

# AUTHENTIC LOVE: IDENTITY

## 1. Intro to series briefly if necessary

- a. Covering some pretty mature topics. Who we are in Christ. That God created us male and female. We are going to think Biblically about gender, sex, dating, sexual temptations, love.
- b. Very important topics. World will try to tell us how to think. What does God, our creator and designer have to say about these topics?

## 2. Turn to Genesis 1:26

- a. Who does God say we are?
- b. Creation. Birds, fish. All good. Read 1:26-28
- c. Not an accident. Not random, insignificant chance. Made by God.
- d. If you miss the truth that God created you, you will never understand yourself the way you should. You will always come to a lesser understanding of who you are.
- e. We should go to our creator to discover who we really are.

## 3. 3 reasons we look somewhere other than God to find our identity

- a. Don't believe God created us
- b. Don't believe God is wise
- c. Don't believe God is good

## 4. Made in the image of God

- a. All of creation is amazing, but you are unique. Climax of creation is humans. When he stops and says let us make man in our image. This is different. Nothing else given this honor. The entire universe was made by him, you were made in the Creator's image.
- b. What does this mean? You reflect the glory of God to the rest of creation.

## 5. According to his likeness

- a. often used in the OT when speaking about how children are made according to their father's likeness.
- b. In a unique way, unlike the rest of creation you were created as a child of God.
- c. To know him and enjoy him. Have a relationship with him in a way that nothing else in creation was privileged to have.

## 6. Created with a unique purpose

- a. Vs 28
- b. Rule. Be fruitful and multiply

## 7. Created to know God as his children, live in relationship with him, walking in garden, seeing him face to face, learning from him, and as we do that we were given the glorious task of filling the earth with the glory of God as his image-bearers. Created to fill the world with the good news of who God is by showing them his glory in the way we live, our speech, the way we relate to each other and the world.

## **8. Male and female**

- a. Created us different. He defined our gender for us.
- b. Designed each one of you as either male or female intentionally. Did not make a mistake
- c. Equal. Equally made in his divine image. But different from each other. To be a male means something. To be a female means something.
- d. This is part of God's beauty in creation. Creation of Eve. It was not complete until Eve was there.
- e. God beautifully designed, or wired, men and women to each uniquely display his glory in creation.

## **9. Genesis 3**

- a. Serpent comes and tells them they don't have to be who God created them to be. The serpent is still speaking the same thing today to all who will listen. He lies to us and tells us we can be our own God and decide for ourselves who we will be.
- b. We did not follow God's rule. Wanted to be something more. Problem is, they actually became less.
- c. Kicked out of the garden.
- d. Sin and Satan gained power over us. We became slaves to sin and enemies of God.

## **10. Because of the fall, we no longer reflect God's glory the way we once did**

- a. We are like a painting that once reflected God's glory as we were intended to but now we are covered with black splotches of paint.

## **11. We are separated from God.**

- a. Isaiah. Sins have separated you from your God.
- b. Adam and Eve hid. Didn't want to be found. Knew their relationship was not the same.
- c. Trying to rule yourself does not bring freedom. It brings loneliness. Loneliness comes because we are separated from God and others.
- d. If you follow every sexual desire you have you will end up feeling completely alone. Sex was designed for intimacy. There is no companionship in pornography. Pornography produces FALSE intimacy. Adultery DESTROYS relationships. Not just relationships between a husband and his wife, but between a father and his children, a grandfather and his grandchildren. Premarital sex leads to loneliness, because you are participating in the most intimate activity without the promise of a committed relationship. So when the relationship dissolves you know what you are left with? Loneliness.

## **12. We are unable to fulfill the glorious purpose he designed us for**

- a. Can't rule over the earth reflecting the glory of God as we were made to

## **13. Iphone**

- a. They were created awesome. They can text, call, tell time, calculate things, on mine I can play solitaire, I can read books, take pictures, video, call an uber look up words in the dictionary, I can see a map of the world, tell the temperature, etc. There are a million things an iphone was made to do. And it is really good at everything it was made to do. But what if I were to come across a nail that I need to get into a piece of wood? Could I use my iphone for that?

- b. When I use my iphone for what it was created for, it is an amazing device. But if I start trying to change its identity, to make it something it is not, I get into trouble. An iphone is not a hammer. In the same way, humans are not God. We don't get to define ourselves like Adam and Eve tried to do. That is God's job. We aren't good at defining our own identity.
- c. When we sin we rebel against God's good design for us, and end up like the iphone, experiencing brokenness

**14. Cannot look inward to discover our identity. Must look to Christ.**

- a. He came into this world as a man, no black spots on him. Died in our place.
- b. Rose and is in heaven right now ready to save all who call on him.
- c. We trust in him and our sins are wiped away. We are forgiven.

**15. Culture will tell you the good news is that you are free to be who you want to be.** That is not good news. It is exhausting and confusing. You don't have to try and find your own identity. You are not defined by:

- a. What you have done.
- b. What you think of yourself
- c. Mistakes or accomplishments
- d. So and so's boyfriend/girlfriend
- e. What others say about you
- f. Sexual temptations you experience

**16. You know who the NT says you are? In Christ. Found in him. That is where your identity is**

- a. Not only are we forgiven, he also begins to change us.
- b. Born again. New Creation. The Holy Spirit acts as an art restorer upon our hearts.
- c. 2 Peter 1:3-4
- d. Eph. 2:10 In Christ we are able to be who God made us to be and do what God made us to do.
- e. Greek word poema. Where we get "poem" from. You are God's artistic work, made for His good purposes.
- f. In Jesus we find our beginning and end. We are created by him, and being conformed to his image.
- g. You are Image bearers. You are a son or daughter of Most High King. You have a unique purpose. What an honor it is to be made to reflect the glory, the beauty, the majesty of our infinite Creator.

**17. We look to Christ.** In him our identity is both glorious and secure. Our feelings will change.

Opinions of others change. Even our abilities will change. But Christ never changes. He is always our perfect redeemer. In him we are safe, steadfast, and immovable. Where we find our identity is going to determine how we look at these topics of sex, dating and authentic love. In Christ we can return to be who God made us to be and experience completeness, and joy to the fullest.