

Male and Female, Made in God's Image

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[0 : 00] Father, sometimes your word goes against the grain of what is said in our culture. Sometimes, Father, you call us to be a peculiar people, saying and believing things which don't fit in well with polite conversation.

And, Father, you know how timid we are. You know how we turn away from this because we want to fit in. And we ask, Father, that you would bring your word home to us in a very deep way. And as your word is brought home deeply to us, may you grant us healing, may you restore us, and may you help us to live in a way that blesses this city and brings you great glory.

And this we ask in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Today's reading, some of you might be wondering what's the fuss about Genesis 1, 26 to 31, but today's reading directly touches on the issue of abortion, doctor-assisted suicide or euthanasia, same-sex marriage, and the entire transgender movement.

In other words, nothing controversial in Canada whatsoever, and nothing by which the Bible might disagree with what would be just taken as common sense knowledge by basically every media outlet in the country, at least official or the institutional media, or in university campuses, or in the judiciary, or in the government.

[1 : 37] Nothing controversial at all. So let's get our Bibles out. Let's look at it and see what it is that the Bible says, and why is it that this is sort of, you know, from one point of view, dynamite in a good sense, from another point of view, dynamite in a bad sense.

And we'll just have a look at it. And as I said, yeah, there's Bibles there. Feel free to grab one. And we're going to begin by looking at Genesis 1, verses 24 to 25, because it's all part of the sixth day of creation.

And so Genesis is the very, very first book. In fact, it should probably be in most of your Bibles, the very first page in your Bible. And we'll read these very simple but very profound verses.

And here's how it begins. Verse 24. And God said, Now, just a, you know, a very, very simple thing here.

God gives a, it's going to be sort of relevant to what we're going to see about what happens when God speaks to human beings. But God, basically, he makes all of the living, all the things that have breath that are on the land.

[3 : 06] And it's really important to notice that the Bible doesn't use scientific language. If a biologist was to try to use this division to classify, you know, bugs and other things, it's not helpful.

But one of the wisdom, one of the things which is so wise about this biblical account is it uses the language of perception. And the language of perception is never out of date. You know, if this was written by the way science would classify different animals in the 1500s, in the 1600s, they'd laugh. And then they'd laugh at how we would do it in the 1600s, in the 1700s, and on and on and on. And however scientists do it today, if Jesus tarries, in 100 years, the scientists in 100 years would laugh at the way it's done today.

They'd view it as primitive. And it's really interesting about how the Bible is written. It's written from the language of perception. And that doesn't change. You know, you've got animals you care for. You have beasts that are out everywhere else. You have things that crawl. I mean, that's a pretty simple division. And they're given the command to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth.

[4 : 15] But then, look at what happens in verse 26. And it's a very, very simple two words. Then God said. Three words. Then God said. But it's very, very significant.

Because what happens is that, and we're going to see it later on in the text, about how on one hand, human beings are like an animal. But on the other hand, there's something which is completely and utterly different about human beings.

And when in verse 26, when it says, then God said. It's as if God's drawing a huge line between animals and human beings.

In fact, it's not just a line. And it's definitely not a line in the sand. A line in the sand. Some people will refer to that. But a line in the sand is just arbitrary. God is describing a grand canyon chasm between the animals and human beings in a very significant way.

And this is really important because it's been lost in our culture. There's been a thing in the press just recently about a woman on trial for giving water to pigs.

[5 : 24] And that's not particularly significant. But what's significant is what the newspaper coverage, the language was that to give water to pigs going to slaughter was the same as giving water to Jewish people going to be killed in the gas ovens under Nazism.

Now, just apart from the unbelievable insult to compare it from a Jewish perspective, an unclean animal to a Jewish person, which just shows that they don't know what they're talking about.

That's an idea which, I mean, most people would just sense that that's wrong, but not be able to articulate why it is that you can't make equate a pig and a human being as of the same value.

And the Bible teaches why that is a wrong idea. There's this grand canyon-sized chasm with these three simple words, then God said.

So let's read it. Verse 26. Then God said, let us make man, and I'm going to continue with the singular here, the ESV. It's very helpful.

[6 : 36] I'll explain why in a moment. It's actually a singular collective. And in fact, actually, the word man here is actually Adam.

Because in the original language, Adam can either mean human beings, all human beings, or it can be a name of a person. And to try to make it not overly confusing that uses the word man here rather than Adam, but in the original Hebrew, it's the same word.

But I'm going to stick with it. I know it's not proper English in Canada in 2017, but it's trying to capture a very powerful biblical idea. Then God said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness.

So that's a very short description of the nature of human beings. It's going to be continued next week when we look at a certain part of Genesis 2. And then it gives the vocation for human beings.

And let them, and this is very accurate, uses the singular man, but it's obvious that the word man is referring to all human beings. That's why here it says, and let them, it's plural.

[7 : 47] And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.

Now what's going to happen in the rest of this, from verses 27 to 31, in a bit of a boring grammar geeky type of moment.

But we know who the, you know, we know who we are, the boring grammar geek types. What Paul, what the writer is going to do now is he's going to loop back and unpack the nature of human beings and their vocation.

And verse 27 is going to clarify and expand upon what it means to be in the image of God. And then 28 to 31 is going to clarify what it means to have dominion.

And in our cultural moment, all of the bombs and mind, all of the minds and bombs and the controversial bits are primarily in verse 27.

[8 : 47] And I'm just going to read it and we're going to talk about the vocation of human beings. That's 28 to 31 first, but then I'm going to loop back. I'm not going to ignore the, you know, the controversial bit.

Okay? So that's what we're going to do. Let's just read verse 27 to 31 and I'll just comment on it and we'll sort of summarize what it means. So God created man in his own image.

In the image of God, he created him. Male and female, he created them. And God blessed them.

And God said to them, be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.

And God said, behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of the earth and every tree with seed in its fruit.

[9 : 50] You shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.

And it was so. And God saw everything that he had made and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day. So here's the thing which this text is, this thing about the vocation of human beings.

And if you could put up the first point. The first point is this. The cosmos was made for humanity and humanity was made for the cosmos.

This is a very, very, very, very, very, very important idea in the whole Bible. And it's a very important idea in terms of what it means to be human.

And it's a very countercultural idea. You know, in fact, in just about everything that is done here, I could do a sermon, a whole sermon on each of these different points. I really could because there's an increasing move of thought within our culture that somehow or another human beings are the problem on the planet.

[10:59] That we're the problem. We're the virus. We're the germ. But the Bible says it's something completely and utterly different. And it's to understand here. So when the Bible is giving us our vocation, what is our vocation?

If you look down to verse 28 again, it's to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. That's the first thing. What does it mean to have dominion? Well, God made us to be here.

And the cosmos itself needs us. Rather than us being the problem, per se, by our nature. Okay, we're going to get into why it's a bit of a problem. But by our nature, God made us for this planet and not just for the planet, for the cosmos.

And we are to fill it and to multiply. As an aside, for those of us who are married, who can still have children, and physically we can, this is a profound encouragement to see children as a blessing. And to have children. Like to not listen to our culture that says that children are just an adornment to our life, something that we have if it's convenient and fits, and we should have very few.

[12:09] This is an encouragement to view children and being able to have them as a great gift that we should rejoice in and not turn away from.

So the first aspect of what it means to have dominion over the created order is that we are to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. And the second is subdue it and have dominion.

I know this is a very, very uncomfortable idea, but it's this idea that God wants us to tame areas that are very, very wild. Like if you were in Holland, it's a good thing that some land was reclaimed by putting dikes out into the ocean.

Like it's a good thing to take what would normally happen in a field and to turn it into a garden, to subdue it and have dominion over it. That when we're looking at a beautiful garden, if you go to PEI, and one of the wonderful things about driving through PEI is just how well-ordered the land is, how it seems as if most of it has been cultivated, and it looks so beautiful.

And that sense that it looks so beautiful is in a sense that the Genesis 1 here, in a good sense, is being practiced. And it's right for us to rejoice in it. It's not right to say it's terrible, because think of some of the animals that can no longer live there.

[13:29] That's a wrong way of understanding it. And then the third thing is to notice that God gives it. So look at verse 28 again.

And God blessed them, and God said to them, Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens, and over every living thing that moves on the earth. And God said, Behold, I have given you.

I have given you. Okay, God gives it. This is really, really, really, really important. If you could put up the next point. Human, humanity was created to be God's stewards of the cosmos, of the planet, not to be self-appointed dictators and tyrants.

Humanity, human beings were created to live in this home, and the world needs us. And we are to understand ourselves that the world, the trees, who ultimately owns the trees, not the state, not the United Nations, but God.

Who owns the rivers? Who owns the ocean? Who owns the sky? Ultimately, God. And some of that is put under our care, either individually because of private property, or in some collective way through the state, or some business or corporation.

[14:48] But in every case, we're ultimately stewards, because God gives it, but doesn't relinquish being God. He doesn't stop being God when he gives it to us. And that means that we are to understand ourselves as God's stewards.

But what has happened is, we're going to look at this, and it's really not going to be until two weeks from now, when we look at Genesis 3, where we talk about the tragedy that has befallen the human race by human beings rebelling against God, so that now the image of God, our nature is bent, and it's marred, and our rule, and our place in the planet, it's now, we're too prone to become dictators. We're too prone to become tyrants. We're too prone to say, it's my bleepity bleep piece of property, and if I want to bleepity bleep, put chemicals on it, or do this to it, it's my bleepity bleep business. And that's the language of a despot, of a tyrant. It's of a dictator, self-appointed, a refusal to acknowledge that ultimately, the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof. That the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firm proclaims his handiwork, and we as human beings are his stewards to sing his praises and to care for things in a way so that the entire planet flourishes to the glory of God and to the good of people, because we are God's stewards. We are God's stewards. Now, the naughty or the awkward bit.

[16:17] Let me just share with you something. I'm, you know, I think some of you have heard me share before that I'm not very naturally religious. Left to my own devices, I think if I hadn't become a Christian, I like watching football.

I like watching sports. You know, I like exercising. I like reading books. I like doing what I like to do. And probably most of the time, it wouldn't involve anything religious or spiritual. I'm just confessing to you.

And, you know, there's been many, many times in my Christian life that, you know, I want to go along with something in the culture. I have this idea, and I go reading the Bible, hoping that the Bible is going to validate what I believe or what I want or what I think is wise.

And I've had many experiences throughout my Christian life as I come to the Bible and to my horror and my shock. I can remember different times where I've gotten red in the face and a bit sweaty under the armpits because it's dawned on me that what the Bible says goes against what I want and what I believe and what I think is wise.

I've had that experience many times. So I can sympathize with those who are present who've helped facilitate an abortion or helped who are same-sex attracted and are living it out or want to live it out or those who are very, very uncomfortable in their biological sex and hope that when they go to the Bible, because they still have a desire to know God and to love God, and when they go to the Bible to their horror, what they desire is not what they find.

[18:00] And that's what we're going to find here for all of those different classes of what I've just described. And so this isn't a political rally. This isn't an us versus them.

Every single person here in this room, whether it's being same-sex attracted or being uncomfortable with your gender and your biology, or whether it's abortion, not a single person in this room has not been touched by it either directly or with loved ones or co-workers or neighbors.

And so this is God's word to us. It's not a political rally, and it's not a time to make jokes. It's not necessarily a time to have long faces.

It isn't. Because ultimately, in every case where I've come to the Bible and it's gone against what I've wanted, over time I've come to believe that the Bible, in fact, has only good news and is wise. So it's just really, look at verse 26 and 27. Notice at the beginning of 26, then God said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And in the original language, image and likeness, there's no words in between them.

[19:11] It's just image and likeness. And it's basically just, it's reinforcing the same idea with slightly different words. It's not two technically different words, image and likeness, not like some theologies.

And the big idea is this image. And then jump down to verse 27, and this is the dynamite. And it's interesting. It's a short little poem, three lines of poetry.

And on one hand, it's the simplest thing in the world to understand. On the other hand, it is something that if we were to meditate upon it, if artists and poets and philosophers and musicians and composers, they could spend the rest of their life meditating upon the world, that these three simple lines open up to us to explore it.

So God created man in his own image. In the image of God, he created him. Male and female, he created them. Say it again.

So God created man in his own image. In the image of God, he created him. Male and female, he created them. To memorize this verse would be very helpful.

[20 : 23] So here's the, and you'll notice at 26, it says, made in our image. And then just a few verses later, a few lines later, it says image twice. So in three times, in a very short span, this idea of human beings being made in God's images is spoken, spoken, spoken.

It's very, very important. And here I just want to try to unpack a little bit. If you could put up the first point, the next point, only, and I put it in bracket, in quote marks, just to try to help bring it out. Only man is created by God in his own image. That's what the text is saying. Only man, and here it's referring to the human race, it's using one singular word to emphasize, it's a very, very important here.

That's why I didn't use the word humanity, and I understand why English translations who are helping us just read the text for ourselves will put in the word humanity. But humanity is sort of too diverse, you know?

Man really brings home to us this commonness that human beings share. It's in fact a profoundly important text.

[21 : 38] This text, only man, is created by God in his own image, means that all slavery is wrong. It means that all oppression and persecution is wrong.

It means that all racism is wrong. It means all attempts to view castes in society is wrong. All attempts by elites to think that they are better than others is wrong.

All focus on social class as indicating that some people are better than others is wrong. It is, governments can give rights and courts can give rights and they can take them away.

And it's not entirely clear if we have just evolved randomly why it is exactly that all human beings have a value and a dignity and worth. But the Bible says that, what does it say?

It says, so God created man in his own image. In the image of God, he created him. Male and female, he created them. And he does not say that black people bear it more than white people or that Asians bear it more than people who are, you know, First Nations in Canada.

[22 : 46] It does not have any categories like that. And it uses the singular word to emphasize it. It is a powerful, precious word and it is dynamite to our courts and our country.

So God created man in his own image. In the image of God, he created him. Male and female, he created them.

Next point, please. Here's also, so we all like it, it's against racism. Look at that, that singular word. It's so good. Oh, dang! For many of us.

Because it does not say, and so human beings, when they are smart, or human beings, when they are powerful, or human beings, when they are young, bear God's image.

No! How do human beings come about? We begin as a fertilized cell in our mother's womb. Some of us don't live very long. Some of us don't survive the womb. Some of us don't survive the first year.

[23 : 49] Some of us live to be, who's that guy who just died in Milton, Ontario, 86 or 84? And just last year, he set the age record in the marathon. Some of us live long lives of being very handicapped.

But what is this text telling us? From our beginning as a fertilized cell and to our death, we bear God's image. Down syndrome, Einstein, Usain Bolt, equally bear God's image.

which is why it is that the Bible is so consistent to say that it is wrong to take innocent human life. It means it is wrong to kill a gay person because he's gay.

It's wrong to kill a transgender person because they are transgender. It is wrong to kill a fetus in a womb because it's a fetus, because that's a human being. And it's wrong to kill an old person because they're old.

And it's wrong to kill a sick person because they're sick. I don't know if any of you have had a chance to go to church on Wednesday, but one of the really great things that Daniel has brought about in church on Wednesday is that after the sermon has been preached, there's a bit of a gap sometimes, but then people can text in their questions.

[25 : 15] And you have to sort of think on your feet. And one of the things, I've done this a couple of times, I did it on Ash Wednesday, and every time that I've done it, there's always been at least one fairly wordy, direct question.

And I'm 99% sure as I'm listening to the question that the person is hoping who asks the question that when I hear the question, it's going to sort of knock me back a little bit and make me want to say, well, you know, maybe this, maybe that, maybe this, maybe that.

And every time that it's come, I've taken a bit of a perverse delight. And after the question's read, I either say yes or no. And then I'll say next question.

And I'm going to do that a little bit right now. George, are you saying that the Bible is heterosexist? Are you saying, George, in this day and age, don't you know what they teach in university?

Are you actually claiming that the Bible naively teaches binary understanding of reality in terms of human life? Like, is the Bible so completely and utterly foolish to teach a binary understanding?

[26 : 28] A heterosexist understanding? That there's only two sexes and a gender that goes with each sex? Is that what you're saying, George? Yes.

Yes. So God created man in his own image. In the image of God, he created him.

Male and female, he created them. And then I guess I'd say, well, I want to take away the accusation stuff. But yes, if you could put up the next point, please.

Just to make sure we understand this very simple thing. So God created man in his own image. In the image of God, he created him. Male and female, he created them. If you've memorized that by the end of the service, I've done a great good for you.

What does this say? God created only two biological sexes, each having its own gender. Notice how it creates man, biological, male and female, gender.

[27 : 36] Notice that again. Man and him, referring to the biological reality, male and female, gender. See, if it had just said, so God created man in his own image.

In the image of God, he created him. And then it went on. We could wonder whether, in fact, there can be many genders to go along with the two biological sexes. But this tightly worded poem, this dynamite, in a few words, says that God created only two biological sexes, each having its own gender.

If you could put up the next point, here's it to say, again, the same thing, the same way. And by the way, if you're interested in writing these points down, they'll be on the webpage. And if you use your version, it's part of the notes.

God did not only create man and woman. He also created the man to be male and the woman to be female. God did not only create man and woman.

He also created the man to be male and the woman to be female. What's the text say again? So God created man in his own image. In the image of God, he created him. Male and female, he created them.

[28 : 53] Now, just as a bit of an aside, I watched a really interesting documentary on Netflix a week or two ago on Anthony Robbins, the self-help guy.

And, you know, it's interesting. The Bible here leaves so much unsaid. It gives us a basic direction to think, but doesn't fill it in.

Obviously, the Bible's going to go on and say a few more things if you read it from cover to cover about being male and female. But it's amazing what it doesn't say. You know, one of the things, if you watch this documentary of Anthony Robbins, it's a fascinating thing.

You know, people pay \$5,000 to spend six days with him. Five grand U.S. before taxes. And, you know, one of the things he does, it's not like he just says, oh yeah, you're great, you're great, you're great.

I mean, he tells people off. People will spend \$5,000 U.S. for six days to be told off in public. It's really, it's a fascinating documentary to watch.

[29 : 56] And there's one time in it where he goes after a guy for being a feminine man. I'm not making this up. And, you know, the interesting thing in here is the Bible doesn't say, okay, now we know all about men.

Men are good with tools. You know, men, you know, men like to hunt. You know, women like to cook. It doesn't do this, does it? Like, it makes it clear that these realities exist.

And if you read all of the Bible, you'll start to get some other senses about what's in there. But it leaves a wide range of freedom and variability. But in it all, it makes it clear that in the language today, Jeremiah and Anna had a baby this week.

and it's a baby girl. And she wasn't assigned being a girl. It wasn't as if the baby came out of the womb and Jeremiah and Anna said, well, I don't know, should it be a boy or a girl?

They said, it's a girl. And that's what the Bible teaches. Here's another thing, if you could put it up. Man and woman are equally created in God's image.

[31 : 11] And our complementarity is also in God's image. Man and woman are equally created in God's image. And our complementarity is also in God's image.

Listen to the Bible. So God created man in his own image. In the image of God, he created him. Male and female, he created them. Men and women have their own integrity.

Any culture that treats women like chattel, like slaves, is condemned by this biblical text. Any family or relationship where the man abuses the woman is condemned in this text.

Any culture that says that women only have value if they can produce children is condemned in this text. this text.

This text is both a profound comfort for those of us who will find ourselves being single our whole lives. It doesn't say that you only have value if you're attached to a man or to a woman.

[32 : 17] You only have value if you can have sexual knowing. You can only have value if you can produce. It denies all of this. It's a profoundly important and freeing text on the dignity of every human being, every man and woman, regardless as to whether or not they are married, regardless as to their ability to produce.

That there's an inherent worth and value and dignity as a bearer of God's image. And at the same time, while on one hand you can say that every man and woman bears God's image, at the same time, God chose to have men and women, male and female, that somehow the complementarity that goes with the equality somehow even more shows who God is and what He's like.

Now, some people have a great deal of trouble with the body that they have.

And there are many people in our culture who are biologically male or biologically female and that's a very, very, very complicated thing for them and causes them pain.

Just as there are many people in our culture who find themselves in a male body but desire to sexually know people with the same body as themselves. And one thing which is very important for us to understand is that we should never, ever, ever say yuck to this.

[33 : 55] And we should never believe that that's something which has merely been chosen. Sometimes for people who labor and suffer under that it's something that goes back as early as they have memories.

And this call to view people with their dignity and worth is very important. But this text here is not saying that even if we are born in such a way that from our earliest memories we have these desires.

It's not saying that that is how we are made in God's image. Could you just reverse, could you put, I think, that's two points from now up right now rather than the one I was going to, I think I gave you? We still bear the image of God but it is bent and marred. We're going to look at that in Genesis 3 in a couple of weeks.

But it's just really important for us to understand that everything, it's not just if you're very uncomfortable, you're biologically male but you don't identify with being a male at all or you're biologically female and you just don't identify.

[35 : 10] it's not as if just people like this are broken. If you look in a mirror and you look around every single person in the room is made in God's image and every one of us are bent or marred in different ways.

So you can't just go purely from current human experience to extrapolate and we're going to talk about that a little bit more. But this is all very, very, very good news.

I mean, not only is it good news because it's the basis of human rights but it's the good news because it begins to help us to understand who God is and here's how it's good news.

You know, I like movies and I probably don't like, I mean, believe it or not, I actually sometimes watch more thoughtful movies. I just don't watch junk. But, you know, if you imagine a movie about an alien coming, let's say all of a sudden an alien ship crashed right beside one of our hospitals and they all go, the doctors and the nurses, they go running in.

I mean, it wouldn't happen nowadays because they'd want to get, you know, all the masks on so they don't get diseases but just imagine they go running in or however they go in and they're not clear when they look at the alien and let's say the alien can't communicate with them and we're not clear as human beings is the alien sick and need help or is the alien healthy and we don't know.

[36 : 38] Why don't we know? Here's the thing. I sit on the toilet and something comes out of me that's brown. That's good. You know, in another context, something comes out of me yellowish.

That's good. If all of a sudden I started to have red blood coming out of my eyes or my ears or my mouth, we'd all know that's bad. Why?

Because we know what health looks like. If we go to a human, I mean, if we go to an alien and red stuff is coming out of its mouth, we have no idea whether that's a bad sign or a good sign.

Maybe what we call brown stuff coming out of one end is red for the alien and comes out of a different part of its body. And I'm not just saying that to be silly. We really wouldn't know.

And, you know, the other day I'm having some problems with my steering in my car and I just assumed that I had a leak in my power steering and I went to look.

[37 : 43] I was going to go to Canadian Tire and get it topped up so I can get it fixed on Monday or Tuesday and I go and I look at my power steering level and it's not low. And so I stick something in and the color comes out and I go to the owner's manual and the owner's manual written by the designer tells me basically that if the steering fluid is brown that's not good.

It should be pink. At least pinkish but best of all, pink. So here's what's so good news about this is that the Bible here is letting us know what health looks like.

And it knows it's telling us the direction that we can go towards health. So God created man in his own image and the image of God he created him. Male and female he created them.

If you could put up the point, Andrew, which I guess we sort of jumped over, human beings are not Lego. Did you get a picture of that by the way? There you go.

In case you don't have grandchildren or you're too old to have played with Lego when you were a kid. There's all sorts of movies about Lego people. And the fact of the matter is is that in much of our culture the way we understand being human now aided by medical technology that can do all sorts of unbelievable things.

[39 : 11] It can pump us full of hormones. It can do plastic surgery. It can do all... Medicine can do all sorts of things. And if we come up in a culture whereby increasingly we just see ourselves as accidents, as just stuff, and that...

Well, it's increasingly we understand ourselves as Lego creatures. Well, you can just snap that head off, put a different head on. You can snap that torso off. You can put on a different torso. You can design the Lego in such a way that things pop out in different spots.

And the hands or the legs are all longer. And it's a very, very... You know, we don't consciously think like this but increasingly in our culture we understand ourselves with the analogy of being Lego.

And so when we want to fix ourselves we go by our feelings and the best thoughts that we have and we just figure we'll do Lego processes to fit with what we feel because that's how we understand what health is.

But the Bible here is telling us that God created man in his own image and the image of God he created him. Male and female he created them. And the Bible will also reveal that we're broken. And that's why if you could put up the next point we are to understand that Jesus is like an art restorer.

[40 : 25] A masterpiece restorer. He is not like a Lego builder. And we his disciples have to learn to follow him. See, this is the wonderful thing to know that I am made in God's image.

And there are different ways that I am made in God's image that I am bent and I am broken. And maybe it is that I have a huge desire for pornography. Maybe it is that I have this uncontrollable desire to flirt or possess as many women as I have as I can.

Maybe my bentness is that I have absolutely no interest in any of those types of things. Maybe my bentness or my brokenness is uncomfortable with the biology. And there are so many different ways and all of us are bent or broken in some particular way.

And the thing that we can take is that not only is the Bible communicating to us what health is like, it means that when Jesus comes into our life, he sees that image, the masterpiece, in all of its uniqueness.

And just as if somebody was to give a Van Gogh or a Picasso that had been found in an attic and was very damaged and gave it to the National Gallery, they would hire the best art restorer they could at all afford to restore the beauty of the masterpiece.

[41 : 44] And that's how Jesus deals with us. He is a masterpiece restorer, not a Lego builder.

One final thing just in closing. If you could put it up, here's one of the problems that we all have. Because we are so infected with our culture, with a notion that somehow or another human beings

are like plastic, that in some ways we're like Lego people, we can't understand, like in a Lego world, how could one Lego creature, how could their life matter to everybody's other than the fact that we might be interested in it?

And many of us wonder, because we come from this Lego perspective, how is it that Jesus' death upon the cross, that that could somehow stand for me or you here in Ottawa, and it could also stand for somebody in Korea, and somebody in China, and somebody in Singapore, and somebody in Kenya, and somebody above the Arctic Circle.

And from a Lego perspective, that doesn't make any sense. But if, so God created man in his own image, in the image of God, he created him.

Male and female, he created them. If in fact, human beings are one humanity, bearing the image of God, then only the image itself can stand for all who are made in God's image.

[43 : 21] so Jesus' life and death can stand for me, and you, and you, and you, and you, and every person who receives him by faith as Savior and Lord.

You see, if Genesis 1 is true, the image itself can stand both his perfect righteousness and his bearing the consequence of our sin and our bentness and brokenness.

The image itself can stand for every person made in the image of God. The cross makes sense.

And Jesus died not to erase or destroy the image, but as a masterpiece restorer to begin to restore us to the image, the masterpiece that God desires us to be.

Could you please stand? Just a moment of, a bit of a pause.

[44 : 41] If you're here today and for the first time the gospel begins to make sense to you and you feel a pressure to come to Jesus, let me just tell you, it doesn't matter what your issue is.

Jesus just desires to come into your life and to be like that masterpiece restorer. That's what he'll do when he is your Savior and he is your Lord. That's what he will do. And his death upon the cross and his resurrection can stand for you, can be for you if you receive it by faith.

And there's no time better than right now to just call out to him in your own words that he will be your Savior and your Lord and he will not turn you away. And for the rest of us we all know the different ways that we need Jesus to work in our lives to bring restoration to us.

To have a sense of restoring our sense of dignity and worth that is given to us by God himself. This text tells us of how unbelievably precious we are to God.

So precious that not only did he create us but that God, the Son of God would die upon the cross for us. And at the same time it starts to point towards Genesis 3 and our great need for God, for only God to come and work in our lives.

[46 : 03] Father, if there are any here who today have crossed that divide and asked Jesus to be their Savior and their Lord, Father, pour out your Holy Spirit upon them and draw them ever closer to yourself.

Father, for those who are still trying to think things through, pour out your Holy Spirit upon them and draw them to yourself. Father, for those of us who have maybe right from our family of origin or maybe sometime in our past we've given our lives more consciously to Jesus but we know he's our Savior and our Lord.

Father, you know the issues in our life that are bent and are marred and we give you permission, Father. You are wise. You are the masterpiece restorer. You know how to restore us and we give you permission to move with your Holy Spirit and bring your word to bear to us at our point of deepest need to work a work of restoration within us.

Father, pour out your Holy Spirit upon us. Make us disciples of Jesus gripped by the gospel learning to be restored by you and be an agent of restoration in others so that we and all your children will live for your glory and this we ask in Jesus' name.

Amen. Amen.