

The Image of God and our bodies

Jay Wegter

I. God's 'glory story' is the greatest reclamation project conceivable; He is recovering His image through His Son. *As the image of God, man possesses aspects of human nature not shared by animals (Gen 1:26-27).*

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).

But, 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).

II. A disconnect between faith and life is an 'entry gate' for sexual sin. *A Gnostic-like disconnect is re-emerging in the church today. The attitude of ancient Gnosticism was: "Since they had received divine knowledge and were enlightened, it didn't matter how they lived in the body."*

In our idolatrous culture, the divinely imposed values of virtue, self-control, delayed gratification, and the indirect pursuit of pleasure are colliding head on with the values of boundless self-expression.

Darwinism claims to have a scientific explanation of entire our human existence and experience. The net effect in the minds of most was to replace biblical cosmology with a material worldview.

How does this divided view of reality manifest itself in Evangelicalism?

III. Growing up without biblical cosmology is the phenomenon of being Christian, yet ‘metaphysically lost’. *The absolute truth of biblical cosmology is essential in interpreting the universe truthfully.*

Most believers can attest that they began with soteriology instead of cosmology. As a result, the doctrine of salvation was easily privatized (reduced to merely inward, personal, and pietistic).

IV. The human body, ‘commuter vehicle’ or center of personality and moral volition? What is the significance of being embodied?

A fragmented worldview without a biblical cosmology will ultimately affect the way one views the human body.

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.

The culture’s wrong-headed ideas about spirituality are contributing to Christians’ misunderstanding of the body.

The biblical doctrine of the soul-body unity preserves the truth that the human body was created to be the vehicle of human personality.

V. Ethical symptoms of disconnect—the ‘pornification’ of a generation. *The epidemic of Evangelicals committing fornication and viewing pornography may be the most telling symptom of the Gnostic disconnect.*

Al Mohler has warned that the pervasive plague of pornography represents one of the greatest moral challenges faced by the Christian church in the postmodern age.

Mohler rightly notes that pornography declares war on God's great purpose of glorifying Himself through the marriage bond.

God's gift of sexuality is designed to pull us out of ourselves and our self-occupied concerns and desires and toward our spouse.

This is significant for how we are to understand the unity of God's plan for husband and wife.

VI. The Gnostic disconnect is widened by techno-consumer culture.

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. The screen has become the world.

The 'pornification of culture' is shaping the way in which this society approaches sexual curiosity and the way in which it invents itself sexually.

VII. How do we get faith and life 'reconnected' again? Sexual sin is a dysfunction in worship. Sexual idolatry is the activity of seeking integration by means of a substitute god.

Believers trapped in sensual patterns need a biblical strategy that is holistic. Repent of idolatry, retrain in worship; rebuild the biblical view of sexuality; and reclaim the truth that our body is a chief spiritual resource.

VIII. The human body, 'beast of burden,' or spiritual resource? Our bodies are to be used for the spiritual ends for which we were saved, that is the Holy Spirit's goal.

Scripture calls believers to regard their bodies as a great spiritual resource.

Our rising generation has been so indoctrinated with disconnect ideology, they (and we) need constant reminders that the body is the battlefield of worldview.

We need to recapture the necessity and priority of transformation by God's truth.

IX. Reuniting reality by worshipping the Lord of reality. *Christ does what Plato and the Greek philosophers could not do, He unifies all reality. He links visible and invisible reality. He reconciles singularity and plurality.*

It is all too common for believers to see obedience as a narrow bandwidth and not whole life affections.

X. Biblical cosmology is our lens for viewing ultimate reality. *When we analyze life by means of the authoritative perspective of biblical cosmology, there is an intensely satisfying intellectual fulfillment in seeing the unity of all knowledge and the wisdom of divine purposes.*

This is why beauty is the battleground for the souls of men and women.

Idolatry defaces the image of God in man.

Biblical cosmology helps us burst the issue of mortification of sexual sin out of too small a category—we have tended to treat it as “just my private bosom sin and personal heart struggle.”