



Seeing a World of Difference

Lesson 12

by

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The Truth about Sexuality

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“Because we are members of his body...therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.”

—The Apostle Paul (Ephesians 5:30–31)

“Human sexuality should not be the occasion to divide the church.”

—Mark S. Hanson, Presiding Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

The Truth about Sexuality

The second quote above is from Mark S. Hanson, Presiding Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. He said it in 2009 as his church agreed to admit practicing gays to ministerial office. If Hanson is right, why does the apostle Paul use one man/one woman marriage as the picture of the mystery of the gospel, and compare the Church to the bride in a heterosexual, monogamous marriage (Ephesians 5:22-33).

We saw in the last lesson that religious pagans see homosexuality/androgyny as the sacrament of Oneism. The apostle Paul, without calling marriage a “sacrament,” sees heterosexuality as the God-given reflection of Twoism—a picture of the deep meaning of the created cosmos. Our society no longer sees heterosexuality as a moral anchor, and the Church is beginning to agree. At the major political/religious event of Ted Kennedy’s funeral mass (August 2009) in the Minor Basilica of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, US President Barack Obama delivered the eulogy, in which he alluded to Kennedy’s support for gay rights. One of the “Prayers of the Faithful” was a petition to end divisions “between gays and straights.” On this issue, church and state are hopelessly intertwined, as the following list of pro-gay religious denominations and “Christian” leaders indicates: the United Church of Christ, the Episcopal Church USA, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, portions of the Presbyterian Church USA, many faculty members at Calvin College (Christian Reformed Church), the left wing of the evangelical Emergent movement (represented by figures like **Phyllis Tickle**, **Tony Jones** and **Spencer Burke**), other evangelicals like **Jay Bakker** (son of Jim and Tammy Faye Bakker) and **Peggy Campolo** (wife of Tony Campolo). This is the short list for the USA. There are doubtless many churches abroad who face the same situation. Sexuality is tightly tied to the theological structure we saw in the last lesson. You will remember that Paul’s logic follows three connected exchanges:

1. A *thought* exchange. “Futile thinking” (Romans 1:21) exchanges the truth that God is the Creator, clearly stated in Genesis, for belief in creation as an object of worship (Romans 1:25). This leads to...

2. A *worship* exchange. The dreadful worship exchange divinizes mankind, but makes us grovel before totems of animal deities (Romans 1:23–24). “They exchanged the glory of God for the image of an ox that eats grass” (Psalm 106:20). This leads to...
3. A *sexual* exchange. God created “natural” male/female heterosexuality (Genesis 1:27). Erasing the Creature/Creator distinction leads us to erase all God’s created distinctions. We exchange natural sexual activity for that which is contrary to God’s good, natural design. In doing so, we brand the deepest aspects of our physical being with a searing apostasy. The sad irony is that worshipping nature causes us to go “against nature,” into the practice of homosexuality. Such practice goes against our true human nature. Never has it been more urgent to understand Paul’s Spirit-inspired teaching on sexuality. In Romans 1:26, Paul uses key terms (in italics) that we must examine: “For this reason God gave them over to *dishonorable* passions. For their women exchanged *natural* relations for those that are contrary to nature” (Romans 1:26).

Paul’s Terminology

Dishonorable

Paul does not develop a discourse on the rightness of heterosexuality here, but his use of the term “dishonorable” naturally evokes its opposite, the honorable. Paul has stated that those who reject God as the Creator “dishonor their bodies among themselves” (Romans 1:24). The dishonorable is contrasted with the natural, which God created and sanctioned as holy, or honorable. God says of the **Levitical priests** who sacrificed to idols, and had thus become practicing pagans: “...[T]hey shall not come near to me, to serve me as priest, nor come near any of my holy things...but they shall bear their shame [*dishonor*] and the abominations that they have committed” (Ezekiel 44:10–13). In lesson 7, we discussed the honor we owe the unique God. The truly “honorable” is associated with God as Creator. What is pleasing to God and in accord with his creative intentions for the cosmos reflects the honor due to him. Obeying those in authority as God has ordered the creation, is honorable (Romans 13:7; 1 Timothy 6:1). So is sexual holiness (1 Thessalonians 4:4).

Natural

Paul talks about heterosexuality as God-ordained in Romans 1 by using the term “natural” to mean the essence of something. He speaks of a tree that is “*by nature* a wild olive tree” (Romans 11:24), or pagan deities that “*by nature* are not gods” (Galatians 4:8). Going back to the essence of a thing for Paul means going back to its original created reality. Thus he argues that though pagans do not have the written law of Moses, they “*by nature* do what the law requires” (Romans 2:14). He means that because they are creatures, made in the image of God, pagans have an innate (natural) sense of right and wrong, though in their lives they suppress it. Concerning the created structures of male/female difference, Paul argues that even on the level of visual effect, “*nature* itself teaches you

that if a man wears long hair it is a disgrace for him, but if a woman has long hair, it is her glory” (1 Corinthians 11:14–15).

His arguments for distinctive male and female roles are always based on created “givens”: “For man was not made from woman, but woman from man. Neither was man created for woman, but woman for man” (1 Corinthians 11:8–9). Chronological created order, role distinctions and fundamental equality characterize his thinking. He then adds, recognizing God’s primary, creational role: “for as woman was made from man, so man is now born of woman. And all things are from God...” (1 Corinthians 11:12). God is the ultimate source of sexuality and of its implications in human behavior.

Whenever Paul defends a complementary role between the sexes, he bases his teaching on creational structures and principles. For example, he mentions “the law” (1 Corinthians 14:34) and says, “Adam was created first” (1 Timothy 2:11–14). Paul sees the Creator’s design as paramount in the area of sexual identity and practice.

Do you see the organic relationship between “unnatural” rejection of the Creator, “unnatural” worship of humans and animals, and “unnatural” practice of homosexuality? Our thinking, our worship and our sexuality are fundamentally related. This Pauline logic can move in any direction. Mess with your sexuality, and you will mess with your worship. Mess with your worship and you will mess with your thinking about God. Mess with your thinking about God and you will mess with your sexuality. No matter which exchange you make, you will begin to adopt a Oneist spirituality and ultimately expose yourself to the judgment of God. As far as I know, the New Testament scholar Richard Hays has never read the quote about homosexuality as “the sacrament of monism,” yet he states that Paul sees homosexual behavior as a “sacrament of the anti-religion of human beings who refuse to honor God as creator.” Now that we see the structure of Paul’s argument, it should not surprise us that he considers heterosexuality as linked securely to theism and an essential affirmation of Twoism.

Heterosexuality: A Key to Creation

The Consortium of Behavioral Scientists, appointed by President Obama in 2009 and answerable to him, is charged with “the quest for deeper understanding of humans” in order to “manage society’s most critical challenges.” Those who sever their cultural moorings from biblical truths and believe in ongoing evolution wonder if there is such a thing as “the normative human being.” Radical egalitarian **Virginia Mollenkott**, who wrote a book called *Omnigender*, thinks there are no norms for sexual identity. But if we abandon sexual norms, why keep any norms for theology and spirituality? How can we manage “society’s critical challenges” if those who live in and create them are in constant flux? In Scripture, God gives us clear parameters for human self-understanding and behavior.

To understand who human beings are, we must begin with God. Let's recap what we have already seen about God:

- God is Creator and everything else is creation.
- His “eternal power and divine nature” (Romans 1:20) are seen and known in what he created.
- God is “other,” different from us and from everything else—the “Creator/creature distinction.”
- God is holy, not only morally pure, but “set apart” from his creation, having a special place and function.
- The unique God, from his special place, creates the world and gives us our own special place and role.

We humans derive our meaning and character from our created identity, which is our distinct, holy, significant and created place. The roles God gives us are personal roles, because we are in a relationship with a personal God. Our deviation from the “norm” that God created for us is not a failure to meet some impersonal set of rules. It is a personal offense against our Creator and incurs His righteous anger against our unholiness (Romans 1:18).

Adam and Eve: The Crown of Creation

Genesis 1, to which Paul constantly refers in Romans 1, is one of the foundational texts of Western civilization. On December 10, 1948 the General Assembly of the United Nations, in its “Universal Declaration of Human Rights,” recognized in “the inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family...the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.” Most of that Declaration derives its authority from Genesis 1, which celebrates the nobility and uniqueness of the original heterosexual couple, relative to all other created things. In Genesis, God creates the natural cosmos and six times declares it “good.” When he creates Adam and Eve, he declares his work “very good” (Genesis 1:31). Everything leads up to the creation of Adam and Eve, who are the crown of creation. Nothing else is created after they come into existence. With them, God’s work has reached its pinnacle. It is finished and fulfilled.

Adam and Eve: The Image of God

The most amazing thing that is said about the first couple is that they were created in God’s image (Genesis 1:26). This is astounding, in light of the fact that the God of the Bible will not allow any images to be made of him. Here is what he says to Israel about making anything in his image:

Therefore watch yourselves very carefully. Since you saw no form on the day that the Lord spoke to you at Horeb out of the midst of the fire, beware lest you act

corruptly by making a carved image for yourselves, in the form of any figure, the likeness of male or female, the likeness of any animal. (Deuteronomy 4:15–17)

This is precisely what Paul says rebellious creatures do—they “exchange the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles” (Romans 1:23). There are to be *no* images of God, because he is transcendent and “other.” There is nothing in the created universe that can be like him in any way, unless God makes and declares it to be like him. Male and female humans are not God, but they are in his image. Like God, Adam and Eve have the capacity for personal communion: in the Garden of Eden they commune with God, in spite of his otherness, and they commune with each other, in spite of their male/female differences. Like God, they have “dominion” over creation as stewards of God’s work (Genesis 1:26–27). It is because human beings reflect the character of their Creator that they have nobility and “rights.”

Adam and Eve: Viceroy for God

The psalmist David puts this to poetry. In Psalm 8, he celebrates God’s transcendent glory being known in the world: “O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens.” He sees that glory in “your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place,” and in the glory of humanity: “You have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor. You have given him dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under his feet.” The psalm ends: “O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!”

The character of God is seen in the things he has made. This is true supremely in human beings, but creation as a whole bears the stamp of God’s specific being.

Created Separations

Genesis 1 uses the term “separate” five times. The Creator/creature distinction determines the way God creates. God brought forth cosmic matter from nothing, and turned the original “chaos” (unformed matter) into ordered cosmos. He makes cosmos out of chaos by making distinctions—separating things out and giving each thing its place and function. These separations are immediately pronounced “good.” Oneism tells us that separation is evil and that we should “join the opposites” by eliminating them. But God says separation is good. (By “separation” we are not thinking about the sad kind that is caused by sin and hatred, but about distinctions.) Because everything is separate and distinct, everything must be named. Thus God called the light “day.” He called the darkness “night” (Genesis 1:5, 8, 10). God gives the first human being a specific name, “Adam,” and Adam names the animals (Genesis 2:19) and his wife (“Woman” in Genesis 2:23 and “Eve, the mother of the living” in Genesis 3:20). Though God is ultimately the one who names all things, he gives Adam a position of viceroy in naming the animals and even in naming his wife. Adam and Eve, in their role of dominion over the animals indicate the special role of humanity in the created cosmos. So does the fact that God allows humans to share in his glory, in a mysterious way. Far from giving humans a place of honor and glory, Oneism rejects the idea that man has a

special place. Man is seen as a blight on nature, the cause of all our woes. Certainly, humanity is responsible (our glory) and often sinful (our shame), but the Bible will not give up its notion of human nobility.

Separated and Named as Holy

Old Testament Jewish commentators see a connection between God's acts of creative "separation" and the notion of holiness required of Israel. Moses uses the same verb, "to separate," in Numbers regarding the priests ("you are to *set* the Levites *apart* from the other Israelites," Numbers 8:14) as he does in the creation account of Genesis. Levites may enter the Temple "because they are *consecrated*" (made holy, set apart, 2 Chronicles 23:6). To separate and make holy are synonymous terms.

This is true also of naming. In Leviticus, God says "These are my appointed [called/named] feasts, the appointed [named] feasts of the Lord, which you are to proclaim as sacred assemblies" (Leviticus 23:2, 21). These special assemblies are set apart by God, named as "holy" by God. God's handiwork in creation, his fingerprint on reality, is seen in his acts of *separating* and *naming*, which render the cosmos holy. God is triune, in three distinct persons. Thus personal distinction must appear in the creation he makes. The primary distinction, between God and creation is reflected in all the other differences he puts within the creation. In this way, creation "images" God. In God's crowning act of creation—the human couple, made in his image—the difference between male and female is underlined as an essential part of cosmic holiness. After "dominion," we expect to read about artistic creativity, rationality or vocation. Instead, God mentions our *heterosexuality*! Why? Because "difference" is essential to creational existence.

Practical Implications

This difference has practical implications. Eve is created as a helper different from Adam (Genesis 2:20), to contribute elements only she can bring. Everything in creation is "very good" except one thing. It is "not good that Adam be alone" (Genesis 2:18). There are essential elements in the cultural mandate that Adam cannot accomplish alone. God says: "I will make a helper fit for him" (Genesis 2:18). Eve fits Adam in every way. She is equally valuable, but crucially and essentially different. Eve is entirely necessary because the human task, as the Bible describes it, was (and still is, until further notice) to make the earth habitable and fill it with offspring. From this perspective, without any moral judgment, homosexuality is a creational dysfunction, and homosexual marriage an oxymoron. The crown of creation is the heterosexual human couple. You may not agree with Moses, but that is what he says. Heterosexuality expresses the Twoist truth about the cosmos. In order to make the cosmos work, two distinct entities must collaborate to produce "dominion." This is true of the lower forms of creation. When creation is renewed after the Flood, God commands Noah to take the "male and female [of all the species], to keep their offspring alive on the face of all the earth" (Genesis 7:3).

With regard to the human race, here is the biblical programmatic statement, quoted by Jesus (Mark 10:7) and Paul (Ephesians 5:31), regarding human Twoness: “Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh” (Genesis 2:24). As creatures of God, we instinctively know this to be the good and right form of sexuality.

Heterosexual Fidelity: A Picture of God’s Faithfulness

Moses’ successor, Joshua, at the time of his death, commands the people:

You may not mix with these nations remaining among you or make mention of the names of their gods or swear by them or serve them or bow down to them,...but you shall *cling* to the Lord your God. (Joshua 23:7)

The relationship of God with his people is compared to two people clinging to each other in a marriage relationship. Though God is the transcendent Lord, radically distinct from his people, and they are mere creatures, yet they are to “cling” to him with faithfulness and are not to run after other spiritual lovers/pagan gods. They are commanded to “fear the Lord your God...serve him [remember Romans 1:25] and hold fast to him” (Deuteronomy 10:20).

In the same way, says Moses, a man should cling to his wife in heterosexual life-long faithfulness, and, in so doing, two sexually distinct beings become deeply united, in “one flesh.” In this cleaving, faithful and exclusive commitment, Israel does not become God, nor God Israel, and so it is in the one-flesh relationship of marriage. Two distinct people do not cease to be male and female, but enter a communion of true “oneness” that produces a multiplying, fruitful dominion.

Dr. Peter Jones, Director of truthXchange, puts it this way, as concerns the differences in his own marriage:

I hardly know anyone more different from me than my wife. She likes sweet breakfasts; I like savory. She reads maps; I guess. She looks at the details; I look at the big picture. She plays music by sight; I play by ear. She’d rather eat inside; I prefer outside. She is a night-owl; I’m a morning bird. She loves Home Depot; I love Sports Authority. We have been married since 1971. We’ve had a few arguments and a lot of laughs from our differences, but when we use them to work together, we make a unified, powerful team, by God’s grace.

Heterosexuality: A Key to Redemption

Heterosexuality is the capstone of the *creation* of the cosmos, since it pictures for us both the “otherness” of the Creator and our communion with him. God also uses heterosexuality to represent the *redemption* of the cosmos. The gospel is prefigured in the Old Testament text we examined (Genesis 2:24) because the Creator who reveals his righteous wrath to rebel creatures (Romans 1:18) is the Redeemer who reveals his righteous love in the gospel (Romans 1:17).

It is common these days to encourage Christians to show one hundred percent acceptance and zero percent judgment, especially when it comes to the issue of homosexuality. Such acceptance is seen as the only way to demonstrate God's love. Acceptance of other people is essential, for no man can *judge* another. But speaking of God's love without explaining *who God is* depersonalizes both God and love. There is no such thing as love in general. It must be directed to a person and used to build others up and bring them to Jesus Christ in true human maturity. Each person's responsibility as a created human being is one hundred percent acceptance of *who God is*. Have we exchanged the God revealed in Scripture for a sentimental notion of a non-judgmental, Ho-Ho Santa Claus or a spiritual force, which we are sure the culture will embrace?

We are doing a disservice to sinners if we hide truth. Because God has embedded in our human identity a sense of the "natural," Christians can appeal to this sense in encouraging unbelievers to seek reconciliation with its Author. The "natural" is a call to spiritual sanity, to holiness, and to forgiveness through the Holy One of God. The gospel cannot make sense without knowing who God is, as the transcendent Creator who made the world a holy place, set apart to honor and please him. Without this, there is no sense of God's loving condescension in grace to save the lost. Buried in the well-known text about Christ and the Church is a citation of Genesis 2:24. How does Paul get there? I will cite the whole text, and comment on a few key expressions.

Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body. "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband. (Ephesians 5:22-33)

Wives and Submission

You may blanch at this "out-of-date" view of gender roles and its dehumanizing notion of "submission." Even evangelicals have consigned submission to the dust-heap of history. **Sally Morgenthaler**, an evangelical "facilitator" at the ETREK program, gave a course in 2007, entitled "Beyond Power: Leadership in a Gender-Flattened World." She teaches future pastors, living in our "new world...with its aversion to hierarchy" to consider a "collaborative and whole-brained"

leadership, “outside of hierarchy.”ⁱ Since such thinking is so prevalent in the Church, Christians who take the Scriptures seriously will certainly be swimming upstream. But we must listen to Paul, even if his statement does not fit with anything we have been taught. We must allow the deep reasoning of these ancient words to challenge our modern assumptions.

Submission has nothing to do with enslavement or dehumanization. There are very real abuses of authority, of course, but the biblical notion of submission proposes a joyful acceptance of the holy design that God put in place for the good of humanity. The verb “submit” is sometimes translated in the Old Testament as “be still.” It suggests a moment of thought about the nature of reality as God made it. In Psalm 37:7, the psalmist says: “Be still [submit] before the Lord and wait patiently for him; fret not yourself over the one who prospers in his way.” The answer to inner turmoil (Job 30:27) is silent submission to the will of God. Thus the psalmist exhorts himself: “For God alone, O my soul, wait in silence [submit], for my hope is from him” (Psalm 62:5).

Paul ties submission to “dominion” in the creation accounts. Immediately after Genesis 1:27, which speaks of the image of God in the man and the woman, God declares to the first couple: “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and *subdue* it and have *dominion*...” (Genesis 1:28). For dominion or true humanity to function, there must be submission. This is affirmed in Psalm 8:6, a classic text regarding human dignity: “You have given him *dominion* over the works of your hands; you have put [submitted] all things under his feet.” Paul uses this psalm to describe the victory of Jesus and to celebrate his cosmic lordship: “And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church” (Ephesians 1:22).

Very practically, “one flesh” only works if there are roles. Paul here speaks of the husband as the head of his wife, and of the wife submitting to that headship. Biblical submission is neither of two cultural extremes:

1. *Biblical submission is not egalitarian, creative autonomy, which feminist theorists consider the pillar of the modern world.* In thoroughly egalitarian relationships, the partners (as many as they may be) do as they please. Open marriage, blithely accepted in pockets of our culture, is egalitarian polygamy. Experience in such relationships (starting with Lamech in Genesis!) quickly shows that they are not the answer to a maiden’s prayer or a direct line to human well-being.
2. *Biblical submission is not Islamic dehumanization based on inherent misogyny practiced in the context of male chauvinistic polygamy.* Surah 4:34 says: “Men have authority over women because God has made the one superior to the other...[the woman is] to be admonished and beaten.”

ⁱ See theooze.com/etrek.

In our Ephesians text, the wife is different from, but not inferior to, her husband. She is a beloved, inseparable, equal, monogamous partner, for whom the husband must sacrifice his very life. Biblical submission is ennobling because it recognizes and rejoices in the holy distinctions that are dignified in the structures of creation. The text may seem to advocate dominion for the husband and submission for the wife, but the notions are not so simple. For one, the man is never told to force his wife to submit. The woman is called by God to submit to her husband. Nor can she force her husband to love her. He is called by God to lay down his life for her. Submission is a Christian mindset relative to God's general design, in which *everyone* submits.

Both submission and dominion are expressions of the "holiness as separation" theme that has already been discussed.

The Profound Mystery of Christ and the Church

The Bible's use of heterosexual marriage as the normal, created structure for sexuality in the original creation is also an announcement of future cosmic salvation. Genesis 2:24 precedes Genesis 3:15, often called the *protoevangelium*, the "first statement of the gospel," in which God declares to the Satan: "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel." This is a prophecy about the Messiah's victory over Satan at the cross. But in Genesis 2:24, God embedded in the structure of creation a *protoevangelium* that declares the essence of God's re-creative, redemptive purposes.ⁱⁱ

As noted in lesson 5, Paul's "mystery" that was "kept secret for long ages" (Romans 16:25) is now revealed in the very gospel Paul preaches. Paul is "a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, *which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures*" (Romans 1:1–2). In this role as apostle, Paul boldly uses the Old Testament to teach us post-resurrection truth. As Paul puts it later, what "was written in former days was written for our instruction" (Romans 15:4). He sees that Jesus' life, death, resurrection and ascension are all "*in accordance with the Scriptures*" (1 Corinthians 15:3) and that the gospel was "*preached beforehand to Abraham*" (Galatians 3:8). The mystery hidden in Old Testament shadows and types steps into the light in the person and teaching of Jesus and in the inspired preaching of Paul and the apostles. Paul gives praise to—

Him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages but has now been disclosed through the prophetic writings. (Romans 16:25–26)

ⁱⁱ For an excellent lecture on this subject, see "Creation Sexuality" by Ted Hamilton, at www.truthxchange.com/resources/lectures.

The terms “my gospel,” “my preaching,” and the “revelation of the mystery” refer to Paul’s Spirit-inspired interpretation of the Old Testament in the light of the coming of the Messiah, prophesied in Genesis 3:15 and 2:24.

In Ephesians 5:21-33, Paul turns his Spirit-filled apostolic mind to marriage and the meaning of Genesis 2:24. At creation, God gives us a structure (heterosexual marriage) that helps us understand the mystery he will reveal, namely that of Christ, who saves and loves the Church. A dynamic in the original couple reflects the final redemption. The wife submits to her husband because God has given him a role of spiritual headship (due to no achievements of his own) to lead (not force) his wife, by acts of sacrificial love, both physical and spiritual. That is a tall order for selfish, fallible husbands!

The husband’s care and love for his wife symbolize Christ’s care and love for the cosmos, and the Church. The radically “other” God, distinct by nature from the creation, has condescended to redeem the creature. Sameness will not work. Christ and the Church are not interchangeable. The Church does not create, redeem or hold authority over Christ. Built into creation is the good news of its re-creation. The symphony of God’s remarkable work in history inspires us to honor the male/female distinctions that God set forth in the original “good” creation as a foretaste of the glorious transformed cosmos to come. Sexuality is the reflecting pool of the entire cosmos.ⁱⁱⁱ

Homocosmology or Heterocosmology?

We have considered the only two religious systems: Oneism or Twoism, and their effects on theology, spirituality and sexuality. These two systems can be expressed in another way. First we must do a little word analysis. The prefix “homo” means “same” and the prefix “hetero” means “other,” or “different.” We speak of “homonyms” for words that have the *same* spelling or pronunciation with different meanings. Or we speak of “homogenized” milk, meaning there is no longer any separation between the milk and the cream. As for “hetero,” we say “heterodoxy” for doctrines that are not correct. So now we will look at some made-up words that may help you understand how Oneism and Twoism apply to Romans 1.

Homocosmology (Oneism, Making a World of *Sameness*)

By “homocosmology” we mean a worldview that depends on sameness.

Homocosmology defines salvation as a worldwide consciousness of Oneness in nature. Existence is a self-evolving, monistic sameness, in which distinctions are illusions to be suppressed. This theory affects the three areas of our Romans 1 text:

ⁱⁱⁱ For a biblical overview of the women’s issue, see Rebecca Jones, *Does Christianity Squash Women?* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2005).

- *Homothology* makes God and nature one and the same. The divine is a principle of unity and sameness.
- *Homospiritality* worships the sameness of reality, whether objects of nature, images of the self, or experiences of joining the opposites.
- *Homosexuality* celebrates sexual sameness and provides an ideal door into the deep things of nature.

Heterocosmology (Twoism, Making a World of *Difference*)

In this worldview, existence has distinctions, opposites, paradoxes and analogies, divinely written into the creation in the beginning by a God who is other than all he has created. Salvation comes from the outside, from the Creator who, in condescension and grace, establishes reconciliation with his rebellious creatures.

We see ramifications in the same three areas:

- *Heterothology* maintains the Creator/creature distinction, and honors God as the unique Author of life.
- *Heterospiritality* follows God's Old Testament stipulations not to worship and serve anything in creation, but only God himself (Deuteronomy 4:8-10).
- *Heterosexuality* is a physical, sexual picture of communion and difference. A man and woman express in heterosexual love a picture of the difference and communion between God and his creation, and between Christ and the Church.

You or a friend may be facing a choice between these two options. In the last three lessons we will learn about the ultimate exchange, and examine the amazing truth and advantages of Twoism, the greatest of which is Jesus himself.