

# God's Covenants

## The Covenant of Creation - Part 2

### Key idea:

God's covenant of creation calls us to embrace our creation as male or female, the institution of marriage and family, and to recognize the dignity and sanctity of every human life.

### Key text:

Genesis 1:26–28; Genesis 2:18–24

Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.”<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> God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”

The Lord God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.”

<sup>19</sup> Now the Lord God had formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name.

<sup>20</sup> So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds of the air and all the beasts of the field. But for Adam no suitable helper was found. <sup>21</sup> So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and closed up the place with flesh. <sup>22</sup> Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

<sup>23</sup> The man said, “This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called ‘woman,’ for she was taken out of man.” <sup>24</sup> For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.

### Key points:

1. God entered into a covenant with humanity in creation that defines what it means to be human.

2. God's covenant of creation makes every human either male or female, and this sexuality is central to what it means to be human.
3. God's covenant of creation created the covenant institution of marriage and the family. God's design for marriage is one man and one woman in a life-long bond that creates a family into which children can be born and raised.
4. The covenant institution of marriage is ultimately a reflection of Jesus' relationship with His people, the Church.
5. The covenant of creation reveals the dignity of every single human, and thus demands we recognize and protect the sanctity of every human life from conception to natural death. Thus, abortion and all forms of racism are horrible evils that must be rejected as incompatible with God's covenant demands for all humans.
6. In the Incarnation Jesus went through every stage of image-bearing and fulfilled the call of the covenant of creation

#### **Questions for discussion/application:**

1. What part of Sunday's text and teaching stood out most to me? Why?
2. What does it mean to say that humans are the image of God? What does this entail? Is this something which humans are called to achieve, or something that is inherent in what it means to be human?
3. What does Genesis 1:27-28 teach regarding human sexuality? How is this reinforced in Genesis 2:18-24? How does our culture respond to these ideas?
4. According to Genesis 2:24, Matthew 19:4-6, and 1 Timothy 3:2, what are the elements of God's design for marriage? How do I account for things like polygamy in the Old Testament?
5. Why is Paul's teaching in Ephesians 5:31-33 that marriage is a visible representation of the relationship between Christ and His Bride the Church important in understanding marriage? How does this relate to the elements of marriage discussed in question 4 above?
6. Why is the image of God the foundation for understanding human dignity and the sanctity of life? If humans are not created by God in His own image but are rather merely the result of blind cosmic forces, is there any basis for human dignity, rights, and the sanctity of human life? Why or why not?

7. How does the dignity of every human (and thus the sanctity of human life) relate to the issue of abortion? Racism? What other issues does the dignity of every human (and thus the sanctity of human life) speak to today?
8. How does Jesus fulfill the covenant of creation in regards to what it means to be human? How does His incarnation fulfill the dignity and responsibility of what it means to be human?
9. Whom can I pray for, share what I have learned, and invite to church this week?

**Preview of next week: The Covenant of Creation - Part 3 (Genesis 1:26-2:3; 2:15-17)**