

Social God

I. Slide1 announcement:

A. Slide2 In the News Today: FIRST IMAGE OF A BLACK HOLE

1. The Event Horizon Telescope (EHT) - a planet-scale array of 8 ground-based radio telescopes forged through international collaboration - was designed to capture images of a black hole. On April 10, 2019, in coordinated press conferences across the globe, EHT researchers revealed that they have succeeded, unveiling the first direct visual evidence of a supermassive black hole and its shadow... This black hole resides 55 million light-years from Earth and has a mass 6.5 billion times that of the Sun.

B. Prayer:

II. Slide3 Intro: Social God

A. Genesis 2 answers a basic question. What is the origin and nature of human beings?

1. The answer is that *we human beings are the special creation of God, made in His image and likeness. Our special creation gives each human being individual worth and value. Because God made us, and made us like Himself, you and I are precious beings.*¹
2. This helps us then understand **ourselves** & our view of **others**.
3. This helps us then understand specifically regarding **man** and **woman** and their place in God's plan.

B. Image bearers - Like God we are persons, with an *emotional, moral, and intellectual* resemblance to our Creator.

1. **Social** = *needing companionship. God is a social being* (in Himself/trinity, not "needing others"). *Since we are made in his image* we are **social beings** also.

III. Slide4 IT IS FINISHED (1-3)

A. Sabbath - given to Israel the 4th commandment (Ex.20:8-11) is based upon Gen 2.

¹ Richards, L., & Richards, L. O. (1987). The teacher's commentary (p. 26). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

1. God was finished creating, not tired from creating.

IV. Slide5a **HI HO HI HO, IT'S OFF TO WORK WE GO (4-15)**

- A. (4) Leaving behind *the creation account* (1:1-2:3) the narrative turns to *what is happening on earth*.
1. The narrative now presents **a more personal view of God** interacting with His creation.
 2. We now get **more detail** in the **creation** of the **1st man** and the **preparation** of *the garden of Eden* as his home.
 3. Ch. 2 now offers a closer look at the creation of humanity.
- B. Slide5b **These are the generations** - a formula used throughout Genesis to mark the beginning of major sections. (5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10, 27; 25:12, 19; 36:1, 9; 37:2)
- C. Slide5c (5) **Yahweh God** (LORD God) - The 1st occurrence of the personal divine name **Yahweh**. Here it is combined with *elohim*. [used to define God] (tetra-grammaton)
1. This combo occurs only 37 x's in the OT. **20 in ch.2. Only 1 more in Pent.**
 2. **YHVH** - reflects deity as **the covenant making God**; God as savior, redeemer.
- D. Vs.5 seems to describe the state of the land back in 1:9,10...**just before God commands the earth to bring forth vegetation**.
1. Barren, because **man** is working the land yet (till 2:15).
- E. Slide5d (7) **The breath of life** - Although the **other living creatures** of ch.1 possess life, **only with humanity** is life linked to *breath from God*. [this connects **human life w/God's own life**]
- F. Slide5e (8) **Eden** - was distinguished from the entirety of creation and had *specific geographical boundaries*.
1. **We do not know** what **the rest of the creation** was like.
 2. **We know** Eden was *the unique dwelling place of God*.
- G. Slide5f (9) **The tree of life** - refers to 2 concepts: 1 **earthly** and the other **symbolic** of divine life and cosmological wellness.
1. In the ancient Near East, garden imagery was used to describe the abodes of deities, representing luxury and abundance.

2. The divine abode also represented the place where heaven and earth met.
 3. The OT often connects trees with divine encounters and sacred geography.
- H. Slide5g (10) 4 rivers - We cannot pinpoint these 4 rivers or Eden's location. [a flood messes up river flows]
1. Two rivers are unknown (the Pishon and Gihon).
 2. The Tigris and Euphrates Rivers suggest a connection with **Mesopotamia**.
- I. Slide5h (15) Work/cultivate it and keep it - This phrase helps define the language of **subduing** and **ruling** in Gen 1:28.
1. **People** represent **God** as stewards of His creation. We should tend to it as **He** would.

V. Slide6a DEPENDENCE OR INDEPENDENCE (16,17)

- A. The Creator has the right to govern His creatures. Love sets limits for the good of man.
- B. (17) The tree of knowledge of good and evil - This tree represents a *counterpart* to the tree of life, which could bestow *immortality*.
1. It seemed to offer to humans a way to be **independent** from their creator God.
- C. Slide6b You shall not eat - this is **not** what *awakened moral discernment* in humans, **since** they would have needed to possess this **already** to understand God's command.
- D. You shall surely die - This refers to the **certainty** of death, **not** to *immediate death*.
1. They were **cut off** from the tree of life and driven from the garden after their disobedience (3:6).
 2. Their *immortality* depended on remaining in God's presence, symbolized by the tree of life and its fruit. Driven out, they would inevitably die, as all mortals do.

VI. Slide7a BOY MEETS GIRL (18-25)

- A. (18) A helper - ezer, rendering aid. Yet not necessarily refers to *inferiority*. God is Israel's helper (Hos.13:9 *He destroys you, O Israel, for you are against me, against your helper*)
1. While the naming of Eve by Adam after the fall implies some level of **authority** on Adam's part, the **purpose** seems to be to bless Eve and properly steward his relationship with her.

2. Slide7b Eve's status remains **equal as divine imager**. Their **equivalence** (or **equality**) is indicated by Adam's response to Eve **bone of his bones & flesh of his flesh**.
 3. In addition, **the dominion (stewardship) mandate** was issued to **both** the man and woman at the same time (1:28).
 4. This shows that Adam's relationship to Eve is not one of dominion; **instead**, it involves **a difference in roles**.
 5. **He** blesses creation through his **naming** of the animals, **while she** blesses it by **continuing the life** of humanity (3:20).
 6. **Eve comes alongside Adam** to help him in **his mandate to steward creation**. Adam **leads** in the sense that he is **already working** with creation **before** she is created.
- B. Slide7c (19) **Whatever the man called every living creature** - the first man had **intelligence, language, and speech**. (*not* caveman-ish)
- C. (20) **The man gave names to every domesticated animal** - In exercising his **stewardship** over creation, Adam **names** the animals.
1. In ancient Israelite belief, **knowing the name of a thing** is what enabled one to **do good** for the thing named **or** to **pronounce a blessing**.
 - a) In (ch.32), the divine figure who wrestles with Jacob **must know the name of Jacob before he can bless him**. Adam also gives Eve her name (3:20).
- D. Note, Eve was **taken** from his side (20-22) **then returned** to his side (23-25).
- E. Slide7d (25) **Naked** - *arom/ערום* involves **wordplay**. The serpent is described as **crafty** (*arum/3:1 ערום*).
1. The **parallel words** indicate a **contrast**: **innocence** being transformed into **shame**
- F. Slide8a **Marriage: The Great Dance of the Universe**
- G. Kathy Keller in *The Meaning of Marriage* called this, *The great dance of the universe*.
- H. Slide8b Husband & Wives...submit to *your own divinely ordained gender roles* within marriage.
- I. The first mention of **gender** was in 1:27.

1. Note, are maleness and our femaleness is *not incidental* to our humanness but constitutes its very essence.
 2. We were not created as *generic humanity* and then later we're differentiated. Nope, every cell in our body is stamped as XX or YY.
- J. This comes against the postmodern view, that gender is wholly a *social construct*.
1. If our gender is at the very heart of our nature, we risk losing a key part of ourselves if we *abandon* our distinctive male or female roles.
- K. Slide8c Note gender Extremes:
1. *Hypermasculinity* (alpha male individualism) - *rejection of masculinity* (dependence)
 2. *Hyperfemininity* (a clingy dependence) - *rejection of femininity* (individualism)
- L. Absolute equality. *Both were equally made in the image of God, equally blessed, equally given dominion over the earth. This means that men and women together, in full participation, must carry out God's mandate to build civilization and culture. Both men and women are called to do science and art, to build families and human communities.*²
1. Right after this they are given *the mandate to procreate*. Creating human life could only be carried out **together**. Only in complementary union.
 2. The sexes, while **equal** in dignity & worth, are **complementary**.
 - a) Slide8d **Complementarianism** is a way of thinking and living that flows from the conviction that God created human beings as male and female, **equal** in worth, **both** in the image of God, **both** heirs of the grace of life, **both** fully capable of direct allegiance to the Lord Jesus Christ, **both** fully redeemed from sin in Jesus, and **both** destined for eternal joy and eternal significance as children of the Creator of the universe — *and that* male and female are designed by God and appointed in his word for some **distinct** and **complementary roles** in life, owing to the fact that they are male and female. John Piper
 - b) **Egalitarians** believe that in Christ those kinds of **sex-based role distinctions are done away with** and that the relationship between a husband and a wife should not assume that the husband's manhood implies any unique leadership role or that a woman's womanhood implies any unique role of submission. Similarly, in the

² Kathy Keller, The Meaning of Marriage, Ch.6.

church, manhood and womanhood should not, male and female should not be a decisive part of the criteria by which leadership roles are assigned.

3. Yes, esp in the NT the husband role is **headship** (*i.e.* servant/leaders), **but** the women is NOT described as an *inferior but instead a helper suitable/fit for him*.
4. **ezer** is used to describe **God Himself**. Other times it describes **military help, such as reinforcements, w/o which a battle would be lost**.
 - a) To **help/ezer** someone is to *make up what is lacking in him with your strength*.
Woman was made to be a strong helper.
 - b) *A helper suitable/fit for him* - or *like opposite* him. **They are like 2 pieces of a puzzle** that fit together **because** they are *not exactly alike nor randomly different*.
5. Marriage then is the embracing your spouses **otherness**.