

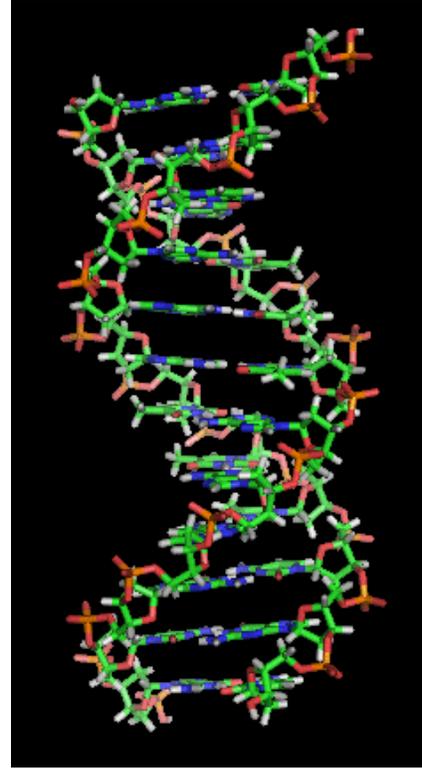
# Life's Big Questions

## Part 5 – What does it mean to be human? (2)

### Genesis 1:26-31; 2:15-25

The opening pages of Genesis make plain that God created mankind “male and female” in his image. Indeed all living creatures bear this same binary gender distinction from one degree to another. Genesis records that the male/female distinction is seen throughout the animal kingdom and even among plants. The fact of “maleness” and “femaleness” is encoded in every cell of the human body. It is reflected in humanity’s physical construction and in the complementary nature of physical intimacy and procreation. The divinely ordered male/female gender construct of humanity is vital for the health, happiness, and flourishing of men and women.

It is also true that we live in a fallen world. Not a single square inch of this world has escaped the effects of sin. This includes the bodies, minds, desires, and feelings of men and women. Therefore, all of us without exception will struggle with disordered and sinful desires. We will all struggle with thinking and feeling about ourselves in ways that reflect the truth. And for this reason, whether our struggle is confusion over our gender, homosexual desires, or prideful self-righteousness the gospel is our only hope. It is only through God’s Son who took on flesh and became like us in order to die in our place and bear away the penalty of our sin that we can have hope in the midst of this fallen world with all of its troubles. This gospel is offered to all people no matter their struggle or confusion or sin. It is the good news that Jesus redeems us and will one day remake us fully free of the trouble and chaos of sin’s curse.



**Main Idea:** God’s male/female design for his image-bearers is an expression of his goodness and allows for the happiness and flourishing of his human creatures.

### 1. We are created as gendered beings.

Genesis 1:27 – “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.”

- Just as he did among the animals, God created mankind with a deliberately male/female gender distinction (Matthew 19:4).
- The contemporary effort to separate gender from biology is an entirely social construct meant to conform our thinking about human identity to the scruples of the new sexual revolution. This new cultural fad is not based upon any new scientific discovery. Indeed, it will require profound intellectual compromise as those in the hard sciences (especially the biological sciences) are required to adjust their entire field of expertise to the demands of the new gender chaos.
- Every cell in our bodies proclaims our God-given design. God created humanity with complementary differences and those differences are for the joy and flourishing of humanity. The creation mandate can only be accomplished by the bringing together of male and female. Any deviation from that represents an assault against God’s good ordering of things and will end in disaster for humanity.

**2. We are created as complementary beings.**

Genesis 2:18 – “Then the Lord God said, ‘It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.’”

- Marriage between the man and woman became the very first human institution. Take note that companionship is the very first explanation for the creation of the woman. The man and woman were created to complement each other emotionally as well as physically.
- When Adam looked upon the woman for the first time he immediately noticed that she was like him in fundamental ways – “This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man” (2:23). Adam recognized from the woman’s physical construction that she was both like him and unlike him in necessary ways.

**3. We are created as reproductive beings.**

Genesis 1:28 – “And God blessed them. And God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’”

- After the priority of companionship the next purpose of marriage is procreation. Because we live in a broken world not every couple experiences childbirth even though they deeply desire this. Typically, however, marriage is directly associated with procreation. Indeed, child-bearing was part of the original creation mandate to “fill the earth and subdue it.”
- Man has sought, through technology to make God’s design of male and female obsolete for child-bearing. But he has yet to overcome the necessity of God’s male/female design for the purpose of procreation.
- Even in this fallen and sinful world it remains a very good thing for God’s people to continue to bring into the world more members of the covenant family. The world benefits from the presence of heirs to God’s covenant promises.

**4. We are created as monogamous beings.**

Genesis 2:24-25 – “Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.”

- With the first couple God established the pattern for marriage and human sexual relationships. Ever since that time the world has sought to undermine this God-given design for human health, happiness, and flourishing. In our own day sexual intimacy has come to be seen primarily in terms of recreation and self-satisfaction rather than a gift for the covenant bond of marriage.

**Questions to consider:**

- What are some of the things being said in our day about gender?
- Why did God create the woman?
- What are some of the reasons God designed male/female distinctions?
- Is it possible to change one’s gender?
- What are some of the problems caused by denying God’s design of male and female?
- What are some of the reasons God designed physical intimacy for marriage between man and woman?
- How would you seek to encourage someone who is confused about his or her gender?