



## **Introduction: The Purpose of Language**

It today's world, there are two primary views of the nature and purpose of language. The *constructionist view* sees the function of language as creating meaning or shaping “reality.” In contrast, the *correspondence view* sees the function of language as describing the real world as it exists, independent of language. This debate about language is playing out in the world around us in the discussions about gender and sexuality. Are the terms ‘man’ and ‘woman’ just social or linguistic constructs? Or, do they actually describe the biological realities of human sexuality?

**Main Point:** We are called to stand firm on the truth that God has sovereignly purposed for each individual to be born with a specific gender through which we are to \_\_\_\_\_ Him and others in the world.

## **What Are Men & Women?**

### **Common Identity**

- **Men and women share a common dignity that comes from being God’s image-bearers as well as a common commission to exercise dominion in the world.**

*Gen. 1:27-28a*—<sup>27</sup> So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.  
<sup>28</sup> And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it...have dominion

⇒ Men and women are to \_\_\_\_\_ new life and \_\_\_\_\_ the potential of both the earth and those who fill it.

**Key Point:** In their shared identity as God’s image bearers, men and women \_\_\_\_\_ together in the work of creation and cultivation in the world God has made.

### **Complimentary Embodiment**

- **There is an inherent goodness and purpose to human embodiment.**

*Gen. 2:7*—then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.

⇒ Our bodies are the union of the physical and spiritual aspects of who we are. Through them we live in \_\_\_\_\_ to God and to others.

“...the body reveals the person. Our bodies are the visible reality through which we manifest our hidden, inner life. Each person’s existence is entirely unrepeatable, and our unique personhood can only be made known to others through the frame of our embodiment.”  
—Abigail Favale, *The Genesis of Gender*

- **There is an inherent goodness and purpose to male embodiment.**

*Gen. 2:15*—The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it.

**What is a Man?** A man is the kind of human being whose body is organized around the potential to \_\_\_\_\_ in order that new life might be generated.

⇒ The specific instructions given by the Lord to the first man emphasize the work of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ in his cultivating of creation. The general attributes of men serve to enable this work.

- **There is an inherent goodness and purpose to female embodiment.**

*Gen. 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.”

**What is a Woman?** A woman is the kind of human being whose body is organized around the potential to \_\_\_\_\_ in order that new life might be generated.

⇒ The specific statement by the Lord regarding the first woman emphasizes the work of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ in her cultivating of creation. The general attributes of women serve to enable this work.

**Key Point:** God has made us to be \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ so that we might worship and serve Him in both common and unique ways.

### **Living in a Fallen World as Men & Women**

- **Men and women will face common enemies but have a common hope as they live in a fallen world.**

*Gen. 3:15, 19b*—<sup>15</sup> 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.” <sup>19</sup> till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.”

⇒ From the beginning, God promised to overcome our enemies of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ through the coming of a Rescuer who would be a descendent of the man and woman.

- **Men and women will face unique difficulties as they live in a fallen world.**

*Gen. 3:16*—To the woman he said, “I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be contrary to your husband, but he shall rule over you.”

⇒ Women will experience the general suffering of life in a fallen world, but that pain and frustration will be felt most acutely in the work of birthing and nurturing children as well as in marriage (or lack thereof).

Gen. 3:17b—*cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life;*

⇒ Men will experience the general suffering of life in a fallen world, but that pain and frustration will be felt most acutely in the work of cultivation and provision as well as in marriage (or the lack thereof).

**Key Point:** As we face the common and unique difficulties of life as men and women, we are moved to look \_\_\_\_\_ from ourselves and \_\_\_\_\_ the Lord as our Savior and Shepherd.

## **Challenges to the Truth**

### **1. The Separation of \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_\_**

“Ultimately, the concept of gender has driven a wedge between *body* and *identity*. Sex once referred to a bodily given, a fact of nature. In gender-world, the power of the body to constitute identity is diminished. “Woman” no longer refers simply to one’s sex, but rather to one’s gender, which has become an amorphous cultural construction...Once this distance between bodily sex and identity was enabled via gender it did not take long...for gender to [become] entirely disconnected from sex, which has paved the way for an even more fragmented and unstable understanding of personhood.” —Abigail Favale

⇒ We affirm that there are aspects of what it means to live as a man or women that are learned, some of which may even differ from culture to culture.

1 Cor. 11:13,16—<sup>13</sup> *Judge for yourselves: is it proper for a wife to pray to God with her head uncovered?...<sup>16</sup> If anyone is inclined to be contentious, we have no such practice, nor do the churches of God.*

⇒ We reject that all aspects of what it means to be a man or woman are culturally constructed. This reduces masculinity and femininity to mere performances of exaggerated stereotypes and makes a mockery of our embodiment.

“Now, unmoored from the body altogether, gender is defined by the very cultural stereotypes that feminism sought to undo. In other words, when a girl recognizes that she does not fit the stereotypes of girlhood, she is now invited to question her sex rather than the stereotypes.” —Abigail Favale

### **2. The Pathologizing of \_\_\_\_\_**

“...on the APA website, the new guidelines conclude that “traditional masculinity — marked by stoicism, competitiveness, dominance, and aggression — is, on the whole, harmful.” ...[these guidelines] argue that “traditional masculinity ideology” — defined as socializing boys toward “anti-femininity, achievement, eschewal of the appearance of weakness, and adventure, risk, and violence” — has been shown to...negatively influence mental and physical health.” —David French

⇒ We affirm that sin can be manifested in a man’s life in uniquely masculine ways. This is why older men are to disciple younger men, teaching them what it means to live godly lives that manifest a Spirit-controlled masculinity.

Titus 2:2,6—<sup>2</sup> *Older men are to be sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love, and in steadfastness...*  
<sup>6</sup> *Likewise, urge the younger men to be self-controlled.*

⇒ We reject that women should

“Men cannot reclaim their masculinity, as if it were something taken from them. They can learn to live as men. Masculinity is not about asserting one’s rights. It’s about using one’s rights, power, courage, wisdom, etc., in serving those a man is given to serve.” —Jeffrey Hemmer, *Man Up!*

### **3. The Pathologizing of \_\_\_\_\_**

“There is a troubling assumption at work here...women, to be “healthy” and “free”, must function, biologically speaking, as much like men as possible...When freedom-as-choice becomes the open-ended *telos* of human existence, the body quickly becomes a problem, particularly for women...In adopting this *telos*, feminism’s march toward freedom has simultaneously been a flight from embodiment.” —Abigail Favale

⇒ We reject that in order for a woman to be truly happy in the modern world, she must control her biology and conform her nature (her femininity) to a masculine pattern.

“What would it look like to model our praxis on the norm of female embodiment? An ethos of interconnection and radical hospitality to life? An ethos built on the value of *integrity* rather than *autonomy*—personal wholeness that is synergistic, opening in love to accommodate the wholeness of another.” —Abigail Favale

⇒ We affirm that sin can be manifested in a woman’s life in uniquely feminine ways. This is why older women are to disciple younger women, teaching them what it means to live godly lives that manifest a Spirit-controlled femininity.

Titus 2:3-5—<sup>3</sup> *Older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine. They are to teach what is good,* <sup>4</sup> *and so train the young women to love their husbands and children,* <sup>5</sup> *to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled.*

## **Concluding Thought**

**In \_\_\_\_\_, we all have full access to know and worship God as His image-bearers so that we might serve Him in the world as the men and women He has made us to be.**

Gal. 3:26-28—<sup>26</sup> *for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith.* <sup>27</sup> *For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.* <sup>28</sup> *There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*



## **Introduction: The Purpose of Language**

It today's world, there are two primary views of the nature and purpose of language. The *constructionist view* sees the function of language as creating meaning or shaping “reality.” In contrast, the *correspondence view* sees the function of language as describing the real world as it exists, independent of language. This debate about language is playing out in the world around us in the discussions about gender and sexuality. Are the terms ‘man’ and ‘woman’ just social or linguistic constructs? Or, do they actually describe the biological realities of human sexuality?

**Main Point:** We are called to stand firm on the truth that God has sovereignly purposed for each individual to be born with a specific gender through which we are to serve Him and others in the world.

## **What Are Men & Women?**

### **Common Identity**

- **Men and women share a common dignity that comes from being God’s image-bearers as well as a common commission to exercise dominion in the world.**

*Gen. 1:27-28a—<sup>27</sup> So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.  
<sup>28</sup> And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it...have dominion*

⇒ Men and women are to **create** new life and **cultivate** the potential of both the earth and those who fill it.

**Key Point:** In their shared identity as God’s image bearers, men and women cooperate together in the work of creation and cultivation in the world God has made.

### **Complimentary Embodiment**

- **There is an inherent goodness and purpose to human embodiment.**

*Gen. 2:7—then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.*

⇒ Our bodies are the union of the physical and spiritual aspects of who we are. Through them we live in relationship to God and to others.

“...the body reveals the person. Our bodies are the visible reality through which we manifest our hidden, inner life. Each person’s existence is entirely unrepeatable, and our unique personhood can only be made known to others through the frame of our embodiment.”  
—Abigail Favale, *The Genesis of Gender*

- **There is an inherent goodness and purpose to male embodiment.**

*Gen. 2:15—The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it.*

**What is a Man? A man is the kind of human being whose body is organized around the potential to impregnate in order that new life might be generated.**

⇒ The specific instructions given by the Lord to the first man emphasize the work of provision and protection in his cultivating of creation. The general attributes of men serve to enable this work.

- **There is an inherent goodness and purpose to female embodiment.**

*Gen. 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.”*

**What is a Woman? A woman is the kind of human being whose body is organized around the potential to gestate in order that new life might be generated.**

⇒ The specific statement by the Lord regarding the first woman emphasizes the work of supporting and nurturing in her cultivating of creation. The general attributes of women serve to enable this work.

**Key Point:** God has made us to be male or female so that we might worship and serve Him in both common and unique ways.

### **Living in a Fallen World as Men & Women**

- **Men and women will face common enemies but have a common hope as they live in a fallen world.**

*Gen. 3:15, 19b—<sup>15</sup> 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.” <sup>19</sup> till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.”*

⇒ From the beginning, God promised to overcome our enemies of Satan, sin, and death through the coming of a Rescuer who would be a descendent of the man and woman.

- **Men and women will face unique difficulties as they live in a fallen world.**

*Gen. 3:16—To the woman he said, “I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be contrary to your husband, but he shall rule over you.”*

⇒ Women will experience the general suffering of life in a fallen world, but that pain and frustration will be felt most acutely in the work of birthing and nurturing children as well as in marriage (or lack thereof).

Gen. 3:17b—*cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life;*

⇒ Men will experience the general suffering of life in a fallen world, but that pain and frustration will be felt most acutely in the work of cultivation and provision as well as in marriage (or the lack thereof).

**Key Point: As we face the common and unique difficulties of life as men and women, we are moved to look away from ourselves and unto the Lord as our Savior and Shepherd.**

## **Challenges to the Truth**

### **1. The Separation of Sex from Gender**

“Ultimately, the concept of gender has driven a wedge between *body* and *identity*. Sex once referred to a bodily given, a fact of nature. In gender-world, the power of the body to constitute identity is diminished. “Woman” no longer refers simply to one’s sex, but rather to one’s gender, which has become an amorphous cultural construction...Once this distance between bodily sex and identity was enabled via gender it did not take long...for gender to [become] entirely disconnected from sex, which has paved the way for an even more fragmented and unstable understanding of personhood.” —Abigail Favale

⇒ We affirm that there are aspects of what it means to live as a man or women that are learned, some of which may even differ from culture to culture.

1 Cor. 11:13,16—<sup>13</sup> *Judge for yourselves: is it proper for a wife to pray to God with her head uncovered?...<sup>16</sup> If anyone is inclined to be contentious, we have no such practice, nor do the churches of God.*

⇒ We reject that all aspects of what it means to be a man or woman are culturally constructed. This reduces masculinity and femininity to mere performances of exaggerated stereotypes and makes a mockery of our embodiment.

“Now, unmoored from the body altogether, gender is defined by the very cultural stereotypes that feminism sought to undo. In other words, when a girl recognizes that she does not fit the stereotypes of girlhood, she is now invited to question her sex rather than the stereotypes.” —Abigail Favale

### **2. The Pathologizing of Masculinity**

“...on the APA website, the new guidelines conclude that “traditional masculinity — marked by stoicism, competitiveness, dominance, and aggression — is, on the whole, harmful.” ...[these guidelines] argue that “traditional masculinity ideology” — defined as socializing boys toward “anti-femininity, achievement, eschewal of the appearance of weakness, and adventure, risk, and violence” — has been shown to...negatively influence mental and physical health.” —David French

⇒ We affirm that sin can be manifested in a man’s life in uniquely masculine ways. This is why older men are to disciple younger men, teaching them what it means to live godly lives that manifest a Spirit-controlled masculinity.

Titus 2:2,6—<sup>2</sup> *Older men are to be sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love, and in steadfastness...*  
<sup>6</sup> *Likewise, urge the younger men to be self-controlled.*

⇒ We reject that women should

“Men cannot reclaim their masculinity, as if it were something taken from them. They can learn to live as men. Masculinity is not about asserting one’s rights. It’s about using one’s rights, power, courage, wisdom, etc., in serving those a man is given to serve.” —Jeffrey Hemmer, *Man Up!*

### **3. The Pathologizing of Femininity**

“There is a troubling assumption at work here...women, to be “healthy” and “free”, must function, biologically speaking, as much like men as possible...When freedom-as-choice becomes the open-ended *telos* of human existence, the body quickly becomes a problem, particularly for women...In adopting this *telos*, feminism’s march toward freedom has simultaneously been a flight from embodiment.” —Abigail Favale

⇒ We reject that in order for a woman to be truly happy in the modern world, she must control her biology and conform her nature (her femininity) to a masculine pattern.

“What would it look like to model our praxis on the norm of female embodiment? An ethos of interconnection and radical hospitality to life? An ethos built on the value of *integrity* rather than *autonomy*—personal wholeness that is synergistic, opening in love to accommodate the wholeness of another.” —Abigail Favale

⇒ We affirm that sin can be manifested in a woman’s life in uniquely feminine ways. This is why older women are to disciple younger women, teaching them what it means to live godly lives that manifest a Spirit-controlled femininity.

Titus 2:3-5—<sup>3</sup> *Older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine. They are to teach what is good,* <sup>4</sup> *and so train the young women to love their husbands and children,* <sup>5</sup> *to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled.*

## **Concluding Thought**

**In Christ, we all have full access to know and worship God as His image-bearers so that we might serve Him in the world as the men and women He has made us to be.**

Gal. 3:26-28—<sup>26</sup> *for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith.* <sup>27</sup> *For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.* <sup>28</sup> *There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*