

A FIRM FOUNDATION IN SHIFTING SAND

Review

- Our environment is changing; **it feels like shifting sand.**
- In the midst of shifting sand, **there is a firm foundation!**
- As a society and as individuals, **we need both love and lines.**
 - Love is basic; it's core. Love is essential.
 - Every social unit translates its morality into "lines."
 - We function best when there are loving, healthy lines.
- We need JESUS: **only he can both give love and lines and at the same time give us the power** to live within those lines.
- God engages us, asking powerful questions that invite us to **make clear decisions** that reveal our hearts, shape our future.

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Review

²⁴ “Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. ²⁵ The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.

²⁶ But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. ²⁷ The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.”

Matthew 7:26-27 (NIV)

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²⁸ When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, ²⁹ because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law.

Matthew 7:28-29 (NIV)

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Some Questions to Address

- What was (and is) God's design for human sexuality?
- Specifically, what does the Bible teach about homosexuality?
- What is the greatest, most important, most practical, key to interacting with others who have different views or lifestyles?
- What is the basis of authority for all of the above; who establishes the lines?
- How do we express (articulate, communicate) our beliefs (and the practical "lines" that develop from these)?
- How do we effectively engage others?

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What I Hope You Do *NOT* Hear Me Say

- Marriage is the cure-all for all the world.
- Romance is the ultimate experience in life.
- Fulfillment can be found if you only have the right person.
- If we could only turn the clock back, everything would be great.
- You need to be married to be complete.
- You're no good.
- He/She is no good.

These are things I hope you do NOT hear me say today!

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What I Hope You *DO* Hear Me Say

- God's plan is great!
- We have all failed...all of us.
- Jesus redeems!
 - Jesus loves; he forgives.
 - Jesus draws lines (what is best for us, and what is not).
 - Jesus empowers us to live both in love and within those healthy lines he draws.
 - "He breaks the chains, and sets us free."
- God's plan is great!

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God's Original, Passionate Design

²⁴For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh. (Gen. 2:24)

⁴"Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' ⁵and 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'?" (Matthew 19:4-5)

³¹"For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh."

³²This is a profound mystery – but I am talking about Christ and the church. (Ephesians 5:31-32) *(All Scriptures from NIV1983)*

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God's Original, Passionate Design

Jesus completely reframed a challenging question!

(see Matthew 19:1-12; Mark 10:1-12)

- The question asked was about divorce.
- Jesus' reply was about God's design for marriage.
 - At the beginning the Creator made them.
 - The Creator made them male and female.
 - The man was to leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two would become one flesh.
 - God put them together; no one was to separate them.

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God's Original, Passionate Design

God's original, passionate design was...

(see Genesis 1:26-31, 2:15-25; 5:1-5)

- Intentional (He planned it, designed it, did it.)
- Purposeful (There was a purpose for man and woman.)
- Care-giving (Together they were to care for creation.)
- Complementary (God created them male and female.)
- Relational (They were to relate with each other, to partner.)
- Growing and Fruitful (They were to reproduce, have children.)
- Very Good! (Each day, creation was good; this day, very good.)
- One Flesh (They were to leave, cleave, and become one.)

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God's Original, Passionate Design

God's design for man and woman, for husband and wife, for marriage, had a greater purpose...

(see Ephesians 5:15-33)

- The relationship between a husband and wife is a mystery... it represents Christ and the church.
 - The husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church, and as he loves his own body.
 - The wife is to respect her husband.
- The relationship between a husband and wife invites them to be transformed into Christ's likeness...to develop a new heart.

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God's Original, Passionate Design

Some of the questions we plan to address in the next weeks:

- What was (and is) God's design for human sexuality?
- Specifically, what does the Bible teach about homosexuality?
- What is the greatest, most important, most practical, key to interacting with others who have different views or lifestyles?
- What is the basis of authority for all of the above; who establishes the lines?
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