

Genesis 1:26-28 – Man & Woman in God's Image – Sermon Outline

Intro: What is a woman? Matt Walsh never really, rightly answered that, but showed we don't know.

Need: You can't know what a woman is without knowing what a man is, and to know what man is, you must know what/who God is, and His purpose for creating men and women.

Theme: God created man and woman in His image to rule His creation for His glory.

1. Image bearing is expressed by taking dominion over creation. (Gen. 1:26)
2. Image bearing requires masculinity and femininity. (Gen. 1:27)
3. Image bearing requires subduing all creation through fruitful, faithful families. (Gen. 1:28)
4. Image bearing writ large requires families rooted in Christ and communities.

I. Image bearing is expressed by taking dominion over creation. (26)

- A. The Triune God who crafted creation from nothing crafts man to reflect His creative work.
 1. "Let us make" indicates there is a plurality in the one God. Diversity within unity.
 2. Gen. 1:1-2, God creates heavens and Earth, Spirit is over waters, the Son sends the Spirit.
 3. Christians are born again by Christ and the sending of His Spirit as new creations in Him.
 4. Father, Son, and Spirit at creation, and at the new creation work the same things. God breathes life into Adam, and the last Adam Christ becomes a life-giving Spirit, breathing life into His people.
 5. We are in the image of God as ones breathed into by God Himself to give us life.
 6. Because God is Triune, it should not be surprising or hard to understand that His image bearers would have a diversity within unity, male and female (diversity) both image bearers of God (unity).
- B. Man made in God's image/likeness means we are to reflect His majesty/glory:
 1. But it is more than mirroring God. We are made in His image, not merely reflectors of His image.
 2. A mirror reflects whatever stands before it. We are to emanate God's image/likeness, from within ourselves, our very being, body and soul. We are transmitters, shining forth, not mere reflectors.
- C. God purposed man, even before the Fall, to have dominion/rule over evil, defeating sin, death, and the devil himself, seen plainly in the serpent/Satan's temptation of Eve with the forbidden fruit.
 1. Satan/the Serpent reverses the order of dominion/ruling. First, he comes as an animal, the crafty serpent, whom Adam was to rule over. Then, he subverts Adam indirectly, tempting Eve first.
 2. Eve in turn becomes a tempter/seductress, convincing Adam to eat the forbidden fruit.
 3. Rom. 5, In Adam all die, not in Adam & Eve. Adam has the ultimate responsibility for guarding the garden, keeping it, protecting Eve from the serpent. Man's fall was really at Adam's sin, not Eve.
- D. Satan being a serpent/dragon is not some cutesy detail. It shows Adam's failure to rule over Creation.
 1. The serpent in Gen. 3:1 is said to be "more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made." It is possible that the serpent/dragon could speak before the Fall, Eve wasn't surprised.
 2. We also see that Adam was intended to resist the evil forces of Satan/fallen angels even before his personal fall. Man was made lower than the angels, but Adam would have ascended to glory over Satan if he crushed him in Eden. But he failed. Yet Christ, the last Adam, has crushed Satan's head.
 3. Christ has taken dominion, rule, so now all authority in heaven/earth is given to Him, & those in Him.
- E. What is the difference between "subdue" and "take dominion" in our text? Conquering vs. Ruling.
 1. Subdue is to go on a conquest, to bring under your power and authority. Dominion relates to maintaining that which you have subdued. So Adam in the Garden is given something of a headstart.

2. There is, after all, a lush garden that he begins in, not a barren wilderness. God actually brings the animals to him for Adam to name. Note, God brings his wife to Adam, and Adam names her, 2:22.
 3. Naming is a sign of authority, indeed dominion. Men are to have righteous dominion over women, particularly and most obviously and intimately expressed in the husband and wife bond.
- F. Only further down in v. 28 do we see the word “subdue”. Why? B/C subduing is needed beyond Eden.
1. Not all creation was the cultivated Garden of Eden, but was uncultivated and unpopulated. Adam’s job was to subdue the whole creation by populating and cultivating it, in short, by subduing it.
 2. Once subdued, the purpose was to maintain dominion, to tend and keep it (Gen. 2:15 with Garden of Eden), then have more children who in turn subdue unpopulated and uncultivated regions.
 3. Thus the Tower of Babel was so wicked, & also why densely populated cities tend toward depravity.
 4. Less is being ruled over and subdued, and what is being exalted is man’s ego, not God’s glory.
- G. Alas, man rebelled, and in many ways is now being subdued, suffering under the curse.
1. Per Genesis 3:2-3, Eve knew God’s prohibition on the forbidden fruit, yet she was deceived by the serpent regardless. Then Adam caved, and then in shame they both hide themselves from God.
 2. They knew their nakedness, their sin, their loss of purity and innocence, yet blame one another.
 3. Adam blames the woman for giving Him the fruit, forgetting he was called to tend and keep/guard the garden, especially the one thing forbidden, and to protect his precious wife from the crafty serpent/beasts of the field. It was an utter failing of his calling as a man to lead and protect.
 4. The woman did not heed God’s voice, for she was not created until after God spoke to Adam to not eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. She blames the serpent, saying he deceived her.
 5. God in mercy humbles the serpent, it now must crawl on its belly, eat dust, and one day Christ will slay the dragon Satan, who was in the serpent and instigated the fall and rebellion of man.
 6. The woman, who was designed to bear image bearers in her womb, would now have to do this, not as a pure privilege and joy, but in pain and hardship. Yet in God’s mercy, she’ll still have children.
 7. Further, she will desire to subvert the authority, to literally go over her head, over her husband, and by extension, women will be jealous of man’s authority in general, in home, the workplace, etc.
 8. They’ll be prone to being gossips, reject man’s rule, refuse to marry/bear children or be homemakers.
- H. Then God curses the ground against Adam, who was called to cultivate the earth beyond Eden.
1. Soil is rocky and hard, bears little fruit, the wind blows it away, the sun scorches, there’s droughts.
 2. Thorns & thistles grow and cut and prick and make it hard to reap even the good fruit that comes.
 3. By backbreaking, sweaty work we will eat our bread and birth our children, until we return to dust.
 4. **The ground from which we were to rule and subdue will ultimately subdue us**, as we lie down in death, as our bodies are buried in the ground, as we turn to ash.
- I. Man is removed from the lush Garden of Eden with God’s holy presence. The head start is forfeited.
1. Family tragedy occurs, as Cain kills Abel, and the line of man seems it may come to an end, until God provides Seth, and from Seth, the appointed seed to replace the righteous blood of Abel comes.
 2. This is Christ, whose blood speaks a better word than even the blood of Abel. In Christ, the Earth will be redeemed, times and seasons continue, and man by God’s strength and mercy can still subdue.
 3. Most important of all, the one forgiven in Christ, though he will die, yet he will rise again forever.

II. **Image bearing requires masculinity and femininity. (27)**

- A. All creation was good, and yet, Gen. 2:18, it is not good that man should be alone.” Why?

1. B/C he could not rule well alone, he could not multiply or effectively maintain dominion or spread out.
 2. The animals, though named, were not comparable or suitable to Adam's task. Only the woman, named by Adam after himself, because she is taken from the man, would suffice.
 3. So man unmarried, alone, was an incomplete, "**not good**" pre-fall condition. That is typically still true.
 4. So woman, in a real sense, is the crown of creation, the glory of man, a helper that makes good and possible the entire purpose that God had for Adam, to fill the earth and subdue it. Praise women!
- B. Notice the "sandwich" in our text so far: Let us make man in Our image....have dominion.....so God created man in His own image, male and female." Image bearing and the dominion mandate coalesce.
1. To properly take dominion over creation, it was not good for man to be alone, **the purpose of dominion can only be fulfilled by two distinct glories of God, male and female**, especially husband and wife together. Masculine and feminine virtues are necessary for dominion.
 2. God is masculine, not a she, but a he. And yet, the totality of God's nature is such that the feminine, nurturing qualities truly reflect God's nature as well. Ps. 41:3, God nurses His own people to health.
 3. Jesus, the God-Man, as we read in Luke recently, desired to gather His people Israel to Himself as a mother hen gathers her chicks under her wings.
 4. This was not an effeminate desire of Christ, nor saying He was a woman, or His divine nature female.
 5. Many progressive churches today will refer to God as a she, and of course you can see how all this would lead to transgenderism, etc. If God can be he and she, so can we.
- C. God is greater than His creation; the feminine nature bears, derivatively but truly, God's image. How?
1. The image of God in the woman/female **is mediated** through the man, for she is taken out of man.
 2. We read in I Cor. 11:7-9 that man is the image & glory of God; but woman the glory of man.
 3. Further, man is not from woman, but woman is from man, and man was not created for the woman, but the woman was created for the man. She is the glory of man, which again, is not a put down.
- D. We saw in Genesis 1 that females/women are made in the image of God, but here we see the order, or the hierarchy of that image bearing. Man bears the image of God directly, not through any mediation.
1. God breathed life into Adam, having taken his body from the ground, but breathing his soul into Adam/man directly, as it were.
 2. Eve is taken/fashioned from Adam, to be a helper to him, and as such she is man's glory; the head of woman is man, whereas the head of every man is Christ, and the head of Christ is God, I Cor. 11:3.
 3. There is hierarchy, but just as an employer has authority over an employee, yet both are equally in God's image, so men have authority over women, especially in marriage, yet both are God's image.
- E. The home, church, and government/society has messed up this ordering/God's good design and differing purposes/glories of male/female, so we have societal collapse, we have church collapse and confusion, and we have transgenderism, homosexuality, effeminacy, butch women, and broken homes.
1. Those who say doctrine divides aren't going to teach Genesis 1-2 rightly, and so because they get the nature of God and man wrong, most everything else is going to go wrong as well.
 2. We are able to take dominion over very little today, whether physically wrangling cattle or dominion in intellectual and artistic pursuits, etc., b/c we don't understand what it means to be a man or woman made in the image of God. We don't know what God is like, and so we don't know what we are for.
 3. And conversely, because we have no clue what a man or woman is, we have no clue who God is.
 4. So we spiral further and further into darker and darker sins, and refuse to repent of our wickedness.

- F. There are two practical lessons here for men & women, revealing our differences/needs for each other.
1. Men, you were created to rule and take dominion, to protect and lead and guard. But you cannot take dominion alone, you need subjects, a family, to rule over, to protect and lead, & you need their love.
 2. Women, you were meant to literally stay by the side of your man, for woman was taken from the side/rib of Adam/man. If Eve was near Adam when Satan came, Adam could have protected her.
 3. The woman was more susceptible to being deceived. Feminists today cry against this, saying that we are calling women stupid. No, rather by God's good design, women are more trusting, more open to listening to other voices, because that is part of their good, feminine nature. Satan knew this.
- G. Adam was to craft Eve and guide her in wisdom, lead her along, and she was to submit and help.
1. So, I Tim. 2:13-14 says women are to be silent in worship, learning in submission, not having authority over a man or to teach, because Adam was formed first, as head and teacher, Eve after, as helper and follower. Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived & fell into transgression.
 2. Adam was not present when the serpent tempted Eve, thus he was not deceived. But his wife either seduced or deceived him, showing woman's tendency to subvert masculine authority.
 3. This also shows the weakness of men, in heeding women who tempt with forbidden things, not leading in love, and being apathetic in defending/taking dominion over what is his, his wife & land.
 4. While unbelievers can be restored somewhat to a proper understanding of men and women, for by nature they are men or women, without the saving work of Christ, being born again, even when men behave masculinely, they will use it for sin, and women will twist femininity into perversity as well.
 5. It is good and natural when unbelievers marry, bear children, and love one another. Yet even that love will not be oriented toward God, who should be our highest love, unless one is born from above.
 6. Redemption in Christ, then restores men to their masculinity, and women to their femininity. It does not obliterate distinctions between man and woman, but actually restores those distinctions.
 7. The purpose is that we can rightly serve and worship God as men and women, build up His Church and Kingdom, establish godly homes and families, which are the bedrock of our churches & society.
 8. May the Church lead the way in exhibiting godly masculinity and femininity, and shine that light into this dark, twisted world, with fornication, adultery, abandonment and aborting of children, sexual perversion, gender mutilation, and perversely weaking self, rather than ruling earth for the Lord.

[PART 2/NEXT SERMON BEGINS HERE.]

III. Image bearing requires subduing all creation through fruitful, faithful families. (28)

- A. Gen. 5:3, Adam begets Seth, "a son in his own likeness, after his image."
1. There's a lot to say that, even in contemporary discussions on Christian Nationalism, being more favorable to our own kin over others, etc.
 2. But this means more than that Seth looked like Adam, for Cain and Abel did too, but that Seth was upright as Adam was upright before the fall.
 3. Not that Seth was born sinless, he was fallen now and bore the image of his fallen father Adam, but that he was of the redeemed line of grace, the Church, the elect.
 4. And this also teaches us, that Grace restores nature, it restores the image of God in man, to be in God's likeness, to be holy, untainted, pure, glorious, taking dominion, ruling and subduing for God.

- B. 1:28, God blesses Adam and Eve, and then bids them be fruitful, to fill the earth and subdue it. Make more families. Thus salvation and dominion depend upon marrying and bearing children for the Lord.
1. Adam and Eve had to have a family line for Christ to come in the flesh, atone for sin, and redeem.
 2. Marriage and children within marriage are essential to Christianity, and to bearing God's image.
 3. It is sin that has disrupted this. Yes, you can be a Christian who never marries and/or never bears children, but these should be your pursuit and pray God provides, unless/until it is clear you have a rare gift of celibacy; then use extra time & freedom from family to serve God in other, unusual ways.
 4. Raising children for the Lord who love Him, others, and develop creation for His glory as His image bearers has always been the purpose of God for man and woman on earth.
 5. And man and woman redeemed in Christ continue that mission. Grace restores nature, it restores pre-fall purposes, it doesn't destroy it or move to something different. It heightens it, it brings it to glory through Christ, the glory that Adam would have received if he had obeyed in the Garden.
- C. Some say the dominion mandate has been forfeited because man fell into sin, and is now fulfilled/completed in Christ alone. They may appeal to Genesis 9 to say this.
1. Noah comes off the ark with his covenant household, with the waters receding/parting again as God parted the waters at the first creation in Genesis 1.
 2. God commands Noah and his sons to be fruitful and multiply, to fill this fallen, yet "new creation".
 3. Note God says this only to Noah and his sons, not their wives, for again, men are to lead, to rule, the wives are to be helpers, helpmeets to their men in this task. "Be fruitful & multiply, and fill the earth."
- D. But Gen. 9 does not explicitly say "subdue". So some conclude dominion and subduing is no more.
1. But that's a really backward conclusion. What the text does say, actually, is how man will still be able to subdue the earth, given it is cursed and Adam failed in the garden to subdue Satan the serpent.
 2. *"And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be on every beast of the earth, on every bird of the air, on all that move on the earth, and on all the fish of the sea. They are given into your hand."*
 3. In other words, God is going to restrain the brute beasts so man can still take dominion over them.
 4. Indeed, animal flesh is now given to man for food, and someone has to take dominion over the animals to kill and eat them. Animals must be subdued even more given the earth is hard to cultivate.
- E. If serpents were still crafty, they'd form an alliance with the lions, tigers, and bears and rule this earth, for we know these animals are stronger than us. It'd be some Planet of the Apes sort of conflict.
1. Further, we see in Lev. 26:22, and elsewhere, that when God's people refuse to obey Him, He curses them with plagues, but also He will "send wild animals against you to rob you of your children, destroy your livestock, and reduce your numbers, until your roads lie desolate."
 2. Earlier, in Lev. 26:6, blessings for serving God and turning from idols include "rid[ding] the land of evil beasts/dangerous animals". Remember how plagues were often swarms of gnats, flies, frogs, etc.
 3. We will take dominion over the elements, over the creatures, but now only with God's help, His restraining the brutality of the lion, His withholding the plagues of flies, etc.
 4. Man will master chemicals that destroy cockroaches, and the Bug Guys will take dominion by spraying them for us. We still exercise dominion, but under much hardship and misery now.
 5. The crawl spaces are nasty, moldy, dirty, and the sun scorches us. Yet by God's grace and blessing, it is a wonderful thing not to have to contend with roaches and ants and wasps, etc.

6. And why is it, usually, when a mouse or snake or roach is in the house, the wife urges the man to take dominion over it and destroy it? Friends, it is built into our natures.
 7. It is a greater sin for a man to be too afraid to kill a mouse or remove a snake than it is for a woman.
 8. And usually as men, if we are honest, we don't love doing that either, but we know it is our duty.
 9. But David was prepared to defeat Goliath because he had killed a bear and lion already as shepherd. Men need threats, conflicts, dangers, to build masculine courage. There will always be threats.
- F. We might think it odd that the focus of dominion is over the animals in Genesis 1-2, Noah in 9, etc.
1. But remember, plowing and planting and traveling, etc., was only possible by the strength of the ox, the backs of the camels and donkeys, etc. for thousands and thousands of years.
 2. We are so separated from the Earth, from the grass and dirt and animals, because others, believer and unbeliever alike, have taken dominion so powerfully over creation, that we now have machines and technology that do a lot of this grunt work.
 3. So, starting a garden may be more than a hobby, it is dominion taking, it is touching the earth and connecting with our forefathers who worked the ground hard and long so we don't have to so much.
 4. That's not some tree hugger, mother-earth weird thing, it's just God's design. There's joy in the natural elements because we were made to rule over it, and to enjoy it directly, not detach from it.
 5. The curse causes pain and suffering, hardship and death, thorns and thistles, but moments of joy and pleasure still break through, fresh air, dirt, sunshine still heals, and that's a foretaste of heaven.
- G. Something good is lost when we are distanced from the literal ground from which men were taken.
1. In fact, the word for man in Hebrew is **Adam**, and the word for ground is **Adamah**. Man's purpose, his very name, is connected to the ground.
 2. Further, "ish/eesh" is the name for man, and man/Adam calls woman/Eve "ish/eesha" since she is taken from man. Man and woman belong together, man ruling and wife helping.
 3. The earth is big, so man and woman must come together in marital union and produce more image bearers of God, more hard workers, more dominion takers, more subduers for God's glory.

IV. Image bearing writ large requires families rooted in Christ and communities.

- A. Genesis 2:15, Man is placed by God in the garden of Eden "to tend and keep it".
1. 2:15, "**put**" Adam in the garden could almost be rendered "**planted**" Adam in the garden.
 2. He was deposited there, to develop that Garden. Would he have left it? Doubtful.
 3. He would have had children who would have sprung forth from there, and been planted/laid down roots nearby, and their children would spread a bit further, planted nearby, and on and on it goes.
 4. God made people to be rooted to a place, to take dominion over it, to subdue it, to beautify and cultivate it, make it fruitful, and to do all in worship and service to God.
- B. Today, we are rootless as a nation by and large, and therefore aimless, hopeless, full of bitterness.
1. Big, corporate jobs require you to move a lot, the military requires the same.
 2. Frankly, the church prioritizes missionaries overseas, or bold pastors who "*forsake family*" and take jobs far away from their home community, as if that is more noble or righteous or healthy.
 3. Bonds of families are weakened, so children will gladly get out of dodge and replant somewhere else, or just drift aimlessly from place to place. There's no clear dominion to take, no purpose.
 4. So we have drifters, wanderers, discontents who turn angry, violent, bitter. We have lost culture and familiarity and stack as many people, as many homes in the suburbs per square mile as we can.

5. And nobody really knows or trusts each other, so kids don't play together in the streets, and everything is made for the car, so it isn't even safe to play in the streets.
 6. We are a fluid society, rootless, not planted in our gardens to tend and keep.
- C. 2:15, "tend" is to cultivate, to order, etc., and keep means to "guard" it, such as from crafty Satan.
1. Remember, God placed the tree of knowledge of good and evil in the midst of the garden, and that was the lone prohibition God gave Adam.
 2. He could eat of all the other trees, but not that one. It should have been guarded carefully by Adam, he should have protected Eve, and Eve should have stayed far from it and stuck with her husband.
 3. For Israel to worship God properly, they had to be delivered from Egyptian bondage and taken to the Promised Land, rooted in a particular place. Land, a place, dominion there, was tied to worship.
 4. We must be rooted in Christ and our homeland to be maximally fruitful and faithful, to tend and keep!
- D. God covenanted with Noah/all humanity and creatures, that the Earth would not be consumed in flood.
1. He's promising dominion will occur, times/seasons of harvest will endure until Christ's return (Gn. 8:21-22; 9:16-17). God's promise is in reply to Noah's blood atonement/sacrifices, pointing to Christ.
 2. So God has covenanted with His Son Christ, to fulfill all righteousness, so that in Christ, redeemed from sin, we can rightly take dominion over creation again, with new hearts, renewed in God's image.
 3. Salvation is about getting back to the dominion mandate, to fill the earth and subdue it, to rule over all creation as His redeemed people/image bearers, to the praise of His glory, in all holiness and purity.
 4. This we are to do now, and will do eternally in the new heavens/earth when Christ returns.
 5. Christ would not be our true redeemer if we did not end up ruling and reigning over creation with Him on His throne, Rev. 3:21. Adam's destiny is now realized for all rooted in Christ the last Adam.
- E. Our purpose and goal as redeemed sinners in Christ who are renewed in God's Image:
1. We rule and subdue this cursed earth, in holiness and righteousness, loving one another. We do this knowing we will return to dust, that all our efforts will in one sense lie in the grave.
 2. But thanks be to God in Christ, this is not the end. It is not the final word. We shall rise again in Him, in the same bodies in which we died, to die no more & ascend to glory as Christ ascended to glory.
 3. The throne upon which He sits at the right hand of the Father, we too will sit upon, by grace.
 4. The creation too, the soil which suffers from the thorns, that sighs and groans like a woman in labor, will also be delivered from its cursed body of death.
 5. The Earth too will have its resurrection, its redemption, Rom. 8:19-25.
- F. So your dominion labors are a matter of righteousness. It is part of your sanctification.
1. Growing in holiness isn't just going in your closet, praying, & reading your Bible. It better include that.
 2. You must be rooted in Christ, in His Word and Truth and righteousness, to truly take dominion. The thorns and thistles of sin in our heart must constantly be slayed as Christians by God's Word/Spirit.
 3. You'll do nothing if you don't do that. But service to God doesn't end and begin there, or at Church on Sundays. How well you labor in your job, in your home, in your town, is a matter of dominion taking.
 4. The Fall itself, after all, occurred because the man of the house didn't tame his animals properly, and allowed his wife to take fruit from the forbidden tree that would lead to death.
 5. But Christ has reversed and overcome this all, sure enough, on a tree, for the cross has become a tree of life for all who repent and trust in the Man who bled and died upon it to wash away their sins.

6. And as the first man was planted in the Garden, now God has planted His redeemed people in Christ, the living Garden, the source of all blessings and delights are found in Him.
7. And if we are in Him, we will be with Him forever, and when He returns, His bountiful Garden will cover all creation.
8. So spread that Garden now, in righteousness, marry and have children, teach and train, protect and serve, beautify your homes, build the kingdom, serve the Lord and receive His blessings. Let us pray.