

A FIRM FOUNDATION IN SHIFTING SAND

Quick Review

- We're in the midst of a new series:
 - "A Firm Foundation in Shifting Sand"
- I received a respectful challenge:
 - Help the next generation know...
 - What we believe,
 - Why we believe,
 - How to effectively communicate this with others who may disagree.
- This challenge related especially to understandings of marriage and sexuality. But it goes far beyond these.

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Quick Review

“A Firm Foundation in Shifting Sand”

- Past messages, along with PowerPoint presentations can be found on our website: www.MtVernonChristianChurch.com
 - Go to page entitled, “Listen (or Watch & Listen)”
- We will seek to focus on all three of the following, with special attention that we remember the third of these.
 - What we believe,
 - Why we believe,
 - How to effectively communicate this with others who may disagree.

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Quick Review

Key Questions:

- We are asking key questions:
 - What do we believe?
 - Why do we believe?
 - How can we effectively communicate this?
- But today we focus on another set of key questions:
 - Did God have a design for marriage?
 - If so, what is that design?
 - What do we do with God's design...keep it or distort it?

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God's Design – Keep It or Distort It?

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 Design – Keep It or Distort It?

God's Design for Marriage included that marriage would be...

- A reflection of God...a likeness of God's image. (Gen. 1:26-27)
- A partnership to fulfill God's purposes. (Gen. 1:26-28)
- A joining of male and female. (Gen. 1:27; 2:15-25; Matt. 19:4-6)
 - "...male and female he created them."
 - "But for Adam no suitable helper was found...Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man." (Gen. 2:20...22)

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God's Design – Keep It or Distort It?

God's Design for Marriage included that marriage would be...

- A reflection of God...a likeness of God's image! (Gen. 1:26-27)
- A partnership to fulfill God's purposes. (Gen. 1:26-28)
- A joining of male and female. (Gen. 1:27; 2:15-25; Matt. 19:4-6)
 - “‘Haven't you read,’ he (Jesus) replied, ‘that at the beginning the Creator made them male and female, and said, “For this reason...”’” (Matthew 19:4-5a NIV1983)

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God's Design – Keep It or Distort It?

God's Design for Marriage included that marriage would be...

- A reflection of God...a likeness of God's image. (Gen. 1:26-27)
- A partnership to fulfill God's purposes. (Gen. 1:26-28)
- A joining of male and female. (Gen. 1:27; 2:15-25; Matt. 19:4-6)
- Care-giving to God's creation. (Gen. 1:26-2:25)
- Fruitful (increasing, multiplying) (Gen. 1:28)
- A stewardship (a trust) from God. (Gen. 1:29ff)
- A part of God's **very good** plan. (Gen. 1:31; Gen. 2:25)
- To be lived with freedom and with boundaries. (Gen. 1:16-17)
- To result in unity, "one flesh" – without shame. (Gen. 2:24-25)

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God's Design – Keep It or Distort It?

- Yes, God had a design!
- Key Question:

What will we do with God's Design?

- What questions will we ask as we address this?
- What will my answer be?
- How will this relate to marriage and sexuality?

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God's Design – Keep It or Distort It?

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?
- 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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God's Design – Keep It or Distort It?

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)