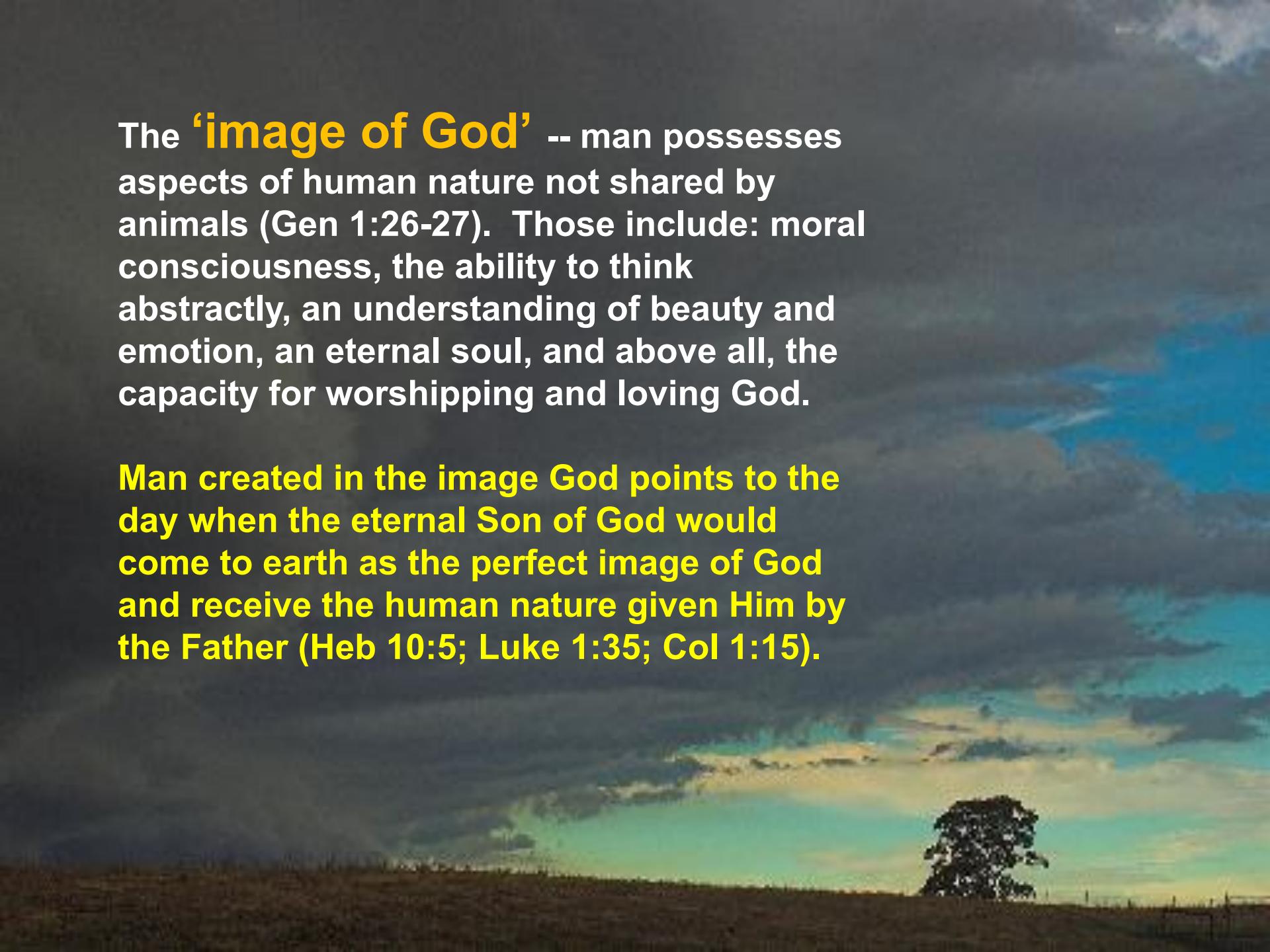


The Image of God and our Bodies

Jay Wegter

A landscape photograph showing a dark, hilly terrain in the foreground. A single, large, leafy tree stands prominently on a slight elevation. The sky above is filled with heavy, dark clouds, with patches of lighter blue and green visible through them, suggesting either a sunrise or sunset. The overall atmosphere is dramatic and somewhat somber.

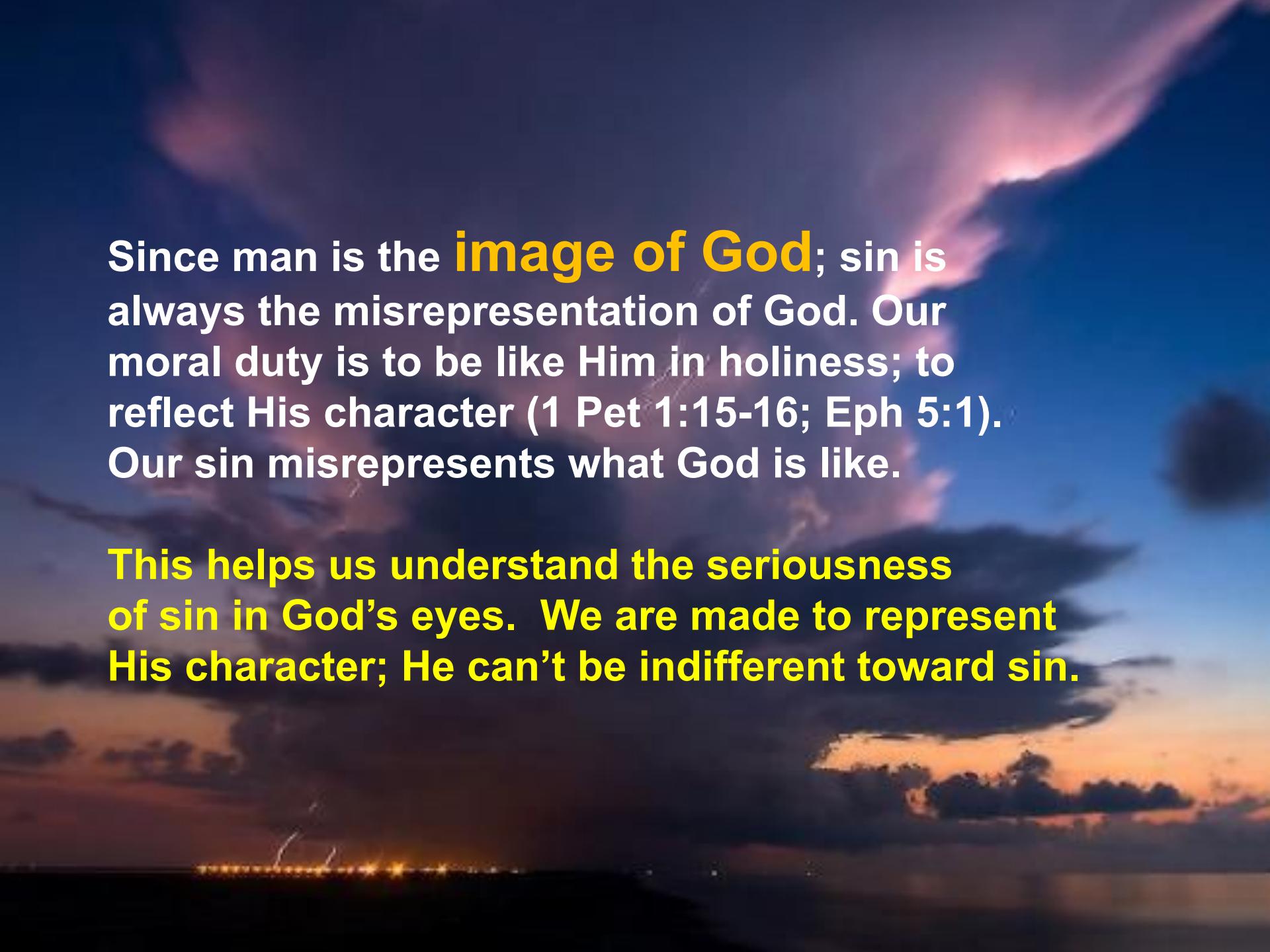
The ‘image of God’ -- man possesses aspects of human nature not shared by animals (Gen 1:26-27). Those include: moral consciousness, the ability to think abstractly, an understanding of beauty and emotion, an eternal soul, and above all, the capacity for worshipping and loving God.

Man created in the image God points to the day when the eternal Son of God would come to earth as the perfect image of God and receive the human nature given Him by the Father (Heb 10:5; Luke 1:35; Col 1:15).



The **image of God** is at the very core of our identity and purpose as human beings. Our identity as the image of God means we must know God in order to know ourselves.

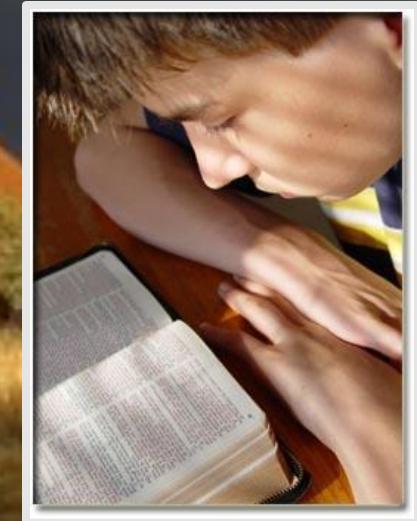
To reject the knowledge of God is to completely miss our identity as His image-bearers (Rom 1:18-21, 32; 2:14-1).



Since man is the image of God; sin is always the misrepresentation of God. Our moral duty is to be like Him in holiness; to reflect His character (1 Pet 1:15-16; Eph 5:1). Our sin misrepresents what God is like.

This helps us understand the seriousness of sin in God's eyes. We are made to represent His character; He can't be indifferent toward sin.

We were created in the **image of God** in order to commune with Him; to share His purposes, and to share His dominion. The image of God places man in covenant relation to God: we are obligated to interpret all the works of God truthfully to the glory of God. It means that man's faculties are designed to receive divine revelation.



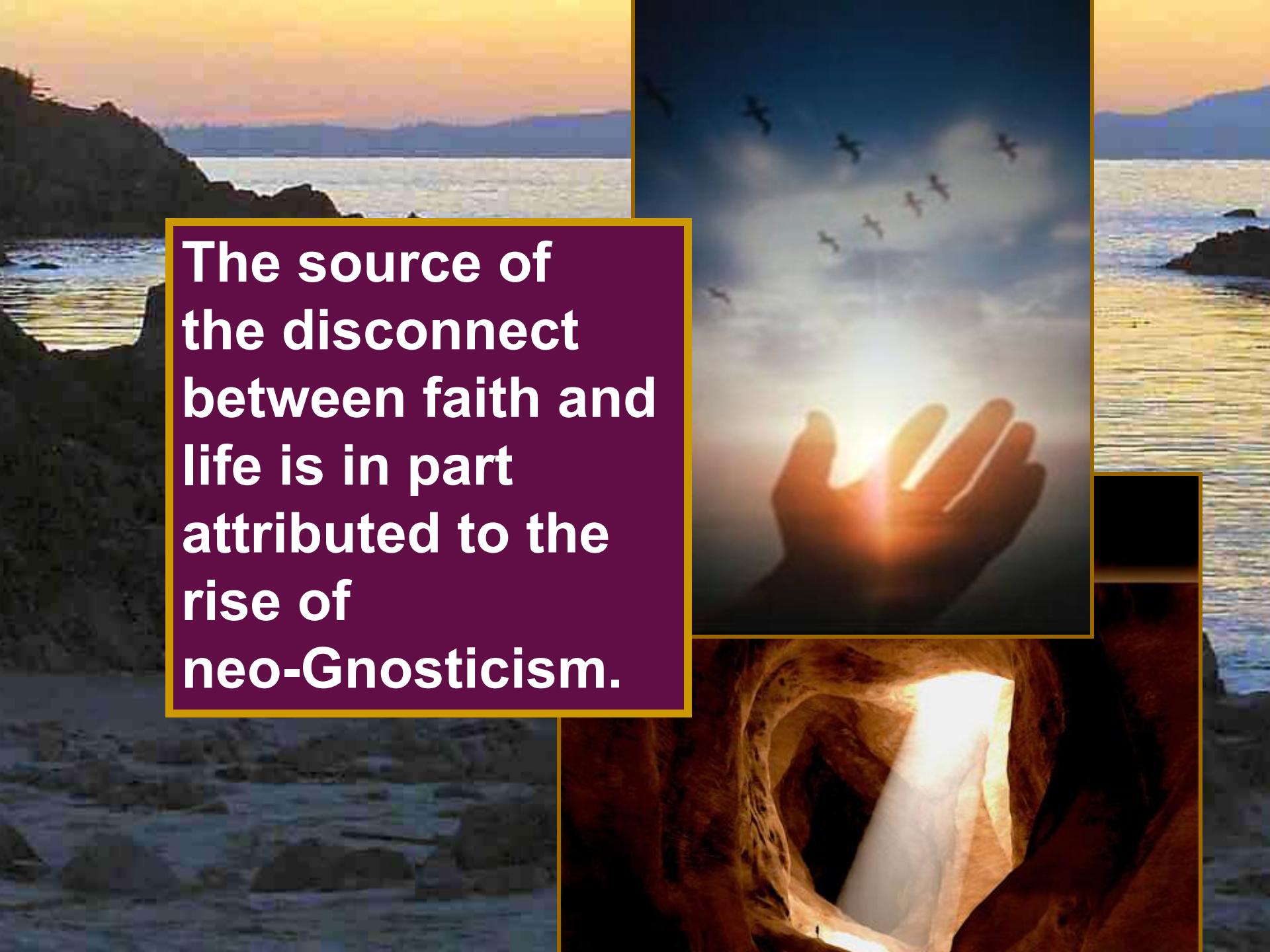


Fallen man bears a *distorted image* of God. That image, therefore, needs to be renewed through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus (Col 3:10; Eph 4:24). God's wonderful plan in the Gospel is to restore sinners to the true image of God through Christ who is the perfect image of God (2 Cor 4:4-6).

Redemption in Christ ‘stamps’ the image of God upon us afresh. Now as God’s possession, we are called to live as the image of God in the power of the Spirit (Titus 2:11-14; 3:3-7).

This is only possible If we uphold as sacred the moral laws and creation structures by which we are limited and bounded by our Creator.





The source of the disconnect between faith and life is in part attributed to the rise of neo-Gnosticism.



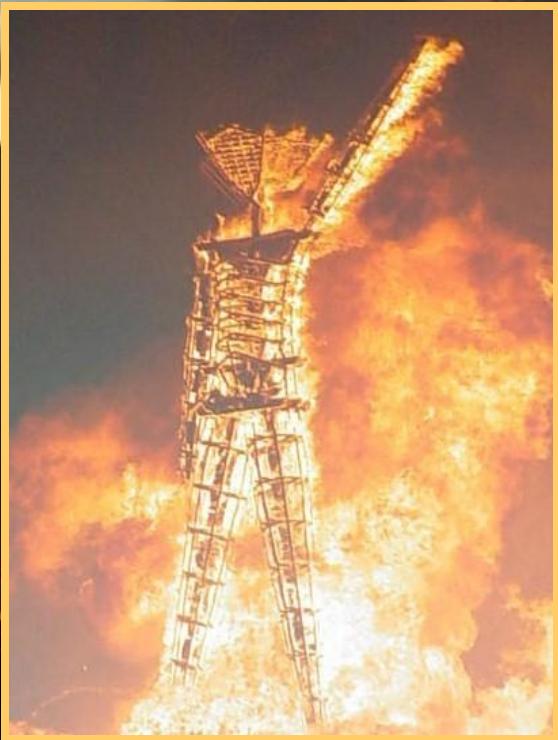
Modern *antinomian Gnostics* place a low level of significance upon our **embodiedness. Their view is that the heart only matters—that's the grand divorce which justifies severing personal behavior from God's standards of truth, beauty, and morality.**

***Ascetic Gnostics* practiced severe treatment of the body (Colossians 2:21-23.)**





**The Fall is
the story of
the abandonment
of boundaries and
limits in the name
of freedom. (“You
will be like God”—
Gen 3:5.)**



Evangelicalism's accommodation to the modern, or two-level view of reality, has pushed redemption further into the 'upper story'. Christians are living in a state of détente with the open gash of dualism.

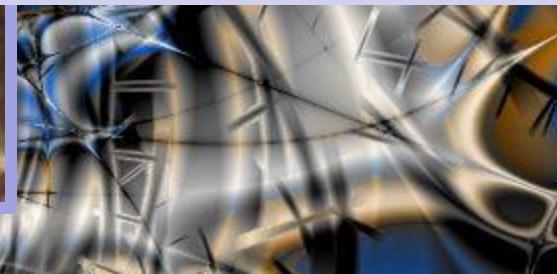
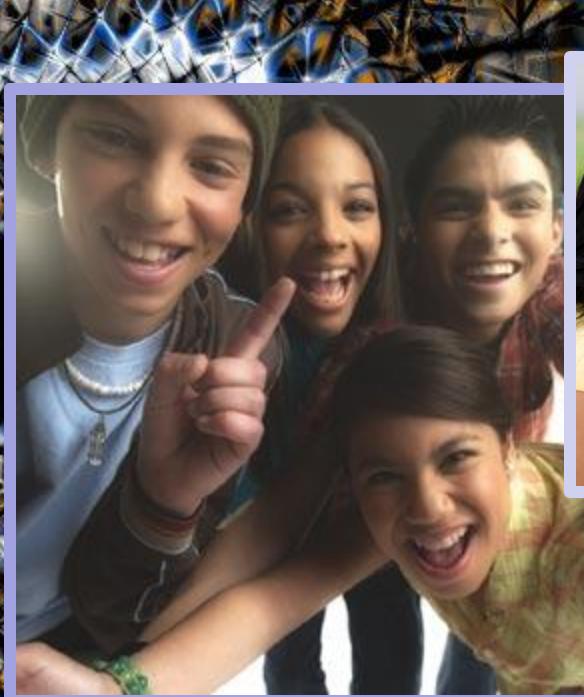
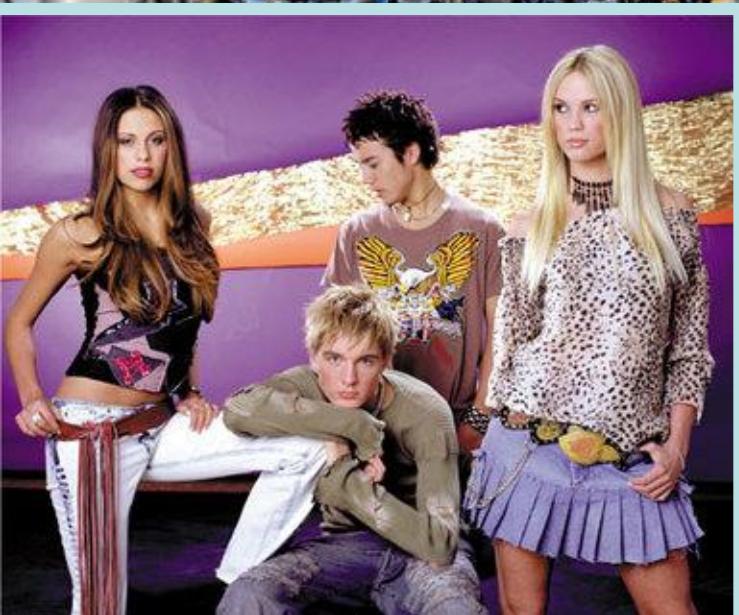


A dark, apocalyptic cityscape with a man running away from a massive explosion. The city is filled with tall, skeletal buildings and twisted metal debris. A large, billowing white cloud of smoke and fire dominates the center. In the bottom left, a man with spiky hair and a dark jacket runs away from the scene, looking back over his shoulder.

**Growing up without
biblical cosmology—
the phenomenon of
being Christian, yet
metaphysically lost.**

The members of
your body:
Romans 6:12-13;
7:5-6;
1 Corinthians
15:42-49

Without the unifying foundation of cosmology, the rising generation hears biblical principles as **disassociated bits and pieces of moral truth**. Cosmology allows us to see creation structures as reality—grounded in the character of God.



The human body—‘commuter vehicle’ or locus of personality and moral volition?



2 Corinthians 5:1-10



**The culture's wrong-headed ideas about spirituality
are contributing to the misunderstanding of the body.
As a consequence, they see it either as debased and
valueless, or as separate from the personality—the
locus of moral decisions.** *James Herrick*



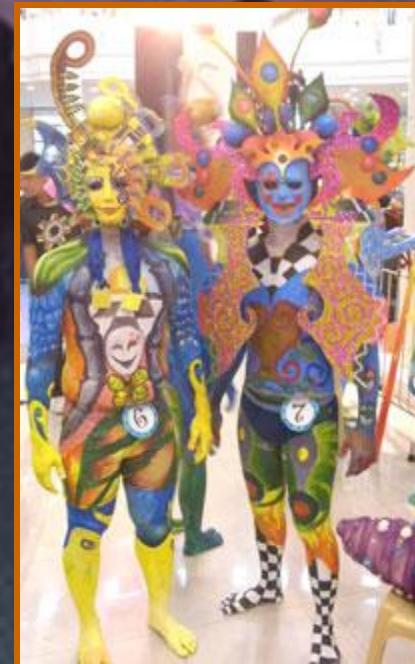
**The devaluing of
the human body
among Christians
is a symptom of
christo-platonism.
In that perspective
our souls merely
occupy our bodies
like a hermit crab
inhabits a seashell.**

Randy Alcorn



Ephesians 4:19

The ethical
symptoms of
disconnect—
the '*pornification*'
of a generation.



Marriage is not merely the lawful arena of sexual activity, it is presented in Scripture as the divinely-designed arena for the display of God's glory on earth. Rightly understood and rightly ordered, marriage is a picture of God's covenant faithfulness. *Al Mohler*



A photograph of a family of three sitting on a sandy beach. A man on the left wears a visor and sunglasses, a woman on the right wears a white bikini, and a young child sits between them. They are positioned in shallow, clear water. The background shows a vast, colorful sunset over rolling hills or mountains.

**God's gift of sexuality
is designed to pull us
out of ourselves and
toward our spouse.**

Ephesians 5:23-33

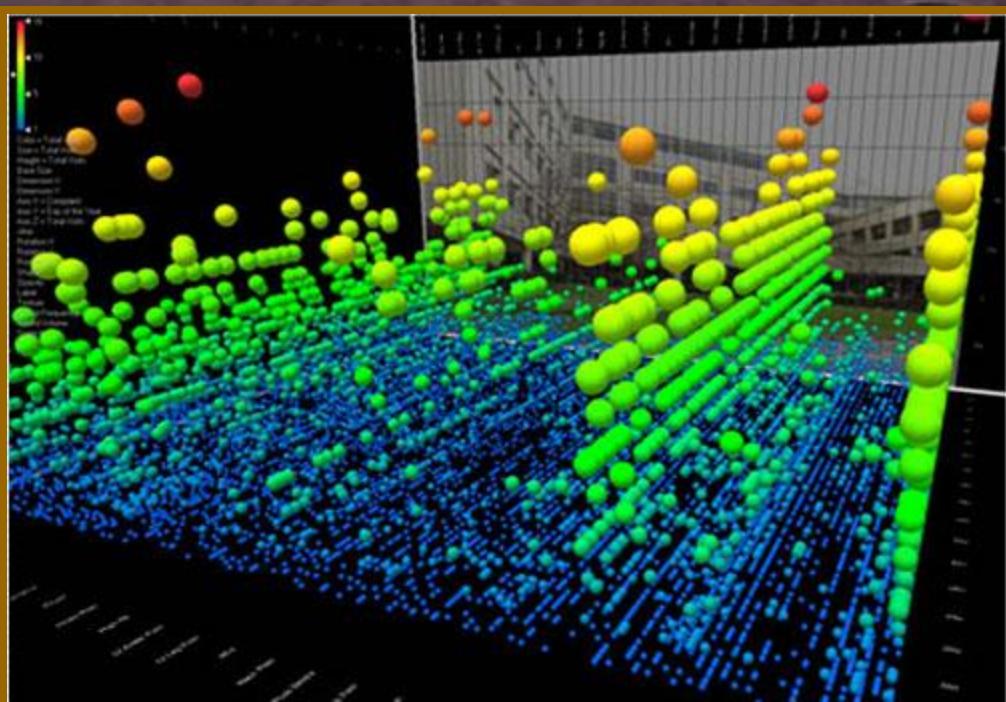
The disconnect between
faith and life is widening—
broadened by our techno-
consumer culture.



Romans 12:9

**The screen has been framed as the real world.
We have gone from *Windows* as a ‘window’ to
the world, to *Windows* is the world.**

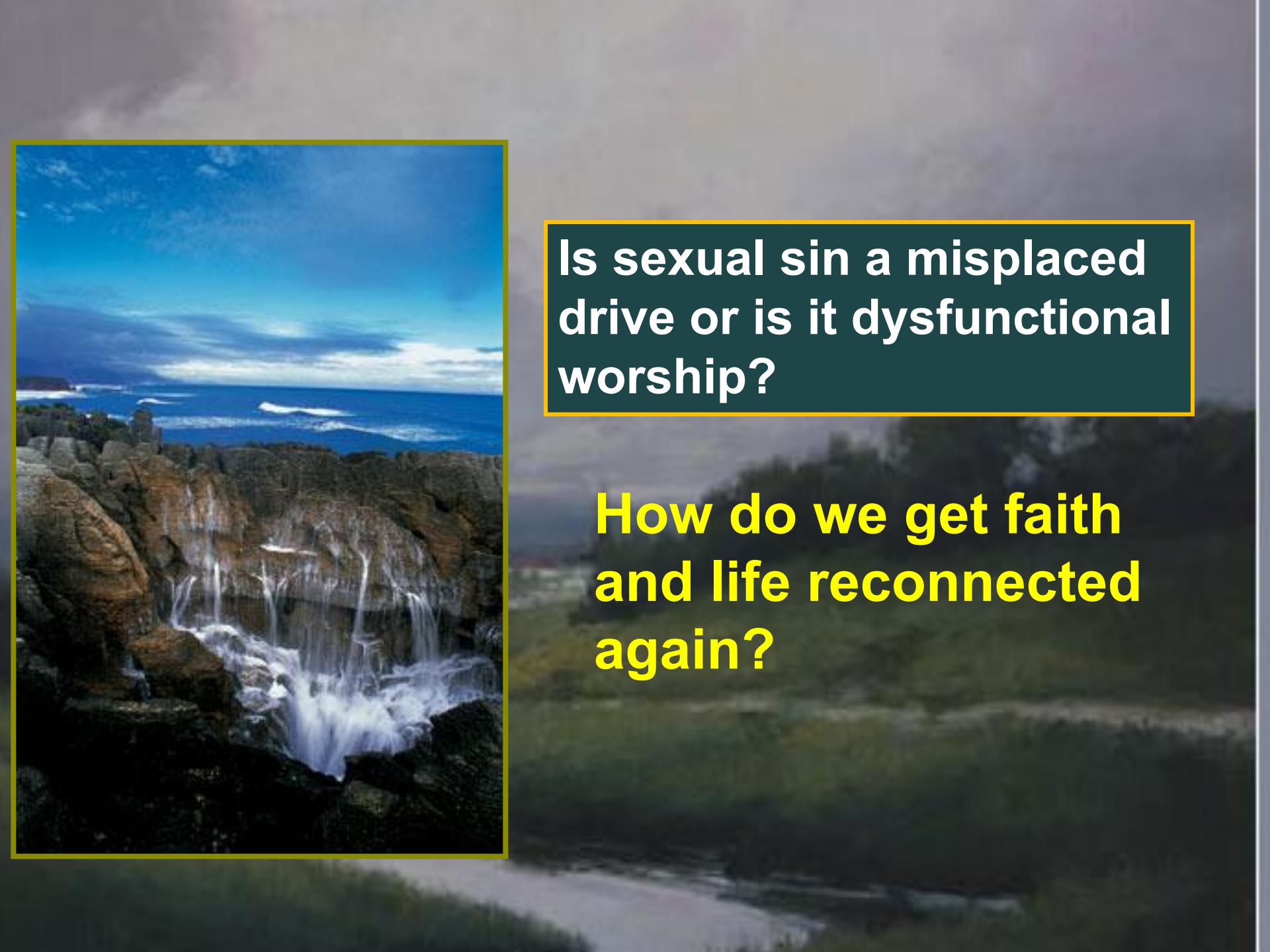
Grant Horner



The pornification of culture through the electronic media is shaping the way this society invents itself sexually. Foucault's vision of freedom without truth and no consequence sex, have desacralized the body. The result is a generation immersed in erotica—with mangled lives to show for it.

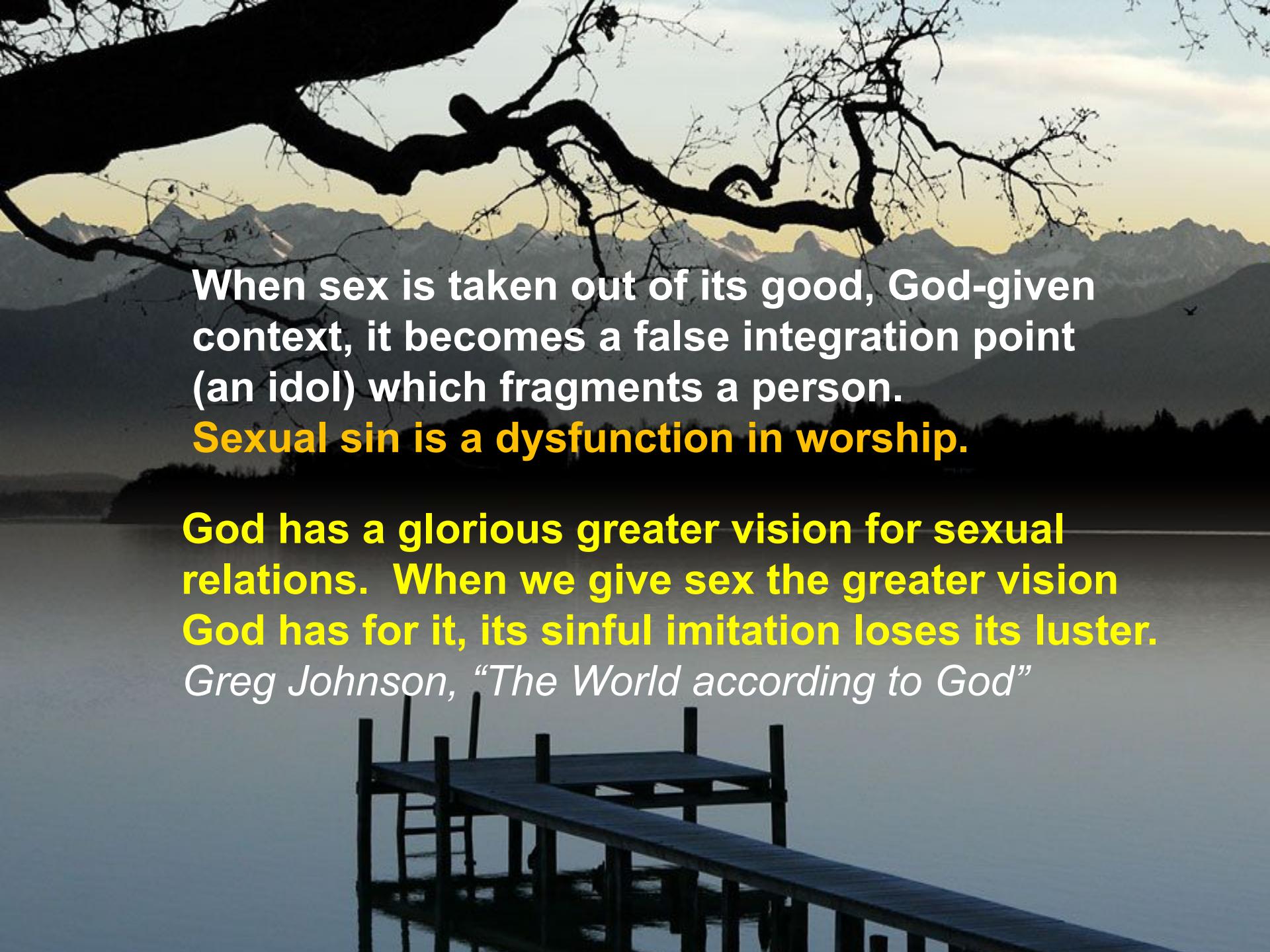
Romans 1:27; 6:21-23



The background image shows a coastal landscape. On the left, a waterfall cascades down a rocky cliff into the ocean. The ocean is visible in the middle ground, with waves crashing against the shore. The sky is blue with some white clouds. A dark green rectangular box with a yellow border is positioned on the right side of the image, containing the text.

**Is sexual sin a misplaced
drive or is it dysfunctional
worship?**

**How do we get faith
and life reconnected
again?**



When sex is taken out of its good, God-given context, it becomes a false integration point (an idol) which fragments a person.

Sexual sin is a dysfunction in worship.

God has a glorious greater vision for sexual relations. When we give sex the greater vision God has for it, its sinful imitation loses its luster.

Greg Johnson, “The World according to God”

Pornography *deconstructs* sexuality. In order to experience freedom in Christ we will have to *reconstruct* sexuality biblically.

A proactive strategy to rebuild what our culture has been deconstructing:

- 1) *Repent* of our idolatry.**
- 2) *Retrain* ourselves in true worship.**
- 3) *Rebuild* our view of God's vision for sexuality.**
- 4) *Reclaim* our bodies as a chief spiritual resource.**



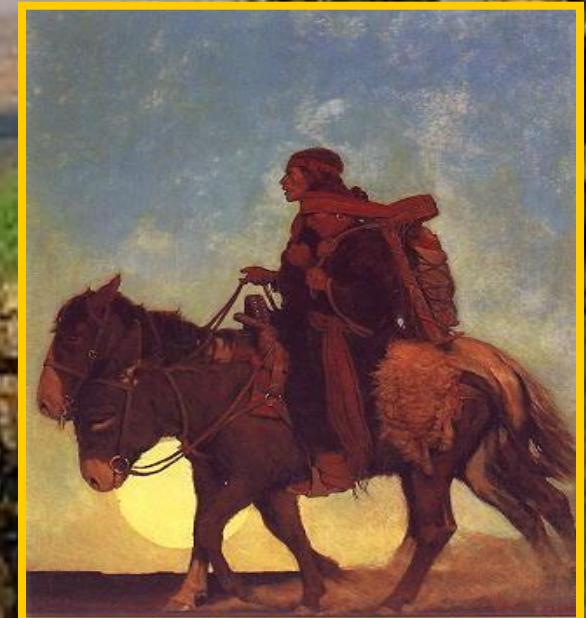
A weak grasp of God's vision for male and female is symptomatic of the fact that Christianity is starving for cosmology.

The common approach today is
“Where does God fit into my life?”
Believers should be asking,
“Where does my life fit into this
great story of God’s mission?”

Christopher Wright, “Mission of God”



The human body—‘beast of burden’ or spiritual resource?



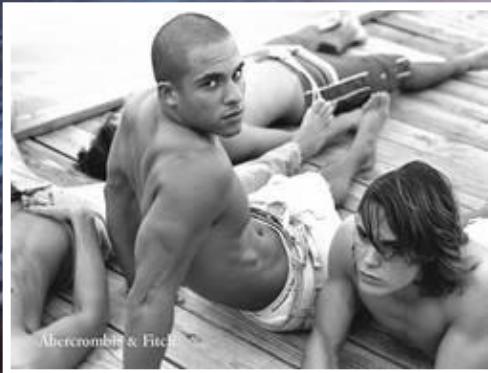
The divine purpose for the body is central to biblical worldview. Scripture calls believers to regard their bodies as a great spiritual resource. “The body is for the Lord” (1 Cor 6:13).



To use the body as a spiritual resource is to live the Christian life holistically. True spirituality involves a huge corporate, social dimension in which one's body is used in Christian fellowship and service.



Young people influenced by the disconnect seek an identity through trends, media, and consumption, rather than upon the Creator's story. What suffers in this disconnect is a proper view of the body as a spiritual resource. It is precisely at this juncture that cyber-porn finds an unguarded entry point.



**Reuniting reality
by worshipping
the Lord of reality**



The incarnation destroys a divided view of reality. The *Logos* doctrine overcomes it by fusing pure rationality with history. God in the flesh brings a total holistic end to fragmentation.



Hebrews 1:1-3
John 1:1-5



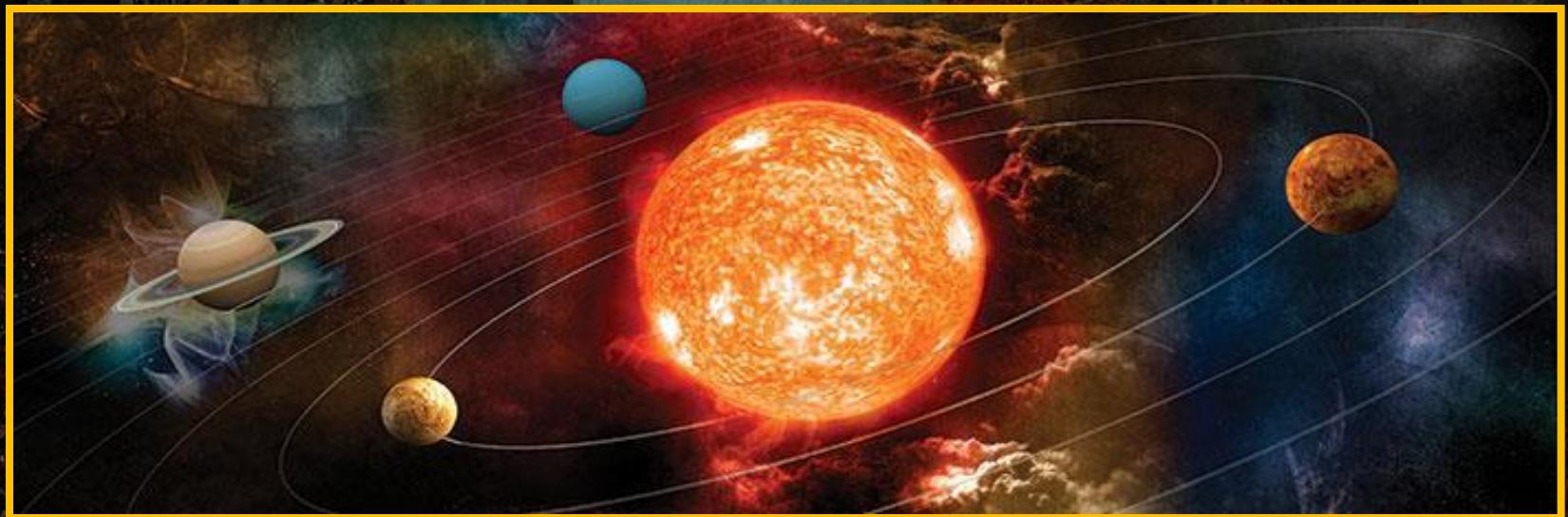
It is common for believers to see obedience as a narrow band-width, and not whole life affections. God's claims upon us in Christ blast into our sacred-secular dichotomy, the Lord claiming every square foot of our life experience for Himself.



The Preeminence of Christ

The supremacy and glory of Christ is like the sun in our own solar system. The gravitational pull of our sun holds all of the planets in their proper orbits. So also, when Christ is at the center of our lives, everything else assumes its proper orbit—including our sexuality.

John Piper, *Sex and the Supremacy of Christ*



Teleology:

The devil's cosmology says: *liberty is freedom from design*. The Word of God says: *liberty is within divine design*



iStock

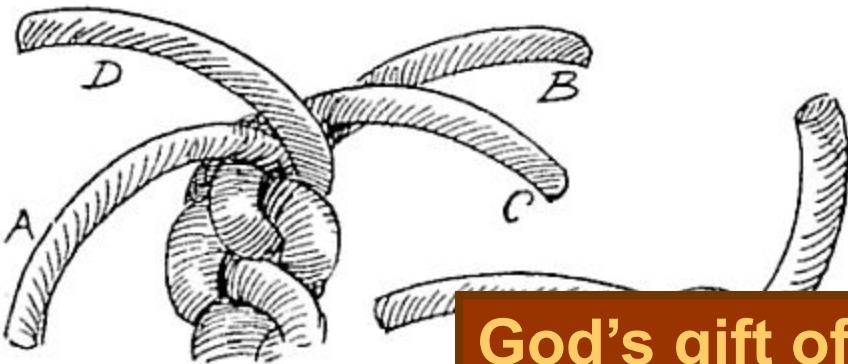


FIG. 141.—Four-stran

God's gift of *marital oneness* is like a cord of four strands— the strands must stay joined.

- A. It is sacred, covenantal, ‘until death’.
- B. It places procreation into a nurturing covenantal home or community.
- C. It is spiritual—making the two into one.
- D. It is pleasuring for the purpose of bonding.