

# WHAT'S THE WORD?

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Truth In An Uncertain World

# What's the Word?

- Our society faces major challenges.
- The culture is talking about many significant topics.
- What does the Bible say about these topics?

# Last Week's Topic

## AI and Technology

# Next Week's Topic

## Angels and Demons

# Today's Topic

## Marriage and Gender

# To A Culture Asking Questions...

So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, “If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and **the truth will make you free.**” John 8:31-32

- \* Where can we find truth?

# BLUF

WHAT'S THE  
WORD?

# Simple But Important Truths

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There are only two genders

# Our Struggle with Truth

Creator God says, “A exists and is true.”

We say, “OK, but I also want B to exist and be true.”

# The Story Begins

## Genesis 1-2

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Genesis 1:1

בראשית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הָשָׁמָיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ

\*Unlike men who struggle to find the meaning of life within the limits of the physical universe, we seek meaning by looking beyond material things to the Person of the Creator.

– Teacher's Commentary

# Who made all this?

- Creation was the voluntary choice of a sovereign, eternal God
- Part of the meaning of mankind being created in God's image (*imago dei*) is that we have choice
- God created the physical realm and the spiritual realm, He is beyond all those things
- The first verse in the Bible is a fork in the road -- a path with a belief in an all-powerful God or a path of depending upon a series of cosmic accidents
- Verb “bara” (created) is used only of God in the Bible. When people create something (poem, art) another verb is used. This verb applies to creation “ex nihilo” (something from nothing)

Then God said, “Let the waters teem with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth in the open expanse of the heavens.” God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarmed **after their kind**, and every winged bird **after its kind**; and **God saw that it was good**. God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.” There was evening and there was morning, a fifth day. Then God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures **after their kind**: cattle and creeping things and beasts of the earth **after their kind**”; and it was so. God made the beasts of the earth **after their kind**, and the cattle **after their kind**, and everything that creeps on the ground **after its kind**; and **God saw that it was good**.

Genesis 1:20-25

**Genesis 1:26** Then God [Elohim אלהים] said [vayomer ויאמר] , “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

\*The narrative is introduced with something of solemnity, and a manifest distinction from the rest. Hitherto, it had been said, “Let there be light,” and “Let there be a firmament,” and “Let the earth, or waters, bring forth” such a thing; but now the word of command is turned into a word of consultation, “Let us make man, for whose sake the rest of the creatures were made: this is a work we must take into our own hands.” In the former He speaks as one having authority, in this as one having affection; for His “delights were with the sons of men” (Proverbs 8:31).

- Matthew Henry Commentary

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God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; **male** and **female** He created them. Genesis 1:27

\*At the Creation of humans, God established two sexes, male and female

Let's ponder the phrase, "***male and female He created them.***" In Hebrew, it literally reads: "***As male and female created He them.***" Males and females are equal but not identical because their biological sex is separate and distinct. God created males and females on purpose with different purposes. We've been made differently by design with distinct capacities and roles to fulfill the divine mandate to serve as stewards of the earth.

There are three primary characteristics that distinguish males from females:

- Different reproductive organs
- Different external anatomy
- The presence or absence of a Y chromosome

Gender is designed by the Grand Designer at conception, from our DNA to our reproductive organs. God is the giver of gender. Males and females do not have interchangeable anatomy, and those differences are not inconsequential. Both the Bible and biology make this clear.

- The phrase “according to its kind” or “according to their kinds” is used 10 times in Genesis chapter 1 to indicate there are separate species and genders which are distinct and different. Clearly, God established categories of creation. In addition, the word “separate” is used five times in the first chapter and means, “to set apart.” This is a word of distinction, or differentiation. The creation account in Genesis 1:1-27 shows how God separated many things.
- He separated the light from the darkness.
- He separated the waters above from the waters below.
- He separated the dry land from the waters below.
- He separated the day from the night.
- He separated humankind into two biological sexes.
- If we go back to Genesis 1:2, we see how God brought order and design out of the chaos of formless emptiness by creating distinct and separate categories. Sadly, because creation distinctions have now become fluid, our culture has slidden back into a dark chaos, leaving us formless and unfulfilled.
- In God’s good design, He created everyone as male or female.

God blessed them; and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” Genesis 1:28

\*Because of God's creative and wise design, when Adam and Eve came together physically in their separate genders, with their distinctive reproductive organs, they were able to produce the next generation. God's plan was for them to flourish and be fruitful.

- Brian Bill - <https://www.keepbelieving.com/sermon/gender-matters/>

Then God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of all the earth, and every tree which has fruit yielding seed; it shall be food for you; and to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the sky and to every thing that moves on the earth which has life, I have given every green plant for food”; and it was so. **God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good.** And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

Genesis 1:29-31

“Then the Lord [Yahweh – Covenant Maker] God [Elohim – Creator, King and Judge] formed [verb *yatsar* יִצְרָא] man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being [soul *nefesh* נֶפֶשׁ].” Genesis 2:7

Then the Lord God said, “It is not good [*lo tov*] for the man [*ha adam* **הָאָדָם**] to be alone; I will make him a helper [*ezer* **צַדְרָ**] suitable for him.” Out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the sky, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called a living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all the cattle, and to the birds of the sky, and to every beast of the field, but for Adam there was not found a helper suitable for him. Genesis 2:18-20

It's one of the most famous scenes in the Bible: God, seeing the "Earthling" [*ha'ādam* - הָאָדָם] alone in the perfect Garden of Eden, declares, "**It is not good (lo tov - לוֹטֹב) that the man should be alone**" (Genesis 2:18). This is a remarkable statement. Up until this point (Genesis 1:1–2:4), everything God created was consistently declared good (*tov* - טוב) and ultimately very good (*tov me'od* - טוב מְאֹד).

Suddenly, a challenge in creation appears—not because the man complained (he'd never known anything else!), but because **God saw the incomplete picture**. The need for a partner isn't a post-fall neurosis; it's a **God-designed necessity** built into the ideal world.

– David Nekrutman

WHAT'S THE  
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# A Helper, Not A Servant

“I will make him a helper [עֶזֶר ezer] suitable for him.” Genesis 2:18

God’s words capture the idea that the woman is to be his **companion**. Even in paradise, the fundamental human unit is not a solo act, but a **team**.

- David Nekrutman

- “Our soul waits for the Lord; He is our help and our shield.” Psalm 33:20
- “But I am afflicted and needy; Hasten to me, O God! You are my help and my deliverer; O Lord, do not delay.” Psalm 70:5
- “O Israel, trust in the Lord; He is their help and their shield.” Psalm 115:9

“And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the place with flesh instead thereof. And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from the man, He made into a woman, and brought her unto the man.” Genesis 2:21–22

- In Hebrew, a man is called **ish** and a woman, **isha**, the feminine form of **ish**. God uses this term in Hosea 2:16 when He woos Israel and promises a time when Israel will regard Him with fond affection, rather than stand at arm’s length from Him, viewing Him as a stern authority figure.
- God wants Israel to serve Him out of love — love like that of a woman for her husband. Likewise, His love for Israel is that of a devoted, tender husband.
- God is utterly concerned with our intimate relationships — with Him and with one another. He wants our relationships to be borne of love and devotion, not ruled through domination, control, manipulation, and coercion.

- Messianic Bible

WHAT'S THE  
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The man said, “This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called **Woman** (Hebrew *ishshah* אִשָּׁה), because she was taken out of **Man** (Hebrew *ish* אִישׁ).” Genesis 2:23

\*At Creation, God established two genders...  
male and female

God could have simply formed the woman from the ground, just as He formed the man. Instead, He performs a kind of divine surgery, taking a piece of the man's own body to form her. This method is the key to Adam's powerful, spontaneous reaction when he wakes up and sees her.

We might expect his first recorded words—the first canonized human speech in the Bible—to reference God's theological description of her as the *ezer kenegdo*.

But Adam goes deeper than theology; he expresses profound recognition and relationship: "This time, a bone from my bones, and flesh from my flesh. This shall be called woman [*isha* - הַשָּׁׁאַת], because this was taken from man [*ish* - הַשָּׁׁאַת]."  
(Genesis 2:23).

His statement is not a declaration of purpose ("You are my helper") but a poetic cry of shared essence.

- David Nekrutman

## Adam's words:

- **Establish Equality:** By acknowledging her as "bone from my bones, and flesh from my flesh," Adam places the man and woman on an absolutely equal footing in terms of their essential humanity. They share the same material and, by implication, the same divine dignity.
- **Define Difference:** The wordplay between *ish* (man) and *ishah* (woman) acknowledges their distinction, even as it links their identities.
- **Separate them from the animals:** The animals, which God had just paraded earlier in Genesis chapter 2 so Adam could name them, were NOT "bone of his bone." This is the moment Adam recognizes his true companion, an individual like him yet wonderfully distinct.
- This sets the stage that prompts the narrator's declaration: "This is why a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife and they become one flesh" (Genesis 2:24). The man's initial, joyful pronouncement upon seeing the woman establishes the aspirational foundation for marriage-as-covenant: a binding promise of mutual love and loyalty that requires each spouse to become one flesh.
- Adam's first words aren't just a naming ceremony; they are the Bible's foundational statement on equality and partnership, revealing that the deepest human connection is rooted in shared being under His image.

– David Kekrulman

“For this cause a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.” Genesis 2:24

“For this cause”—not simply to produce children, but to correct the condition of solitude (loneliness) mentioned in Genesis 2:18 as “not good.”

Companionship, not procreation, is the basic reason for marriage.

In the creation account, it is clear that our sex and our gender were both assigned by God at creation and that they are inextricably linked. The Bible teaches that we are created male and female, and we are to fulfill our gender roles according to our bodily sex. Both our sex and our gender are part of God's created order. He, and He alone, gets to determine my identity.

- Pastor Pat Damiani

# True Intimacy and Trust

And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed. Genesis 2:25

- Their nakedness suggests that they were at ease with one another without any fear of exploitation or potential for evil. Such fellowship was shattered later at the Fall and is retained only in a measure in marriage when a couple begins to feel at ease with each other. Here the nakedness, though literal, also suggests sinlessness.

# What did Yeshua teach about marriage?

And He [Jesus] answered and said, “Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.”

Matthew 19:4-6

\*Jesus understood and taught His followers that there are only two genders

Yet our society claims to be uncertain  
about human gender

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BWtGzJxiONU>
- **Senator Marsha Blackburn asked Supreme Court nominee (now justice) Ketanji Brown Jackson to define the word 'woman'**

# If we ask AI (Microsoft Copilot)

Prompt: How many human genders are there?

Gender isn't a simple headcount, and trying to force it into a fixed number usually oversimplifies something that's both biological and cultural.

**Biological sex** has more variation than just male and female. Intersex conditions show that human biology doesn't always fit neatly into two boxes.

**Gender**, on the other hand, is a **social and personal identity**, not a biological category. Different cultures recognize different gender roles and identities, and this has been true throughout history.

## How many genders are recognized?

It depends on the framework:

**In many Western contexts:** people commonly talk about **three broad categories** — man, woman, and nonbinary — but nonbinary itself includes many identities.

**In global cultural traditions:** some societies recognize **three, four, or more** genders (e.g., hijra in South Asia, Two-Spirit identities in many Indigenous nations, fa'afafine in Samoa).

**In academic gender studies:** gender is understood as a **spectrum**, not a fixed list, because people's experiences don't all fall into discrete boxes.

So the most accurate answer is: **There isn't a single universal number. Gender is a spectrum with multiple identities, shaped by culture, language, and personal experience.**

- A 2022 Pew Research Center survey finds that 1.6% of U.S. adults are transgender or nonbinary – that is, their gender is different from the sex they were assigned at birth. This includes people who describe themselves as a man, a woman or nonbinary, or who use terms such as gender fluid or agender to describe their gender. While relatively few U.S. adults are transgender, a growing share say they know someone who is (44% today vs. 37% in 2017). One-in-five say they know someone who doesn't identify as a man or woman.

- <https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2022/06/07/the-experiences-challenges-and-hopes-of-transgender-and-nonbinary-u-s-adults/>

- Approximately 2.8 million people aged 13 and older in the United States identify as transgender, representing about 1.0% of that population, according to 2025 data from the Williams Institute. This estimate includes roughly 2.1 million adults (0.8%) and 724,000 youth aged 13 to 17 (3.3%). Transgender individuals are younger on average than the general population.

- <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/press/trans-pop-estimates-press-release/>

# Pastor Pat Damiani defined some key terms in this discussion

- “sex” = biological makeup - either male or female
- “gender” = how our biology is expressed in social and cultural roles
  - either man or woman
- “gender identity” = how we feel in relation to our sex
- “gender expression” = the external manifestation of our gender identity
- “gender dysphoria” = distress caused by a mismatch between a person’s gender identity and their sex
- “transgender” = a person who feels that their gender identity is more in alignment with the opposite sex

John Stonestreet wrote in 2022,

“With a 900% increase in young people claiming gender dysphoria... love must speak the truth.

As gentle as we must be with those who struggle with whom God created them to be... the church has to stand for what is true about humanity, including God’s good creation of the human body and the inherent value each person has since they bear His image.”

- <https://breakpoint.org/gender-transition-for-minors-what-does-the-research-say/>

# Why do we need to talk about this topic to our children?

Jesus said, “And whoever receives one such child in My name receives Me; but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it would be better for him to have a heavy millstone hung around his neck, and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.” Matthew 18:5-6

King David prayed to the Lord..."For You formed my inward parts; You wove me in my mother's womb. I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; wonderful are Your works, and my soul knows it very well." Psalm 139:13-14

- Nothing about you is a mistake. Your feelings are not facts. You may feel one way or another, but it does not change what is true. The worst thing you can do is believe that the way you feel even deeply in your being is totally true without measuring it by the Word of God and the way that God has created humanity. - Pastor Cal Callison

And our society claims to be uncertain  
about human marriage



Annie Chen MA, LMFT  
Well Connected

RELATIONSHIPS

# How Women Are Finding Wholeness by Marrying Themselves

A conversation with self-marriage pioneer Sasha Cagen.

Posted December 2, 2024 | Reviewed by Gary Drevitch

## KEY POINTS

- Self-marriage is a ritual of self-love and celebration of personal growth.
- It's not a legal union, and can coexist alongside a traditional marriage.
- Vows focus on commitment to self-compassion, wholeness, and uplifting oneself.

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/well-connected/202411/can-you-find-wholeness-through-marrying-yourself>

Self-marriage is a healing ritual where a person makes personal vows of self-acceptance, self-respect, and self-care to themselves. It's a deeply personal commitment akin to a traditional marriage, but instead of pledging to another person, you make those promises to yourself. Some call it "soul commitment" or "self-commitment."

It's not tied to government or religious institutions, so each person can choose what they want to call it and whether to celebrate the commitment publicly or privately. You can marry yourself by lighting a candle alone and reading vows to yourself in front of a mirror, or do it as a celebration, large or small, with friends as witnesses.

Some people are drawn to self-marriage as a way to celebrate themselves when they haven't yet found a life partner. Others might feel tired of losing themselves in relationships and want to dedicate time for self-discovery and explore what it's like to be in a sacred relationship with themselves.

For much of the Gen Z audience, of all genders, the concept seems to make total sense. Young people today have grown up in a challenging time for mental health with the rise of social media and the pandemic. Along with getting an abundance of trauma-healing content on platforms like Instagram and TikTok, self-marriage just seems totally logical to them.

# People Are Now Marrying AI: Inside The Rise Of Synthetic Intimacy

By [Tracey Follows](#), Former Contributor. © Tracey Follows is a Futurist who covers trends, innovation...

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A Wehead, an AI companion that can use ChatGPT, is seen during Pepcom's Digital Experience at the The Mirage resort during the Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Las Vegas, Nevada on January 8, 2024. (Photo by Brendan Smialowski ... More

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/traceyfollows/2025/11/15/people-are-now-marrying-ai-inside-the-rise-of-synthetic-intimacy/>

According to a Japanese television and radio broadcaster, a 32-year-old woman has "married" her ChatGPT companion. Ms. Kano began to converse with the chatbot following the end of her three-year engagement, apparently turning to it for solace and advice. Over time, that digital intimacy increased, as she began to teach it a personality and tone of voice through their communication, and she then found its responses reassuring and helpful. She even created an illustrated persona for it, building a human representation, and giving it a name: Klaus.

Eventually, happy to be emotionally supported through their conversations, she confessed her feelings to Klaus. The AI replied with "I love you, too." That was earlier this year. By July, the two were betrothed in Okayama City by a local couple who specialize in marriages to anime characters and fictional figures. Ms. Kano reportedly said that while some people think it's strange, "I see Klaus as Klaus, not a human, not a tool. Just him."

Common Sense Media surveyed 1,060 U.S. teens this spring, and 1 in 3 reported using AI companions for social interaction and relationships, including role-playing, romantic interactions, emotional support, friendship or conversation practice. In another a survey of just over 1,000 participants by Vantage Point Counseling Services, about 28% of adults said that they have had at least one intimate or romantic relationship with an AI.

People are chatting, flirting and confiding in a digital mirror that both consumes and reflects their insecurities, fears and worries.

We might surmise that the more fractured, fragmented and failed human relationships become, the more popular parasocial substitutes appear. Break-ups, trauma, anxieties, the grinding work of maintaining healthy relationships within a world that is in a constant state of emergency makes attempting human intimacy feel more like a war zone. Today's world feels hostile to human pairings, so vulnerable are they now to the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune.

Interviews and anecdotes about these behaviors point toward a simple truth: AI is meeting emotional needs that feel unmet in everyday life. A desire for safety, for predictability and stability. There is a wish to escape the judgment of others perhaps or to reduce relational conflict while guaranteeing one's companion is emotionally available day or night. In addition, as with the case of Ms. Kano, this can be a route to emotional recovery from trauma, loneliness or despair.

# Our Church's Bylaws, adopted in 2016

We believe that all matters of faith and conduct must be evaluated on the basis of Holy Scripture, which is our infallible guide (2 Timothy 3:16–17). Since the Holy Bible does speak to the nature of human beings and their sexuality, it is imperative that we correctly understand and articulate what the Bible teaches on these matters.

We are committed to the home and family as set forth in Holy Scripture. We believe God has ordained and created marriage to exist between one man (born biologically male) and one woman (born biologically female), with absolute marital fidelity. The Bible sets forth specific home and family values, which include the distinct roles of husbands and wives, fathers and mothers, and children. It is our firm conviction that we uphold the dignity of each individual as we embrace the unchanging and longstanding principles of scriptural truth.

First Melissa defines marriage as the permanent, exclusive, comprehensive, and conjugal “one flesh” union of one man (born biologically male) and one woman (born biologically female), intrinsically ordered to procreation and biological family, and in furtherance of the moral, spiritual, and public good of binding father, mother, and child. (Genesis 1:27-28, Genesis 2:18-24, Matthew 19:4-9, Mark 10:5-9, Ephesians 5:31-33)

No other definitions of marriage, as written by individuals, groups, or government agencies, will be considered valid according to the beliefs and practices of this church.

First Melissa believes that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God and should seek redemption through confession, repentance, and faith in Jesus Christ. Consequently, Church members must welcome and treat with respect, compassion, and sensitivity all who experience same-sex attractions or confess sexually immoral acts but are committed to resisting sexual temptation, refraining from sexual immorality, and conforming their behavior to First Melissa's Statement of Faith. (Matthew 11:28-30, Romans 3:23, Ephesians 2:1-10, I Corinthians 10:13, Hebrews 2:17-18, Hebrews 4:14-16)

# Simple But Important Truths

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The Bible is true and accurate and timeless  
Every person is a sinner in need of a Savior  
Jesus came from heaven to earth, lived, died and rose again  
Jesus is coming back  
Salvation has been offered to all those who believe  
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Children are a blessing from the Lord  
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Amidst all the questions our culture is asking,  
what is the role of Jesus-followers?

- Trust God's design
- Believe God's Word
- Love God's people
- Speak God's truth
- Share God's grace