been given the privilege of reflecting the Lord in that it's not even a contest.

It's not even a race. We come down the stretch to the finish line, and our ability to reflect the image of God in our lives against everything else that God made, and the contest isn't even close, friends. [35 : 39] Do the animals reflect God's wisdom and goodness? Sure, they do. But can they reason? Can they love, discern, choose the good, deny themselves for God's glory?

No, not on anything close to the levels that you and I can. But does creation reflect the wisdom of God, the power of God, the divine glory of God? Sure. But nothing like the image of God in you does.

Evolution, through satanic influence, wants to blur all those lines. Let me go further. Because of what I've read, I know this for a fact. They want to destroy those lines.

They're out for blood. Friends, consider the alternative you and I are presented with.

That's the alternative. Are we truly descended from apes? Is our text for this morning just a fanciful religious myth that denies the science of our animal origins?

[37 : 00] Is that our history? Is that what the Bible says? Does the Bible even give a hint for that? Does it even allow for us to press that somewhere in between the verses of Scripture somewhere?

By the way, I wish I had time to take you through and show you that at every one of these levels where they have tried to link what we are today with that over there, everything in between has been debunked.

Every one of them. The fossil evidence, everything. And it's been written and it's been documented in scientific journals, in publications, not just by creationists, but by secular scientists who were looking at this and saying, yeah, you know what?

You know what we thought that was in the way of a link between the two? That's a mixture of bones. A gibbon and an orangutan and a human femur.

And they put them all together. They had a skull cap. And they made an entire being out of a skull cap. Skull and all. And that's all they had to fashion it.

[38 : 13] Everything else, they made it up. And it's documented. I read it. I looked at the pictures. Book after book. And that's why Brian and I got mad.

What a lie. They're presented with this and yet, you know what? They keep publishing it in the textbooks. They keep putting it in our school system.

They have it in our museums. Do you know the, look, I'm fixing to go off. Do you know the famous, the Lucy thing? I'm going to show you pictures of this. The Lucy thing.

Do you all know what I'm talking about? Lucy. She's the most famous creature. Brian said missing link. That's what they call her. They think that she is the evolutionary link, the greatest evidence that we have.

And they have made these life-size features of her. And she tours the world. Wait till I tell you what the evidence was for them to form Lucy.

[39 : 15] I'm going to wait. I'm going to wait. You go look it up. That's fine if you can't wait. But wait till you hear what they used to form this critter and fashion her.

And I don't think it was any accident that instead of giving her ape eyes, they gave her human eyes. Wait till you see. I read that and looked at that thing and I about came out of the chair.

I did come out of the chair. I had to take a break. No, no, no. We're not, we're not, we're not buying into that. We're not, not because we reject science.

There's no science here. This is bias. This is fake. In one case, there was this, oh, I can't do it. I can't do it. I need to move on.

That's nothing. You see, I'm, I'm, all right. The alternative is we can't do it. Now look, for certain, for certain, because I, you know, I'm not up here on my soapbox just trying.

[40 : 12] I want to, I want to expose this for what it is because it works against the truth of my Lord and Savior. This doesn't leave people with hope.

This is purposeless. This is you taking the credit for who you are by struggle and striving, by you being able to be the fittest.

You're here today. And that's not true. We share in some characteristics with some animals. We do. We do. Think about it. We're air breathers. They're air breathers. Many air breathing animals. We eat. Right?

Think of all the ways that we are similar to some animals and how they, well, we all come from the same designer. It's just not a big, hairy, wicked, arresting deal to say that.

[41 : 14] I'm not denying Scripture to say we are like some animals in some ways. Okay. But as many theologians have pointed out through the ages, the one aspect of God's image unmistakably reflected in human beings is personhood.

Personhood. We reflect the relational, personal nature of the triune God of the universe. That's the us and the our of Genesis 1.26.

So, unlike the animals, we were made with a God consciousness. We were made with a God mindfulness.

We were made to have a mindful, personal knowledge of God through a communicative relationship with Him and we were made for each other.

So, we, folks, we are God aware. We are self aware. And we are others aware. Do you understand?

[42 : 25] You following me? This is all part and parcel to the reality of that Trinitarian distinction in the Godhead connected to us as relational beings.

That's how we bear the image of God as relational people. This is the beauty and the wisdom.

These are truths that cause human beings to give worship to their Creator.

We feel blessed by this distinction. We are set apart by God in this distinction. That should humble us and make us want to fall to our knees in worship of our Creator.

Well, don't you think that Satan would want to rob you of that and rob God of that? Absolutely. And so, here comes the lie. No, we're not like the animals in this at all.

We're so distinct. In fact, here, here is where you and I encounter God's chosen descriptions. His chosen descriptions for who we are as those made in His image.

[43 : 35] This is what the text bears out. Look at it with me again, if you will, in verse 26. Then God said, He spoke, let us make man in our image according to our likeness.

And notice this, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle over the earth over all the creeping things that creep.

God created man in His own image. In the image of God, He created him. Look now, male and female, He created them.

In verse 26, when we start talking about this distinction, we start talking about the different ways that God has chosen to describe this mankind thing that He made, we encounter these things.

The first thing that He tells us is, let us make man. The Hebrew word is Adam and it means mankind. Mankind, not a single man.

[44 : 40] As distinct from animals, plants, and any other aspect of creation. That's the contextual idea. He's not just making an announcement, He's making a distinction.

Now, you and I also know that Adam, or Adam, does later refer to a single historical figure. It can be used that way as well.

Here, it's used in a plural sense. You and I share in the name of the human person we all come from. Adam, mankind.

The context here makes clear we are dealing with mankind. So we're dealing with him and hers. Not just him. Not just one him.

Not just one guy. In verse 26, we also have this phrase. Will you notice it with me? This is the second description that God allows for us. and let them rule over.

[45 : 42] And let them rule over. The plural pronoun them refers again to mankind. Not to a solitary person. Humankind composed of two distinct creatures.

Two distinct creatures, but it gets better. The brilliance of this and the beauty of this, oh, I don't want it to get lost on us. So notice with me in verse 27 now.

God created man in his own image and the image of God he created him. Male and female he created them. There you go. There's another one. Male and female he created them. God blessed them and God said to them. Friends, listen. God made the animals male and female, didn't he?

So why doesn't the Lord make a point of that fact as he does with human beings? Why does he wait until now to point out the fact that he made them male and female?

[46 : 46] What do you think? So you think about that with me. He hasn't done that before. And yet he's made male and female creatures before this so that they could fulfill his mandate to do what?

That's right. Multiply. But wait now. It's not until human beings that he makes a deal out of telling you that he made them male and female. Why would he do that?

Why does he do that? Because, look, because with people we are dealing with personal identity. Your maleness or femaleness is fundamental to who you are in relationship to God and to each other. Not so with the animals.

Gorilla's a gorilla's a gorilla. He is not God aware. No need for him to know whether he's male or female. He lives by instinct. He procreates by instinct.

[47 : 49] Designed into him by the Lord to perpetuate the species. Not so with you and I. I did not begin to date Suzanne and walk up to her and say, I got a good idea.

I think you and I ought to get together to perpetuate the species. I didn't say that. I wooed her. I dated her. I talked about what I liked about her.

We ate cheeseburgers together. You understand where I'm coming from? I had to date the girl. I had to win her over in that process. I looked at the courtship, a documentary of the courtship of birds and I watched what some of those male birds had to go through and I was like, yeah, forget that.

Man. He's having to work, man. God made you and I to relate to each other. There is a process by which we come to share ourselves with each other but there are levels of that sharing that are defined by God and His design for closeness so that the closeness that you feel with your soulmate is so unique to that relationship that no other relationship can come close to it and so you guard it. You safeguard it and you nurture it. You should be. You pray about it. You move in the circles of the joys of sharing in that soul connection with the person that you married.

[49 : 22] It's unique on the earth. It's like nothing and the animal kingdom can't touch that. No matter how much the documentaries you see try to humanize the animals, they are not human.

Now listen when I say this, please. Animals don't love. That is an attribute of Almighty God limited to human beings.

No matter how much you see that gorilla or that chimpanzee cuddling and it might be so cute, their little baby, what's going to happen pretty soon? Mama's going to grab that thing by the arm and sling it out of joint and throw it up on her back and run off into the bush and you're going to go, yeah, I don't do that.

Right? I mean, I may play with my kids and throw them up in the air and make Suzanne go, ah, make sure you catch him, you know, kind of thing. But I don't sling my kids around like animals do. It's not love. But the documentaries want you to believe it and then they say, look at how much they love their young. Well, they don't love their young. They don't know what love is.

[50 : 30] They care for them to perpetuate the species. Come on, let's call it what it is. These are the subtle ways that they hook our kids. These are the subtle ways that they start making our kids think that there's really no true distinctions between the animal kingdom and us.

We're just one more form of animal on the earth and we have a responsibility as the higher form to take care of the other forms. Seems like I read that in the Bible somewhere where God gave us some stewardship dominion over the animals.

We'll get to that. This is what we're talking about in the way of what God is doing in relationship. Relationship. People are male and female because that is critical to their personal identities.

It is fundamental to who you are in relationship to God. That's the point. Friends, notice please, God doesn't give authority to any of the animals.

He doesn't make them his co-regents to rule over creation in any aspect. God didn't give the animals or any other part of creation the ability to know God and to relate to God personally.

[51 : 46] But in verse 28, 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 and over the birds of the sky and over

every living thing that moves on the earth.

In verse 28, God speaks personally and directly to his creation of man and woman. That is significant.

He is speaking to them. Why? Because they bear his image and God is able to communicate with them in a way far, far beyond and advanced beyond any animal.

God doesn't talk to the moon. He doesn't walk in the cool of the garden with the stars or a plant or a monkey or a giraffe.

but he does with mankind. And so he speaks to his creation because he created mankind to relate to him on a level that is unique to mankind.

[52 : 53] So he speaks to them. He talks to them. He says words to them so that they can say words back. This is unprecedented. Language is a gift of God given to you and I.

What we're doing even right now is a gift of the Lord Jesus Christ as our maker. The music that we sang. Mitch took us along with some other couples to Handel's Messiah on Friday night.

And Mitch and I were walking back to the car afterward and we both were I think thinking the same thing and we said it. Said you know I've got evolution and creation and all it's just oozing out of my pores for two months now and so I can't help it.

As I sat there and watched that performance I told Mitch how could anybody hear something this glorious and think that this came from monkeys. That it took us billions of years to get to the point where we could do something like that.

Isn't it much easier for us to just say well we were made to be like this. We were given the ability to compose something so magnanimous so beautiful so soul arresting so beyond what any creature in God's creation could do except for mankind.

[54 : 15] No. God is speaking directly to his creation. Notice the difference if you would please. Notice the difference between verses 28 and 22.

Look at 28. God blessed them and God said to them. Right? Now look up at verse 22. God blessed them saying be fruitful and multiply.

In verse 22 he simply decrees. This is an order of decree, right? Down in verse 28 he's communicating. There's a difference.

Please notice the difference. He uses human language and communicates with them to give them direction for their shared purpose. Here's their purpose.

Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth with more of you. Subdue the earth. Rule over all of God's creation as male and female. No. This blessing then and these mandates for mankind these are the first recorded words God spoke to people.

[55 : 25] As far as we know notice he blessed us. That's what's happening here. In the first words God ever spoke to those he made humankind he blessed them and he gave them the dominion command.

Now in that blessing go and be fruitful. Fill the world with your kind. I want many many many of you to be able to relate to communicate with and love.

this is so much unlike the animals. I hope you're seeing that. He blessed us in our maleness and femaleness.

He made beautiful and marvelous the distinctions of our respective persons. Look and in those perfect distinctions God created compliments that is corresponding soul stirring life giving attributes designed designed for our joy in life as we reflect his image in our humanity.

The union the unity in verse 26 are God's inventions comprising what? Marriage.

[56 : 46] from the beginning. That's the purpose. That's the design. You as a man and you as a woman are distinct.

You are your respective persons in that maleness and in that female and that's God's wisdom and design. At the same time God has designed in you this relational aspect that images him in the Godhead and you desire companionship and so God puts within you this corresponding and complementary attributes of being able to correspond to union yourself with in your case a woman with a man a man with a woman and that design is so unique so special so high in God's economy that it becomes the pinnacle of what we have in the way of understanding human relationships.

It doesn't mean that singles are left out singles can know that kind of relationship with the Lord but God has designed that communion with two souls two human souls to be limited to marriage.

All right so Brian and I can have a friendship but we will never ever approach in our friendship what he has with his wife Danielle and I have with my wife Suzanne.

That is a God designed purpose for marriage. Folks do you know what I'm saying here? It's worth fighting for. It is worth fighting for as God's church.

[58 : 28] It is worth dispelling the lies that we hear over and over about marriage. There are books out there on marriage. Some of them even written by Christians that are just ridiculous.

At the center of all of it is your happiness. The whole purpose of you being married is that you be happy. Not holy. Holiness is maybe something that might be mentioned here and there if at all. We're married to reflect the goodness of God in the Trinity. We're married to reflect the goodness of God as Christ loves his bride, the church. And his bride shows respect for him.

All of that gets blurred and obliterated when you start thinking about evolution. I'm going to go out and say, and I'm not the first to say it and I won't be the last, much of what, if not all, of what we're seeing in our gender issues today is based in evolutionary Darwinian theory.

Why not? You believe in evolution, you believe that we came from monkeys, you believe that we have no purpose, that it's all random, why not?

[59 : 36] You get to choose. There's nothing unique about your identity as a man or a woman. Switch it up. Human sexuality, hear me please friends, human sexuality is an apex attribute in how we reflect our likeness to God as his creation.

Did you hear me say that? Human sexuality is an apex attribute in how we reflect our likeness to God as his creation. You say, why Jeff?

Is God male or female? No, he's not. God is not male or female. He's spirit. He doesn't have a body, right? So God is neither male nor female, but he made us to be that way and to reflect his image in our maleness and femaleness.

He did that. At the core of our persons, we are made, we are made, created sexual beings who relate to God from our maleness and femaleness.

You understand? So singleness, marriage, and family all reflect this truth that you were made male and female to relate to God fundamentally as male or female.

[60 : 57] Folks, you can have as many operations altering things as you want. You can wear the other sexes clothes. You can go to all the extremes we see.

We can change up the bathrooms and let men go into locker rooms with women and do all of that, but this is something that will never, ever change. You will never, ever factor out of your soul whether God made you man or woman.

You can't get man out of man. If you were made male, you will always be male. Rejoice in it. If you're female, you will always be female.

Rejoice in it. Because that was God's perfect design for you from the beginning. You know why people don't want to stay male or female?

Because they wimp out. They cowered out on the truth. It's hard to be a guy and self-deny. It's hard to be a woman and self-deny.

[62 : 01] Maybe if I mix it up and muddle it up, I won't be responsible anymore. And so they cowered out. They cowered out on serving each other.

Have you accepted the fact we're all cowards? We all look like water for the easiest way down. God help us.

Well, a central feature. Here it is. A central feature of our very worship is submitting. Submitting to God in the distinctiveness and corresponding nature of being male and female.

We cannot escape or destroy what God put into us. This is beautiful. This is so, it's so beautiful to be male and female.

And the joys of being male and female and celebrating together in that maleness is just a glorious human privilege. What a blessing from Almighty God.

[63 : 08] Greg explained it in the sermon that he did back in Ephesians 2. In his sermon, Greg said, mankind is God's masterpiece. Amen, brother.

Reflecting God as the master artist. Amen. Well, doesn't it make sense that Satan would want to blur that and destroy that if he can so that we won't reflect back on our master who made us.

Again, friends, I'm just trying to help us get our minds around the reality. This is spiritual warfare.

These are spiritual issues. We cannot afford to turn a blind eye and a deaf ear to these issues in our culture because we have the truth.

We have the hope, the joy. We know what these relationships mean. Friends, our glory in this wonderful regal-ness that God's built into us, our glory is not our own. It is simply and miraculously a reflection of God's glory in us. Even unbelievers who have no regard for God, who rebel against the Lord who made them, even they are reflections of this masterful work of God as they bear His image.

[64 : 29] We are embodied spirits made by God and our culture is desperately, desperately in need of these foundational truths about our origins as people made in the image of God.

Folks, this is what I've been saying to you. I'll put it in a little more theological terms for us. This passage that we're reading right now about being image bearers, this passage centers on a biblical anthropology.

Big word, biblical anthropology. It just simply means God's view of mankind. This is who we are as human beings. This answers the question, what does it mean to be human?

In contrast, the current pot of anthropological porridge that's being cooked up and fed to and swallowed by our culture is nothing but a swill of lies seasoned with the savory spice of it's all about you.

That spice makes everything go down easier. Every lie Satan's ever perpetuated on humankind goes down a lot easier when he says, oh, and it's all about you.

[65 : 41] And we say, well, give me a second dose. even the high and holy doctrine of being made in the image of God isn't about us, at least not primarily.

You with me? Being made in God's image can't be separated from the truths of sin and the depravity of mankind.

That unbelievers are polluted or corrupted by sin throughout their entire being and are a need of a force outside of them to rescue them from that corruption.

That's every one of our issues and dilemmas that we face as human beings. It's all about you is an ancient brew of poison.

It's cooked up by Satan millennia ago. God willing, we'll get to it in Genesis 3. Does God have any answers from Genesis 1, for the confusion and chaos about our sexuality?

[66 : 44] Does he have any answers for us about our personal identity, our masculinity, femininity, marriage, family, gender, singleness? Can the ancient text of Genesis taking us all the way back to the beginning, to our origins, can that text speak into our modern problems with anything to make us wise about the doctrine of man, about humankind, about who we are and why we're here?

Well, we say yes, it does. Amen? Genesis 1 absolutely does. And I hope you won't get tired of hearing that Genesis answers these critical issues for our lives.

Look, I want to give you just a little bit more to hang on to, all right? Professor, author, and biblical theologian, Owen Strand, he thinks that Genesis 1 has these answers for us and I wanted to share this with you.

I thought he did a great job communicating this and it blessed my soul. This was refreshment to me after reading all that other stuff. Look at this is what he says. We need to see humanity afresh.

Amen. We have been told that we are people, that we people are the chance result of impersonal chaos working its dark magic on the universe.

[68 : 01] We have no divine origin. There is no design or telos, divine meaning, to our bodies and identities. And this last part is taken almost for granted today.

There is no God. The outcome of such thinking? Humanity is disenchanting. We are not made by God. We have no greater purpose in life.

Spirituality is just mystic make-believe for the emotively oriented. Children are a burden. And the desultory, that means disconnected or random creed, goes on and on and on.

Friends, because the battle for perspective over our identities, the chaos that ensues from believing Satan's lies about people being animals, and the resulting disenchantment with life that follows from believing those lies, they are not limited to modern times.

Human beings have been struggling with this stuff since the fall, because Satan's been lying to them since the fall. Satan's war against God as creator, and against mankind as made in God's image, that has manifested through church history in all kinds of various forms.

[69 : 15] But listen, friends, at the base of it, these lies are always about who God is, and who we are in relation to him as creator.

All of the lies of Satan will come down to that basis. That's what we're fighting. We're not fighting the people who believe the lies.

I was one of those people, and thank God I had people who cared about me enough to tell me the truth, and for God to use that truth to rescue my soul. Quoting again from Strand, I think he helps us sharpen our understanding of why the issue of the doctrine of man is so important to our time.

I want you to grasp this. Give me just a little bit more time here. Look, we find ourselves in a contest of anthropological visions, visions about humankind. The culture rages over the doctrine of man. If the major issue of the 16th century was that of acceptance, that is, how man may be forgiven by God, and the major issue of the 20th was that of authority, whether the Bible is inerrant, then the major issue of our time is that of anthropology.

[70 : 25] Does the human person live in an ordered cosmos and have an appointed identity, or does he make his own identity in a world without God? Beyond the finer points of the various debates we face today, this is the question of our age.

Amen. This is the question of our age, and God answers it in Genesis chapter 1, clearly and definitively. Folks, our world is torn apart, is it not?

Our world is torn apart by evolution's doctrines. They tell us that we're random animals with no greater purpose than to survive and thrive in ways which seem best to our view of things.

Whatever it takes for me to be happy. We don't know who we are. We don't know that we're made in God's image. We don't know why we were made, who made us.

We don't know that we were made for a beautiful purpose. One final observation from Strand, because it cuts to the chase of why we're so confused and so conflicted about ourselves, and then I'm done.

[71 : 29] Look at this. The witness of the Scripture and of the church that loves the Scripture is not that the knowledge of God helps in our formations of self-knowledge, no. The witness of Scripture is that we cannot know ourselves without knowing God.

To know God and His intentions for humanity, we must start where the Scripture starts, Genesis 1. Many Christians derive their doctrine of origins from this chapter.

This landmark text, however, offers not simply knowledge of God's creative work, but knowledge of God's design of humanity. That's what we want to camp on.

That's what we want to proclaim, preach. That's what we want to bring hope to people with. God's design for humanity is high and holy. God Himself became a human being to rescue human beings from themselves, and that's the reason for the season, isn't it?

That's what we're celebrating, and so God willing, next Sunday, if I'm here to have breath for life, I've already got most of what I want to say next week. I couldn't help it. It just had to come out, so I hope you'll be here next Sunday, Lord's Day.

[72 : 40] We'll celebrate the reason for the season together. We'll be joyful in the Lord Jesus, and we will rejoice that God has made us male and female. Let's pray. Father, we do thank you, Almighty God, for the wonderful truths of Scripture that clearly tell us and identify for us that we were made in your image.

We were made, created, unlike any other aspect of creation, to reflect the goodness of your heart, your character, your love and kindness and compassion.

And so I pray that you will send us out today reflecting your character in those ways to others. And please help us to remember, God, there are many, many, many people out there like ourselves who do not deserve your love, but you shower it on us by grace through faith.

And so when they get testy, when they cut us off in traffic, when they tailgate us, when we get in line and they push us out of the way, when they act rudely, I pray that you'll help us to show kindness and patience and grace.

And remember that we're celebrating a season right now where we are rejoicing that you became a human being in order to give us life.

[74 : 04] Help us to spread the joy of that life by speaking that truth in love. We thank you for all these blessings, Lord, and for your truth and for your holy son.

In his name we pray. Amen.