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WHY THIS SERIES?

- Our goal is to teach the truth and equip believers while remaining unified as the family of God.
- Our challenge in this series - stand firm as the family of God while speaking and living out truth in humility and with wisdom outside of it.

Jesus warns his disciples about future realities

Jude 3-4 (NIV) - Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt compelled to write and urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to God's holy people. For certain individuals whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you. They are ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord.

God gives us a guide in His Word

2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NIV) — All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Ephesians 6:10-12 (NIV) – Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes

Psalms 119:9 (NIV) –How can a young person stay on the path of purity? By living according to your word.

Some facts about the new (false) doctrine of gender and sexuality:

1. There is no objective truth about your gender, though there is about your sex
 - a. Sex is your unambiguous sexual organs based on biology but your gender can be different than your physical sex
2. There are many variations of gender and just how many kinds now is debated.
3. Your gender is fluid, variable. Gender fluidity means your gender is somewhere on a spectrum.
4. What you think you, are you are based on feelings and emotions and it's not to be questioned.
5. The job of parents, teachers, counselors and doctors is to only be affirming not questioning.
6. The answer to the problem of questioning is to just become what you think you are and want to be
7. This is the result of what is being taught in the media and some medical professionals.
 - a. gender dysphoria
8. Physical changes are being pushed medicinally in schools – without parental consent
9. Scientific studies have confirmed that 70% of girls resolve their gender confusion if they do not use hormonal medicines. Adolescent brain development doesn't stop changing until around age 25. Those that use hormones usually struggle to resume the gender of their biological sex.

What the Bible says about our design and desires

1st - The faith reveals the REAL problem - a sinful heart

- We are all flawed and our sinful flesh (desires-appetites) leads us away from God's design
- Some people's God is their appetites - sinful attractions - draw of emotion and their "hearts desire"

Philippians 3:17-21 (NIV) — Join together in following my example, brothers and sisters, and just as you have us as a model, keep your eyes on those who live as we do. For, as I have often told you before and now tell you again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is set on earthly things. But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.

Romans 16:17-19 (NIV) — I urge you, brothers and sisters, to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned. Keep away from them. For such people are not serving our Lord Christ, but their own appetites. By smooth talk and flattery they deceive the minds of naive people. Everyone has heard about your obedience, so I rejoice because of you; but I want you to be wise about what is good, and innocent about what is evil.

Jeremiah 17:5-9 (NIV) — This is what the Lord says: "Cursed is the one who trusts in man, who draws strength from mere flesh and whose heart turns away from the Lord. That person will be like a bush in the wastelands; they will not see prosperity when it comes. They will dwell in the parched places of the desert, in a salt land where no one lives. "But blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him. They will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit." The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?

2nd - Discipleship: includes being saved and following Jesus back towards His design for us

- The Great Commission is to teach others to obey all that Jesus commanded (Matthew 28:19-21)

3rd - The truth about gender and our options

- God's design is two genders based on biological sex who are to multiply in the context of lifelong marriage or to be single and celibate

Genesis 1:27-28 (NIV) — So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

Matthew 19:3-6 (NIV) — Some Pharisees came to him to test him. They asked, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any and every reason?" "Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate."

4th - Dealing with our sinful nature - broken attractions

- Accept that we all have a sin nature and broken desires
- God's final solution – the New Heaven and New earth
- God helps us through this broken world to remain faithful
- Let the Word of God become your plumb line
- Reject any thought or attraction that deviates from God's truth
 - Warning – feed the attraction the more powerful it gets - neuroplasticity
 - The sinful nature is never satisfied
- When you struggle with thoughts (not if) remember your identity is in Christ
- Be honest with other believers (the right ones) as a means to defeating sin
- Immediate change is not always the result - sometimes the struggle remains – God's grace is sufficient
- When dealing with those trapped be gentle and respectful

Romans 1:24-32 (NIV) - Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen. Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural sexual relations for unnatural ones. In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed shameful acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their error. Furthermore, just as they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, so God gave them over to a depraved mind, so that they do what ought not to be done. They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; they have no understanding, no fidelity, no love, no mercy. Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.

Romans 12:1-2 (NIV) – Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 (NIV) – For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

James 1:13-15 (NIV) – When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

1 John 1:8-9 (NIV) – If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

Galatians 5:16-17 (NIV) – So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want.

QUESTIONS TO REFLECT AND DISCUSS:

Passages to consider: 2 Genesis 1:1, 26-31; Psalm 139:13-16; Philippians 3:17-21; Romans 12:1-2; 2 Corinthians 10:3-5

Questions:

1. What stood out to you in the sermon? What about it was significant to you?
2. What truth from God's word to his people do you want to investigate more? What will this look like for you?
3. Read Genesis 1:1, 26-31 & Psalm 139:13-16. What do these passages say about who God is and who humans are? What does this mean to you personally?
4. Read Philippians 3:17-21. What are appetites that could draw your focus away from God and what he says life is about? How do you want to respond to that awareness? What are challenges you see for your family and close friends?
5. Read Romans 12:1, 2 and 2 Corinthians 10:3-5. How do these passages help you live as a Jesus-follower?
6. Try praying this prayer several times this week:
God Almighty, Creator and Lord of all the world, help me to present my body as a living sacrifice to you. To honor you and the way you made humans with my thinking and my words. Give me wisdom to lead myself and my family, to impact my friends and co-workers with truth and grace. These are turbulent times, where your design is being replaced with another set of values, I choose You and your way. Give me courage to love others the way you do, and to stand firm, taking thoughts and ideologies captive to your authority, Jesus.