

God's Great Design - Purpose

REVIEW: This is week three in our series of God's Great Design. Over the last two weeks we have been looking in Genesis at how God designed things to be. Ultimately we are leading, and will get into it today, what is God's design for man, and what is His design for women.

So far we have seen that God is the Creator, and we are the created. When we consider this, it means quite simply that we are not the point of everything. The Creator is. Because there is a Creator, it also means that questions about origin, purpose and design are all answered in Him.

Under origin (what are we), I talked about how we are made in the image of God. That is, "God's investment in humanity of God-like glory and moral capacity to reign and rule the earth as His representatives."

The image of God impacts so many areas of life. It should change how we view abortion, racism, sexuality in many forms, sex trafficking, rape, or even just being a consumer of the opposite sex. The image of God means that we value life, whether we know the person or not, we value them simply because they bear the image of God.

TRAN: Today we are going to start in on purpose and design. We will start with the men. We will be working on the men for a couple of weeks. Then we will turn our attention to the ladies - a couple of weeks there as well.

Ladies, please do not think these next few weeks are not for you. No snoozing, or sleeping in at home and sending the hubby to "get fixed up." These next few weeks are important for you to understand because you need to understand what it is that God called us as men to, and then encourage us in those things, and even expect those things from us. In other words, you need to be here so you can help raise the bar for us as men. This doesn't mean just your husbands. You have sons, maybe grandsons. AND you have the other men of the church - your brothers in Christ that need to be encouraged and held up by you as well.

And for the single ladies, and the high school/college girls in the room, you need this too. We said last time that you are valuable because you bear the image of God. That means you need to know what to expect out of us as men. And if some guy comes around, no matter how cute and sweet he is, if he acts like a boy, tell him to take a hike. I promise you, if you do this, you are going to send more than one guy back to school to grow up. If you leave the bar set low, you will have a herd of morons at your door. It will only be the cream of the crop that will rise to the high level you set for yourself.

- I. Our premise for today is that where men fill the purpose and design that God created them for, humanity thrives, and where men refuse to fill that purpose and design, humanity suffers

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- A. If you don't believe me, look at the number of studies that all say that children need a father
 - 1. Not someone to create them
 - 2. Someone to nurture them, love them, and be an active part of their life
 - 3. These studies are not Christian studies trying to press a Christian worldview
 - 4. These studies are not people discovering something new
 - 5. When we know what the role of a man is supposed to be, and he does not engage in that role, the family unit breaks down
 - a) When family breaks down, culture breaks down
 - b) When culture breaks, all sorts of negative things become a common part of everyday life
 - B. So all these studies do is tap into what the Bible has already said about man's design
- II. The way God designed man
- A. We have to talk about a concept, and the idea and the word has fallen into disrepute - the word is "headship"
 - 1. Now I could use the word "lead"
 - a) However the problem in using that word is men already lead
 - b) And women lead as well, and should lead if God has gifted them, within the boundaries God has set
 - c) So to use the word "lead" and say that is what men should do, when women also do it would be misleading
 - 2. Headship in Greek, literally rendered means "where the brain is"
 - a) If you are a woman here and you are starting to get tense thinking, "Pastor is not seriously sending us back to the stone age here, is he?"
 - (1) Take a breath
 - (2) Allow me to explain
 - b) The brain never treats the body with contempt
 - (1) The brain receives messages from the body, and acts on those messages in a way that is best for the body
 - (2) The brain is to make sure the health and vitality of the body are held intact
 - B. So then, male headship would be the work of establishing order for human prosperity
 - 1. So it is the unique work of the man for establishing order so humanity can thrive
 - C. Headship plays out three ways: home, at church, and in the culture
 - 1. To start this, turn to Genesis 2

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2. We will see here man given two specific tasks: work the garden and keep it
- III. How headship is worked out in life - Genesis 2:5-17
- A. Look back to verse 15 - God put man in the garden, before the sin entered the world in the fall, and gave him the task to work the garden, and care for it (keep it)
 1. It is significant that men are designed to work
 2. But even more significant that we were designed to work before sin came along
 3. So headship is exercised through work - but how?
 - B. The man works out headship by working at home
 1. Turn to Ephesians 5:25-31
 2. So we see three ways in the home that a man exercises headship
 - a) The first is sacrificial love towards his wife
 - (1) Love your wife like Christ loved the church
 - (a) We know how Christ loved the church - He died for the church
 - (b) So for us, that plays out by a love that never dominates or demeans
 - (c) It is a love that sacrifices
 - i) Sacrifices sleep
 - ii) Sacrifices comfort
 - iii) Sacrifices rest and gets up and helps
 - b) The second way it plays out is spiritual direction
 - (1) The man sets the spiritual climate of the home
 - (a) Children often follow daddy
 - (b) So Daddy sets a climate of talking about the goodness of God that day at dinner
 - (c) Daddy is willing to take the lead in praying with the kids and praying with his wife
 - (d) Daddy is willing to ask for forgiveness and keep short accounts with the family
 - (e) The whole climate of the home should be saturated with the goodness and grace of God
 - (2) Two quick things here to touch on
 - (a) First, if you are a single mom, or widow
 - (b) What we are describing is the ideal
 - (c) And where the ideal is lacking, God's grace rushes in
 - (3) Second, and more personally, since I have been working with discipleship groups and men's groups

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- (a) I have heard from wives how they desire for their husbands to take a strong role spiritually
- (b) I have heard from teens how they wished their father had set more of the spiritual climate
 - i) How they wish their dad had walked in their room and prayed with them
- (4) So men, if you are feeling some conviction, or guilt, I don't mean to do a drive-by guilting, so let me offer you this
 - (a) If you think this is you, that you have not set the spiritual climate in your home, know that there is forgiveness
 - (b) If you want to know for sure, and this is bold, ask your family
 - i) But be ready for the answer
 - ii) If they confirm what maybe you fear, I suggest you ask for their forgiveness, and make some changes
 - (1) It can be as simple as making a pact to pray with each child every night before bed
 - (2) To take 15-20 minutes each day with your wife for reflection on God, and prayer together
 - (3) It might feel awkward at first, but soon, it will be a source of comfort and joy for your family as you begin to see God honoring your efforts
 - (c) And if your kids are grown?
 - i) If you feel you did not set the spiritual climate you could have, you can still ask forgiveness and seek to build into them as best you can now
 - ii) Grown children make their own choices
- c) The third way this plays out in the home is provision
 - (1) This does not mean that your wife or kids get whatever they want
 - (a) And to that some of you are poking your wife right now saying "See, I told you! Pastor said so!"
 - (b) If the head receives signals from the body, it is a matter of receiving the signals, and ordering what is best
 - i) So provision may mean saying, "Yeah we can do that but not yet."
 - ii) You order the things of life for the betterment of the body
 - (2) Provision is shelter, care, and helping to strengthen the family in their gifts and desires for God
 - (3) Provision is not necessarily being the primary breadwinner
- d) If I make all of this sound easy in here, trust me when I say that I understand that it is not

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- (1) I understand there will be days when you stand there completely confused
- (2) You have no idea how to react to something
- (3) Or days when you don't react well
- (4) Or days when you feel completely inadequate for the task God has called you to
 - (a) I feel like that about the church often times
 - (b) And I don't have a family to deal with at home
- (5) But whether or not revival breaks out in your home because you had family devotions together or not, does not relieve you of the responsibility to enter in and seek to set the spiritual climate
- e) If you hate to fail, and most men do, understand that the gospel has freed us to own our failures and display what it means to be a real man more than succeeding all the time
- f) So, can you see that where men do these things, a family flourishes
 - (1) When sacrificial love is given a wife flourishes
 - (2) When spiritual direction is set, the family flourishes
 - (3) When daddy works hard to provide, it sets the example to the family, and the family flourishes
 - (4) But all three need to be present
 - (a) None of this, "I work 70-80 a week to provide - that is my sacrificial love"
 - (b) You don't neglect sacrificial love or spiritual direction to provide
 - i) That has been the lie of our culture for years
 - ii) The man works hard, that is his love
 - iii) It may be one expression of love, but I promise you your kids would rather have YOU
 - iv) Its almost a stereotype of a young lady having all she wants and hating daddy - or treats herself cheaply because daddy wasn't there to teach her about her value in Christ
 - v) And yet, I have know plenty of teens that may not have had the latest and greatest, but because their daddies were there and loved them, they know how valuable they are
 - (5) When men abdicate, when wives are not being love sacrificially, where the spiritual climate is not being set, where there is no provision - things break down
3. We also see headship play out in the church - 1 Timothy 3:1-7
 - a) These are one of the lists of requirements for elders (overseers)

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- (1) We don't have time to get into the details of this today, but I believe in an all male eldership
 - (a) For today, all I will say on that is, if God expects men to set the spiritual climate in the home, why would that be different in the church
 - (b) This is an issue of role, not value or skill
- (2) Now, when elders practice authority that is harsh, uncaring, or does not allow for women to thrive in their gifts, they are outside of God's will
- (3) So men, and headship in the church means that the elders are working to order things in such a way as to allow human flourishing
- b) When the elders set the spiritual climate in the church, the church flourishes
 - (1) Right now that duty falls to me and generally to me alone
 - (2) Which makes me tired
 - (3) This is one of many reasons we are looking at eldership
 - (a) It is the original way the church was designed
 - (b) A group of godly men to exercise headship - because I cannot do that alone

IV. So from Genesis 2 we get that man is to work, and to keep it

- A. By design, men are physically stronger than women - its a general rule - so don't send me pictures of body builders that could kick my butt
 1. Because we are stronger, traditionally men go to the front lines
 - a) This may get me in trouble, but hear me out
 2. When you are at home and something goes bump in the night, how many of you men roll over and say, "Sweetheart, I heard a noise, go check that out."
 - a) If you did and you are feelings ashamed - you deserve it
 - b) We are the ones that go check that out
 - c) And the thing is, even the progressive people in society know this to be true - and I will give you two examples
 - (1) The day we were ready to return from the DR, July 20, 2012 a man walked into a theater in CO and opened fire on the patrons
 - (a) Three guys under 30 took their girlfriends to the movie
 - (b) All three threw their GF on the floor and jumped on top of them
 - (c) All three died- their GF's were injured but they saved their lives
 - (d) All around the world, these men were heralded as heroes

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- i) Why? Because chivalry is not dead - despite the feminazis out there
- (2) Earlier that same year, the *Costa Concordia* capsized killing 32
 - (a) There were widespread reports of men shoving women and children out of the way to get to the lifeboats
 - (b) They were universally condemned as cowards
- d) Why is this? Because inherently we understand that its the man that takes the brunt of violence, we don't throw the women out there
 - (1) We have been wired to keep (meaning protect, not hold onto) it
 - (2) In this way it is physical - but there is also the spiritual
- B. Illustrating the spiritual component is easy - Adam and Eve
 - 1. The serpent deceives Eve into taking a bite of the fruit - but Adam was standing right there
 - 2. Eve bites the fruit and then hands it to passive Adam, and you know who God blames - ADAM
 - a) Adam takes the fall for sin entering the world
 - b) Because Adam did the spiritual equivalent of "Go check that noise sweetheart"
 - c) What Adam should have done is told Eve to put the fruit down and back away slowly with her hands up
 - d) Stop playing with that snake, sweetheart. We're leaving
- V. All of this has been to married/family men - what about us single guys - how do we model headship?
 - A. We model it by serving other women as sisters
 - 1. My older sister has cerebral palsy - its mild, and if you did not know it you would not be able to tell
 - 2. When we were in grade school there was a boy that used to pick on my sister mercilessly
 - a) I was a little pip squeak at this stage of life - not the hulky hunk you see before you
 - b) And while I never did go after this boy, everything in me said "Defend your sister!"
 - c) And depending on exactly what this boy did, I know my parents would have been behind me if I had - you look out for your sister
 - 3. Now, I had no authority over my sister
 - a) If I tried to walk in the house and say, "Tammy! clean my room. I have headship!"
 - b) Yeah, first she would have laughed at me
 - c) Second my parents would have put me back in my place

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- B. So we display headship by protecting women as sisters, but also by not playing games with women in relationships
 - 1. When you get sweet on a gal, gentlemen, God's design, and desire is that you not play with her heart
 - a) You do not date her indefinitely
 - b) You be serious about seeking God's will for your lives
 - 2. There are some brothers that are called to a life of singleness - and Amen and hallelujah for them
 - a) But unless that is a call on your life, you be serious about relationships
 - b) You guard that woman's heart for her protection and for the glory of God
 - 3. And let me tell you something gentlemen, godliness is sexy
 - a) Probably never thought you would hear that in a sermon, did ya
 - b) Physical attraction/sexiness has some mystery to it, until the mystery is removed
 - (1) After it's gone there is no deepening of the relationship
 - c) Godliness, that is ever deepening
 - (1) The flames just keep getting stoked as you watch her grow and mature

CONCLUSION: Where men fill this gap; where men love sacrificially, set the spiritual direction in their homes, provide for their families; where men step up in the church to do the same; where single men protect women as sisters, and are serious about pursuing relationships - that is when vitality, and life, and flourishing take place.