

Theme: True freedom is found in recognizing humanity as including both body and soul, and embracing the inherent identity and limits of both.

I. Intro - Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn

- A. Served in Red Army in WWII; sent to a gulag for criticizing Stalin in a private letter; spent 8 years there
- B. Wrote Gulag Archipelago; he won Nobel Prize for literature in 1970
- C. When he was exiled to the West, he was hailed - until he said we had the same disease here!
“Today’s world has reached a state which, if it had been described to preceding centuries, would have called forth the cry: “This is the Apocalypse!” Yet we have grown used to this kind of world; we even feel at home in it.”
“Men have forgotten God. That’s why all this happened.”(Templeton Prize lecture, 1983)
- D. We are looking at a number of these problems in this series as we look at the nature of true freedom based on what it means to really be human
- E. Today: humanity as body and soul

II. Humanity: Body and Soul

- A. Humans are created as a fusion of body and soul
The Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being. Genesis 2:7
 - 1. God forms us from dust - our material body
 - 2. God breathes into us the breath of life - our soul
 - 3. Humanity is not body or soul, but rather both body AND soul

- 4. Both the body and the soul are part of human nature and essential to what it means to be human
 - 5. This is why the early Church totally rejected Gnosticism - it was a denial of true humanity and thus true redemption.
 - 6. True freedom will have to include embracing our full humanity, both body and soul.
- B. Human nature includes identity as male or female
So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.
²⁸ God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number...” Genesis 1:27–28
- 1. God creates humanity as male and female
 - 2. This means that our sex - male and female - is NOT a social construct but is inherent to our very identity as created by God.
 - 3. The first command - to procreate and multiply - REQUIRES a male and a female. It is impossible to fulfill our call from God apart from the inherent, given sexuality of male and female.
 - 4. To be clear, this does not mean each human is male and female, but rather that each human is inherently male or female.
 - 5. Our “maleness” or “femaleness” are assigned by God to us in our bodies and are essential to our identity.
 - a. This is seen in that reproduction is a bodily function, not one of the soul.
 - b. It is also seen in Genesis 2:21-22 where God takes part of Adam’s body and forms the female body of Eve.

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. ²² Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. ²³ 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." ²⁴ For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh. Genesis 2:21–24

1. God takes from Adam's body to make Eve
2. Bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh - body
3. Man and woman are united in marriage and become one FLESH

6. To be sure, our "maleness" and "femaleness" also is part of our soul, but our sex is ALWAYS revealed in our body as male or female.

7. This means true freedom can only be found when I embrace my humanity, including my sex as my or female as given by God in my body and soul.

C. True freedom is found in recognizing humanity as including both body and soul, and embracing the inherent identity and limits of both.

III. Slavery - Dividing What God Has Joined

A. Some deny the place of the soul in our humanity

1. Materialists - matter is all there is
 - a. This philosophy declares that physical matter is all that exists - there is no such thing as a soul
 - b. This means that our genetics absolutely control behavior - genetics is destiny

2. BF Skinner and the behaviorists

- a. Skinner was the founder of and proponent of behaviorism - the environment molded our behavior
- b. *Beyond Freedom and Dignity* - Human freedom and dignity are really a myth, we are like Pavlov's dogs
- c. Human behavior is simply the result of conditioning by external society - we do not really have freedom to choose our own path.
- d. "We have not yet seen what man can make of man" - but this will end in totalitarianism and the abolition of man.

3. The original gay rights movement

- a. Originally this is how gay rights and gay marriage were argued for in society
- b. People are born either heterosexual or homosexual; there might even be a gay gene; authenticity requires following these natural, bodily dispositions
- c. Lady Gaga - Born This Way
- d. This was actually the popular idea that led to the Supreme Courts Obergefell decision legalizing homosexual marriage

4. In all of these ideas, humans are simply our bodies and our genetics; we do not really have the dignity of a soul that can determine what actions to follow.

5. Biology trumps morality, and anyone who appeals to a higher moral law is simply a bigot

6. The Scripture teaches the reality of the human soul that can decide to follow the impulses of the body or to reject them in obedience to a higher moral law.

7. The 'freedom' of rejecting the human soul simply leads to the bondage of following the dictates of our body or the mandates of society.

B. Some deny the place of the body in our humanity

1. The original heresy of Gnosticism

- a. I spoke about this at length recently from 2 John
- b. This idea of denigrating the body has deep roots in American culture and even the American church

2. Transhumanism

- a. Looking to evolve humans beyond our current state, using technology to radically alter or even eliminate the human body.
- b. The body is viewed as merely an inconvenient shell, hopefully to one day be discarded.
- c. Ray Kurzweil - digital download of self into a computer

3. The transgender movement

- a. The basis of the transgender movement is that I am what I determine - and my body has no say in the matter
- b. If I was born biologically male, including a prostate, male sexual organs, and XY chromosomes in every cell of my body, but I feel like I am a woman, the scientific physical reality of my body does not matter - I am a woman.
- c. Famous example of Bruce Jenner becoming Caitlyn
- d. This is an obvious denial of biology & physical reality
 1. Allyson Felix, a woman with more gold medals than Usain Bolt. Her lifetime best for the 400-meter run is 49.26 seconds. Based on 2018 data, nearly 300 high-school boys in the U.S. alone could beat it.

2. Even after hormone 'therapy', surgery, and years of transitioning - the body is still male, with greater bone density, greater ability to process oxygen, greater ability to create muscle, etc.

3. It is vastly undermining women's sports

e. The war within LGBTQ+ and feminist community

1. The basis of L, G, and B are mutually contradictory with T (and also to a lesser extent Q)
2. The entire basis of being lesbian is you are a woman who sexually desires another woman - the entire basis of transgenderism is there is no such thing as a man or woman
3. For the same reason, the T is diametrically opposed to feminism which only makes sense is there is such a thing as a 'woman'

f. In our day this a far greater danger than the denial of the human soul. Anyone who dares to speak against it is subject to being canceled.

4. In all of these ideas, the human body is irrelevant or an obstacle to be overcome so that the real 'me' can be expressed.

5. Identity - especially gender identity - trumps biology, and anyone who dares to point out biological realities is simply a bigot who must be canceled.

- a. Ryan T. Anderson - *When Harry Became Sally* - removed from Amazon last week; no record of its existence - but you can buy *Mein Kampf!*
- b. JK Rowling on the article 'Create a more equal post-COVID19 world for people who menstruate' - "People who menstruate - I'm sure there used to be a word for those people. Someone help me out. Wumben? Wimpund? Woomud?" - firestorm against her for this.
- c. "If sex isn't real, there's no same-sex attraction. If sex isn't real, the lived reality of women globally is erased. I know and love trans people, but erasing the concept of sex removes the ability of many to meaningfully discuss their lives. It isn't hate to speak the truth," - Rowling's response, which generated more hate

- d. Martina Navratilova - women's tennis champion, lesbian feminist icon - objected to transgender participation in women's sports and was condemned as transphobic by LGBTQ+ organizations
 - e. Scott Newgent Newsweek op-ed - We Need Balance When It Comes To Gender Dysphoric Kids - accused of transphobia for saying kids should wait - and is transgender, already completed transition!
6. Scripture teaches the reality and importance of the human body that is essential to my identity - including whether a person is male or female - and this can not be ignored or altered and will continue into eternity.
 7. The 'freedom' of rejecting the human body is an illusion that leads to the bondage of ever-increasing foolishness and destructive behavior of attacking the body rather than receiving it as a gift.

IV. Applying the Word

A. Living in a culture that divides body and soul

1. This is our culture - we deny reality to go our way "At the heart of liberty is the right to define one's own concept of existence, of meaning, of the universe, and of the mystery of human life." Justice Kennedy, Planned Parenthood vs. Casey
2. There is a relentless assault to separate body and soul, radically defining what it means to be human
3. We must not be seduced by this foolishness - to redefine humanity leads to destruction and death, not blessing and life.
4. This false view is relentlessly pushed in the news, entertainment, education system, corporate culture, and government policy - it can not be avoided

5. We must actively have our minds and hearts washed and renewed by God's Spirit and Word each day.
6. We must actively press into the community of God's people by gathering for corporate worship (especially when we move back outside) and by being part of a connect group!
7. We must talk with our children about these issues and help them understand what it means to be human. Educate yourself and talk with them!
8. For a deep dive on how we got here, I recommend "The Rise and Triumph of the Modern Self" by Carl Trueman. It requires effort but is well worth it! Also links to some interviews in the discussion guide.
9. We must engage in spiritual warfare for our family, friends, and this culture! Politics will not shift this tide - it is a spiritual battle!!
10. When you engage with people of opposing views - especially someone who is LGBTQ+ - be kind and compassionate, establish relationship - but do not compromise biblical truth.

B. The Table of Freedom

1. Notice that our sacraments and spiritual practices assume the unity of body and soul!
2. Come to this Table to receive fresh grace and strength from Christ!
3. Come and feed, body and soul!

Freedom - Embracing The Limits of Body and Soul

Genesis 1:26-28; 2:7

February 28, 2021

Communion

1 Thessalonians 5:23-24

Teaching keywords: Freedom; humanity; Lent; creation; LGBTQ+; sex

May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴ The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it. 1 Thess. 5:23–24

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.” ²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. ²⁸ 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.” Genesis 1:26–28

The Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being. Genesis 2:7