

# God's Great Design - Women's Pitfalls

INTRO: Two weeks ago you had an unmarried man talking about the purpose of women. This week you have the same unmarried man talking about women's sinfulness. Again, what could go wrong?

REVIEW: We have been looking at God's design for humankind. We started with God as our Creator - which means we are not the point of this life, and that He knows infinitely better than we do how life is to operate. We looked at humanity being created in the image of God. There are several results of that, including that humanity is more important than the animal kingdom. Your dog or cat may be cute, but we all know inherently that our kids are more important. Being created in the image of God also means, every human has value.

We then looked at what it means to be a man. Just being a male does not make one a man - or being female does not make one a woman. Otherwise, These little kids we love seeing running around the church are men and women. There is something about behavior that helps us to define what it means to be a man and what it means to be a woman.

Then we looked at, for three weeks, what God has said about men - their purpose, their pitfalls, and how the gospel applied to them, corrects that which has been going wrong. We don't have time for a full review

In recent weeks we have looked at the purpose of women. God created women as a helper or helpmate for men. We defined helpmate as a woman who serves God by helping the man in his work of establishing order for human flourishing.

The term "helper" in the Bible is actually used most often of God. And what that means is that man was given a task by God. He needs help with that task, and so women come along side men to aid him in accomplishing his task. It shows that the task is too great for men alone, and they need a helper. Being a helper does not make women weak. The reality is men are not strong enough alone to do the job - so here come women to help. The responsibility for the task is still the man's, but the woman is of great help to the man.

- I. Introduction of the sins of men and women
  - A. As we walked through the section on men, we said that men's sins fall into two broad categories
    - 1. Selfish passivity - where men tend not to engage, not to lead, not to love sacrificially
    - 2. The second is self-aggression - where men lash out in treating women poorly (overbearing, domineering, pornography, violence)
  - B. For women, we have two broad areas that tend to catch most sins of the ladies

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1. The first is comparison
  2. The second is perfectionism - and there is some overlap here
  3. Before we dig into those areas specifically, grab your Bible and go to Genesis 3:16 - we need to look at what God says here like we did with the men
- II. Genesis 3:16 - the judgment from God for sin - "To the woman he said, "I will make your pains in childbearing very severe; with painful labor you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.""
- A. Let's start with "I will make your pains in childbearing very severe..."
1. Now I have never been in a delivery room in my life
    - a) And as much as I would like to be married and be a dad, there is a part of me that is praising Jesus for this blessing of life
    - b) I have heard horror stories of what happens to women in the delivery room
      - (1) Normally sweet, angelic ladies that would not hurt a fly
      - (2) Suddenly changed into some demon possessed woman with the strength of 50 men
  2. Of course we all know how, after the baby arrives, it's like all the pain, all the effort, all the insults and threats of never letting their husbands touch them again are forgotten when mama holds baby for the first time
    - a) Did you realize that there is a hormone, beta-endorphin, that is released during breastfeeding that takes away the pain (its 18-33 times stronger than morphine)
    - b) It helps mama forget the pain
      - (1) Which is why we are still here as the human race
      - (2) That and the epidural
  3. But this increase in pain is the same thing as what happened to the man - work would become toil and bring pain
    - a) So it is not that women are cursed with pain and men aren't
    - b) When sin entered the world, pain and death became a part of our existence, and affect our identities
      - (1) So for men, pain and death - toil, work, hard
      - (2) For ladies, pain in childbirth - and putting up with men
- B. Sin affected external parts of womanhood, but it also affected the heart and hope of womanhood
1. "Your desire will be for your husband and he will rule over you."
    - a) First its pain in childbearing, now desires will be disordered
      - (1) Because of sin, disordered desire rules the human heart

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- (2) The reality is, disordered desires rule all of our hearts - but it is played out in certain ways with women
- b) Part of it is that women will have a tendency to usurp the authority of their husbands
  - (1) Which is understandable since men's tendency is toward self-passivity - the woman is picking up where the man is not leading rather than encouraging him to grab ahold of his God given role
  - (2) Because of this bucking against authority, the idea of submission is grating on many women - and they refuse to submit to the headship that God has set up for men
  - (3) But this is not the full meaning of the text
- c) Let me explain this by having you turn to James 1:14-15
  - (1) Because desire has been disordered, we tend to make things that are okay to be desired into ultimate things to be desired
  - (2) When that happened, slap on the handcuffs, because you become a slave
  - (3) James 4 goes on and says, "What causes fights among you...is it not that your passions are at war...you desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel."
    - (a) So we desire to have (fill in the blank), and when we can't have it, we do what should not be done
    - (b) So there is nothing wrong with making a living, and even making a good living
      - i) But when the desire is for money
      - ii) We begin to sacrifice our families, and our lives because our desires are disordered
- d) So, back to Genesis 3:16
  - (1) The thought here is that women set up men as idols (don't believe me, think about all the women that are afraid they will wind up as the crazy cat lady because they don't have a man) - they look to men to provide emotionally, spiritually and physically what God was designed to provide
  - (2) Men, especially apart from Christ, oppress women
  - (3) Women often respond with this independence and control for dealing with the oppression of men
    - (a) Think pretty much every romantic comedy in the last 25 years
    - (b) "I need a man to complete me" - Men oppress women because of sin - To deal with that comes the "All men are scum" Man embargo

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(4) So the reality is this (and this is true regardless of the situation) - when our desire for something becomes ultimate (in this case the desire for a man), that thing rules our us

(a) So what is your ultimate?

(b) Whatever it might be (man or something else), that is what is ruling you

III. Now, the first of these pitfalls for women - Comparison

A. Comparison would be the disordered desire for approval and validation

1. I am grateful here for the pastors, and leaders that have done research like this so I can present it here for you - so I am relying on their research into quotes and such for this message

B. Julia Oliphant wrote an article for *The Telegraph* entitled "Why do girls check out other girls?"

1. The premise of the article is that women spend more time checking out other women, their beauty, body composition, clothes, etc. rather than men out of a sense of comparison

2. The article goes on to argue that women don't dress for men, but for other women

3. Ever wonder why some women will dress more provocatively than others

a) It is to get attention of men, yes

b) But it is also because they feel, by comparison, they have to offer something men aren't getting elsewhere

C. Bodies are not the only thing compared - parenting is compared

1. I have listened to parents tell me how other parents would judge them because their kids were in public school and not Christian school or homeschool

2. There can be comparison about your kids and how smart they are, or what sport they play, which camps you sent them to in the summer, if they started preschool at 3 or 4

D. Comparing marriages

1. Her husband really pursues her - I wish mine did that for me

E. You all heard of the "alpha male" - did you know there is an alpha female?

1. Women can seek out the best mom, or the most beautiful, just to be around them and reap the rewards

2. But all of this comparison is really just competition

a) You are comparing and competing for an identity

b) It is a desire for approval and acceptance

c) But when it is not built on something real, it is just a facade

(1) I have it all together

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- d) These are not biblical standards that we are building on, these are standards the world is pushing on us
- F. If this is a struggle for you, nine times out of ten social media will not be your friend
  - 1. If you struggle with comparison, the worst thing you could do is be given a phone with a camera on it
  - 2. Snapping selfies left and right
  - 3. I have watched the exchanges on FB of two girls, "Please stop being so beautiful!" "Oh stop, you're the beautiful one"
  - 4. Let me ask you, oh beautiful ones, when is the last time you have seen some woman wake up at 5:30 in the morning and "click" snap that selfie
    - a) No one does that
    - b) Its always when we are all beautified, embellished, and glamorized
- G. So here is your problem with a veneer - this untrue image of yourself
  - 1. It will lead to discontentment and insecurity
    - a) This is not a woman only problem, men - we struggle with the veneer too
    - b) This is why I tell you we need to learn to be real
      - (1) If we are struggling with something - bring it out into the light
      - (2) Doubt, temptation, pain - whatever
      - (3) We are all broken here - so there is no need to play the game
  - 2. Insecurity gets worked out differently between men and women
    - a) Men use their size and strength to intimidate
    - b) Women use words
      - (1) And they are experts - they can tear down and brutalize people in crazy cruel ways
      - (2) If you don't believe me, talk to the mother of any preteen/young teen girl
        - (a) I have watched girls crying
        - (b) Heard stories of girls not wanting to go to school because of the words other girls said to them
    - c) Still don't believe me - Scripture time
      - (1) Proverbs 19:13 "A foolish child is a father's ruin, and a quarrelsome wife is like the constant dripping of a leaky roof."
        - (a) Ever see someone waterboarded?
        - (b) God says it would be better for that sheet over your head, and water to be poured on your face than to live with a quarrelsome wife
      - (2) Proverbs 21:9 "Better to live on a corner of the roof than share a house with a quarrelsome wife."

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- (a) God says, "Brother I love you, get out on the roof. I know there is a hurricane coming. If you're lucky I'll take you home to be with me."
- (3) Proverbs 21:19 "Better to live in a desert than with a quarrelsome and nagging wife."
  - (a) When God says "desert" don't think beachfront
  - (b) That is not the kind of sand we are talking about
  - (c) No water, no vegetation - you might die out there, but it is still better than where you are
- (4) This is the idea behind being a quarrelsome women - a woman that is an expert at cutting people down with her words
  - (a) Which, most of these Proverbs were written by Solomon
  - (b) Maybe Solomon should have focused on one good woman instead of 300 women
- H. So if you are a woman and you are thinking, "But Pastor, words are all I have. I need to defend myself."
  - 1. First of all, prayerfully your man has been hearing these words of God about how he engages you
  - 2. But that does not let you off the hook for how you engage him
    - a) There is a way to engage that is life-giving
    - b) And there is a way to engage that is going to push his buttons
    - c) For Example: Approach one: You notice that your husband has been really busy and has not really been engaging you or the kids, has not really been intentional lately with them about their hearts and lives before Jesus - you can point that out and ask what you could do to help create more time for those things to be happening
    - d) Approach two: same scenario: you can complain, tell your husband that he is failing at his duties with the kids, they will soon wind up as degenerate youths hanging out with the other druggies, or headed to the family clinic for a pregnancy test and it is all his fault!
    - e) Which approach do you think will get his hackles up?
  - 3. So which approach do you think gives life, and which sucks the life right out of your husband?
    - a) When you approach with grace and compassion, that makes all the difference
- IV. The second pitfall for women - perfectionism
  - A. This is the disordered desire for righteousness and perfection apart from Christ
  - B. There was an article published in *The Atlantic* entitled "Closing the Confidence Gap"

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1. It opens by saying, "Under-qualified and underprepared men don't think twice about leaning in, about getting into opportunities. Yet, overqualified and over-prepared, women still hold back. Women feel confident only when they are perfect or practically perfect. Study after study has shown that [perfectionism] is largely a female issue."
  2. Keep in mind this is a secular magazine writing this - no Christian background or agenda to the article
  3. Perfectionism is largely a female issue - one that guys don't generally play at
    - a) Men could be completely incompetent and still want to be given the chance
    - b) "Just hand me the book - I can do this." "You can't read!" "So - that won't stop me!" - this is men
  4. Women put a weight on their shoulders that was never meant to be there
    - a) I have to be the perfect student/mom/employee/wife/friend
    - b) And when perfection is not attained, paralysis sets in
    - c) So not only do you have mommy guilt, brought on by comparison - we have perfectionism thrown on top of that
- C. There is a cultural idea that is bought into by far too many people called psychological determinism
1. Psychological determinism plays out in parenting like this - My kids are blank slates, and I can turn them into whatever I want by my parenting techniques
    - a) I want them to stay away from drugs - done
    - b) Stay a virgin until their wedding day - done
  2. We as Christians have Christianized this concept by adding a verse to it: "Train up a child in the way he should go; when he is old he will not depart from it."
    - a) You can make your kid godly, right?
    - b) That is ridiculous - Christian parenting techniques do not unequivocally produce godly kids
    - c) Here is my point
      - (1) You as parents DO have the RESPONSIBILITY to do everything in your power to rear your children in a godly manner
      - (2) Matt Chandler's way of saying this is that you put the kindling around the heart of your child
        - (a) Pray with them - read the Bible with them - show by example what it means to do ministry (let your kids see you involved in ministering to others)

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- (b) Climb in bed with your kids and love on them, hug them, go after their hearts, and direct those hearts to Jesus
- (c) And in the midst of all of that you pray that all that work at godly parenting, all that kindling you have laid around their heart would be ignited into a flaming passion for God by the Holy Spirit
- d) Do not fall victim to the idea that you control your child's heart and that you can make them love God
  - (1) You lay the groundwork - the foundation
  - (2) Then you trust and pray like crazy that God does what ONLY God can do, and sets your child's heart on fire for Him
- e) In this process, you will mess up
  - (1) You will snap at your child
  - (2) You will lose patience
  - (3) Trust me here, you did not just turn them into serial killers
  - (4) When those days happen and you lose patience with the kids - model correct behavior and confess your weakness to the kids, ask their forgiveness - SHOW them what forgiveness looks like
- D. This idea of perfectionism is at the root of several issues that women face more so than men
  - 1. Women are twice as likely to attempt suicide than men
  - 2. Women tend to battle body image issues more than men
  - 3. Women tend to battle depression and anxiety more than men
  - 4. People with eating disorders: 85% - 95% are female; men is only 5%-15%
  - 5. These are symptoms of perfectionism - and it is enslaving
    - a) How could you ever feel at rest
    - b) Or feel peace
- E. If every outing, every holiday, every family interaction, every committee, every school function, every day of your life - perfectionism is just a giant weight on your back
  - 1. Ladies - don't do that to yourselves
  - 2. News flash - you're not perfect - no one is
  - 3. And you don't have to be perfect to be great
    - a) You don't have to be the perfect mom to be a great mom
    - b) You don't have to be the perfect wife to be a great wife
    - c) It is in confession, repentance and going at it again that the gospel is modeled for our homes
- F. Please ladies - cut yourself a break
- G. We love you just the way you are



# **God's Great Design - Women's Pitfalls**

1. The only perfection you will ever attain is through Jesus Christ
2. And let Him be enough