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Teaching Notes

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## **Gender and Sexual Identity**

### **Lesson #1: Foundations in Creation**

#### I. Overarching Themes

##### A. Present-day Confusion About Gender or Anger About Gender-Based Roles

###### 1. Current events

Most recent HOT TOPIC on this issue: HB2 (the “Bathroom Bill”) passed in NC State Legislature and signed into law in March of 2016

#### **The Public Facilities Privacy & Security Act**

Officially called **An Act to Provide for Single-sex Multiple Occupancy Bathroom and Changing Facilities in Schools and Public Agencies and to Create Statewide Consistency in Regulation of Employment and Public Accommodations**

Highlighted the issue of transgenderism, and the State Legislature voted in the bill to require people to use the bathrooms of their birth gender... this produced a firestorm of opposition as though this were a Civil Rights issue... significant entities protested HB2 like PayPal, the ACC (pulling its hoops tournament from Charlotte), the NCAA (similar action), several companies pulling their businesses from NC, and many famous people including Bruce Springsteen, Mike Krzyzewski, Roy Williams, Michael Jordan... it seems for them gender has become something elastic, something self-defined

Two key definitions:

“Gender identity refers to an individual's personal sense of identity as masculine or feminine, or some combination thereof.” [*Sexual Orientation and Gender Expression in Social Work Practice*, edited by Deana F. Morrow and Lori Messinger]

Gender dysphoria (transgenderism): “Gender dysphoria (formerly gender identity disorder) is defined by strong, persistent feelings of identification with the opposite gender and discomfort with one's own assigned sex that results in significant distress or impairment. People with gender dysphoria desire to live as members of the opposite sex and often dress and use mannerisms associated

with the other gender.”

[<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/conditions/gender-dysphoria>]

Other examples of assault on the basic concept of gender:

**A Nebraska school district has instructed its teachers to stop referring to students by “gendered expressions” such as “boys and girls,” and use “gender inclusive” ones such as “purple penguins” instead. “Don’t use phrases such as ‘boys and girls,’ ‘you guys,’ ‘ladies and gentlemen,’ and similarly gendered expressions to get kids’ attention,” instructs a training document given to middle-school teachers at the Lincoln Public Schools. “Create classroom names and then ask all of the ‘purple penguins’ to meet on the rug,” it advises.**

**The document also warns against asking students to “line up as boys or girls,” and suggests asking them to line up by whether they prefer “skateboards or bikes/milk or juice/dogs or cats/summer or winter/talking or listening.” “Always ask yourself . . . ‘Will this configuration create a gendered space?’” the document says.**

**The instructions were part of a list called “12 steps on the way to gender inclusiveness” developed by Gender Spectrum, an organization that “provides education, training and support to help create a gender sensitive and inclusive environment for children of all ages.”**

**Children can also identify themselves as “boy,” “girl,” “both,” or “neither.”  
[National Review, October 8, 2014]**

Tweet on infant gender identity (#babyself)... October 14, 2015:

“Why do people think it’s okay to call babies he or she? They can’t speak yet so they can’t say their preferred gender. Please refer to them as babyself or toddlerself until they can say their pronoun preference, otherwise you’re ableist and transphobic.”

[**Ableism** or **ablism** is a form of discrimination or social prejudice against people with disabilities.]

SO: Gender is something one **CHOOSES**, not something one is **ASSIGNED**

Article in New York Times

1. Julie Scelfo, New York Times, Feb. 3, 2015: “A University Recognizes a Third Gender: Neutral”

2. Written about Rocko Gieselman, University of Vermont student, who classifies her gender as “neutral”
3. Article written about many themes, including a new look at gender-free pronouns

1	2	3	4	5
e/ey	em	eir	eirs	eirself
he	him	his	his	himself
[name]	[name]	[name]’s	[name]’s	[name]’s self
per	per	pers	pers	perself
she	her	her	hers	herself
sie	sir	hir	hirs	hirself
they	them	their	theirs	themself
ve	ver	vis	vers	verself
zie	zim	zir	zirs	zirself

4. Gieselman prefers the formerly plural “they, them, their” approach; listen to her mother talk about her in this new pattern:

**Sara Miller, Gieselman’s mother, said that when her teenager first came out to her and offered to provide a pronoun chart for reference, she scoffed. “At the time, it irritated me to no end,” said Ms. Miller, a social worker. “I was like, ‘Really? This is what our struggle is going to be about? Pronouns?’”**

**But Ms. Miller has learned to accept the person her former little girl has become. “It’s grown out of the process of really seeing how Rocko has grown as an individual and an adult, seeing how Rocko is their own person, and not a child,” Ms. Miller said. “This is how they presents themself to new friends and colleagues and employers and students. That group knows Rocko only that way.”**

5. Summary statements from the Council for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood:

### **Gender confusion in the home**

- Husbands fail to exhibit humble, loving leadership of their family

- Wives fail to exhibit willing, intelligent submission to their husbands
- Motherhood and homemaking are often viewed as secondary responsibilities
- Parents fail to be intentional in encouraging biblical masculinity in their sons and biblical femininity in their daughters

#### **Gender confusion in the church**

- Churches divide over ministry roles of men and women
- A subjective sense of calling is often used to set aside biblical criteria for ministry
- Feminist ideology influences church theology and practice

#### **Acceptance of homosexuality**

- Secular homosexual agenda influences church theology and practice
- Confusion exists regarding maleness and femaleness

#### **Revisions of the doctrine of God**

- Some evangelical leaders and churches encourage referring to God as "Mother"
- Changes to the Trinity are being proposed in the areas of language and relationship

#### **Gender-neutral language in Bible translation**

- Many translations systematically omit masculine-oriented details of meaning

6. Reasons given for the Danvers Statement (1987)

**In December, 1987, the newly-formed Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood met in Danvers, Massachusetts, to compose the Danvers Statement on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood. They drafted a series of assertions on biblical manhood and womanhood. As a preamble to the Danvers Statement, they explained the reasons for it:**

“We have been moved in our purpose by the following contemporary developments which we observe with deep concern:

1. The widespread uncertainty and confusion in our culture regarding the complementary differences between masculinity and femininity;
2. the tragic effects of this confusion in unraveling the fabric of marriage woven by God out of the beautiful and diverse strands of manhood and womanhood;
3. the increasing promotion given to feminist egalitarianism with accompanying distortions or neglect of the glad harmony portrayed in Scripture between the loving, humble leadership of redeemed husbands and the intelligent, willing support of that leadership by redeemed wives;

4. the widespread ambivalence regarding the values of motherhood, vocational homemaking, and the many ministries historically performed by women;
5. the growing claims of legitimacy for sexual relationships which have Biblically and historically been considered illicit or perverse, and the increase in pornographic portrayal of human sexuality;
6. the upsurge of physical and emotional abuse in the family;
7. the emergence of roles for men and women in church leadership that do not conform to Biblical teaching but backfire in the crippling of Biblically faithful witness;
8. the increasing prevalence and acceptance of hermeneutical oddities devised to reinterpret apparently plain meanings of Biblical texts;
9. the consequent threat to Biblical authority as the clarity of Scripture is jeopardized and the accessibility of its meaning to ordinary people is withdrawn into the restricted realm of technical ingenuity;
10. and behind all this the apparent accommodation of some within the church to the spirit of the age at the expense of winsome, radical Biblical authenticity which in the power of the Holy Spirit may reform rather than reflect our ailing culture."

#### 7. The effects of feminism

- a. Some aspects of the feminist movement have been helpful... but only as defined biblically... certain unbiblical denigrations of women have been part of the pridefulness of men and have been worthy of opposition
- b. BUT the overarching goals of feminism are unbiblical: the denial of the significance of gender in roles in the home and in church

#### **8. Results: little help is given to a son's question, "Dad, what does it mean for me to be a man and not a woman?" Or a daughter's question, "Mom, what does it mean for me to be a woman and not a man?"**

#### B. The Fundamental Issue of Gender

1. First statement made about (almost) every baby born into the world: "It's a boy!" or "It's a girl!"
2. Paul Jewett (*Man as Male and Female*):

"Sexuality permeates one's individual being to its very depth; it conditions every facet of one's life as a person. As the self is always aware of the self as an 'I,' so this 'I' is always aware of itself as *himself* or *herself*. Our self-knowledge is indissolubly bound up not simply

with our *human* being but with our *sexual* being. At the human level, there is no 'I and thou' *per se*, but only the 'I' who is male or female confronting the 'thou,' the other, who is also male or female." [quoted in Piper and Grudem's *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, p. 34]

3. Gender is raised at the first passage in which humanity is mentioned:

***Genesis 1:27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.***

4. Jesus Christ raised the issue in His teaching on marriage and divorce:

***Matthew 19:4-5 Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,'<sup>5</sup> 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'?***

#### C. The Glory of God in Creating Gender

1. The glory of God in men being masculine
2. The glory of God in women being feminine

#### D. Offense and Defense

1. A positive presentation of the glories and delights of biblical defined gender
2. A defense against Satanic attacks on biblical manhood and womanhood
3. Key texts:
  - a. Genesis 1-3 ("Male and female He created them")
  - b. Ephesians 5:21-33 ("The husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church")
  - c. Galatians 3:28 ("In Christ there is neither male nor female")

#### E. What is Common Between Men and Women

1. Both created equally in the image of God
2. Both equally fallen in sin and needing a Savior
3. Both equally saved by faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ
4. Both equally valuable and fruitful members of the family and church
5. Both equally heirs of the gracious gift of life, a glorious future in heaven

## F. What is Different Between Men and Women

1. Men are given the responsibility for biblically described and mandated leadership in the home and the church in ways that women are not
2. Men and women play different roles in the procreation and rearing of children
3. Men and women are intrinsically equipped by God for their varying roles in ways that are hard to define but generally recognizable

## G. Definitions of Biblical Manhood and Womanhood

**What follows is from John Piper and Wayne Grudem, *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood: John Piper, Chapter 1: "A Vision of Biblical Complementarity"* (p. 31-59)**

### 1. What is Biblical Manhood?

**At the heart of mature masculinity is a sense of benevolent responsibility to lead, provide for, and protect women in ways appropriate to a man's differing relationships.**

### 2. What is Biblical Womanhood?

**At the heart of mature femininity is a freeing disposition to affirm, receive, and nurture strength and leadership from worthy men in ways appropriate to a woman's differing relationships** [John Piper, *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, p. 35-36]

### 3. Unpacking the manhood statement

- a. **"At the heart of..."** = these definitions are not exhaustive
- b. **"...mature masculinity"** = a man's sense of responsibility is in the process of growing out of its sinful distortions and limitations, finding its true nature as a form of love not self-assertion
- c. **"... a sense of"** = the man must "sense" "feel" "affirm" his responsibility or he is not mature
- d. **"...benevolent"** = the responsibility of manhood is for the *good* of woman, ruling out all selfish or tyrannical motives or behaviors
- e. **"... responsibility"** = man will be uniquely called to account for his leadership, provision and protection in relation to women; this is illustrated when God came to Adam first in Genesis 3:9 saying "Where are you?" though Eve had eaten the fruit first; this does not mean that woman has no responsibility as we shall see, but just that man bears a unique and primary one

- f. “... **to lead**” = this is such a difficult word to define that Piper had nine substatements explaining it!!
- 1) not to be served but to serve and to sacrifice for the good of woman;
  - 2) not to assume the authority of Christ over woman but to advocate it;
  - 3) not presuming superiority, but mobilizing the strengths of others;
  - 4) not initiating every action, but feeling the responsibility to provide a general pattern of initiative;
  - 5) accepting the burden of the final say in disagreements between husband and wife, but not presuming to use it in every instance;
  - 6) expressing leadership in romantic sexual relations by creating an aura of strong and tender pursuit;
  - 7) in a family, taking the initiative in disciplining the children when both parents are present and a family standard has been broken;
  - 8) being sensitive to cultural expressions of masculinity and adapting to them (where no sin is involved) to communicate to a woman that a man would like to relate not in any aggressive or perverted way, but with maturity and dignity as a man;
  - 9) recognizing the call to leadership is a call to repentance and humility and risk-taking
- g. “...**provide for**” = not that a woman can take no supportive role in providing for a family’s needs, but that, when there is no bread on the table, it is the man who should feel the main pressure to do something to get it there; note: this is strongly implied by the focus of the curse for the man in Genesis 3 being on his breadwinning power
- h. “...**protection**” = “Suppose a man and a woman (it may be his wife or sister or friend or a total stranger) are walking along the street when an assailant threatens the two of them with a lead pipe. Mature masculinity senses a natural, God-given responsibility to step forward and put himself between the assailant and the woman. In doing this, he becomes her servant. He is willing to suffer for her safety. He bestows honor upon her.
- i. “...**women**” = I do not say “wives” because there is a sense in which masculinity inclines a man to feel a responsibility for leadership, provision, and protection toward women in general
- j. “... **in ways appropriate to a man’s differing relationships**” = Ephesians 5:22 exhorts wives to be subject to “your own” husbands; thus the



relationship of leadership and submission between a woman and her husband should be different than how she relates to other men... but there is a general pattern established here which is worked out in a variety of complex ways—in business, recreation, government, neighborhood, courtship, engagement, etc. These expressions of manhood will include acts of defense and protection, a readiness to serve with strength, and a pattern of initiative

#### 4. Unpacking the womanhood statement

a. **At the heart of...** = not exhaustive, but the essence.

b. **...Mature Femininity** = as opposed to distorted feminine traits; -Ronda Chervin, in her book *Feminine, Free and Faithful*, gives a list of what people commonly consider “positive feminine traits”:

Responsive, compassionate, empathetic, gentle, warm, tender, hospitable, receptive, diplomatic, considerate, polite, supportive, intuitive, wise, perceptive, sensitive, spiritual, sincere, vulnerable (emotionally open), obedient, trusting, graceful, sweet, expressive, charming, delicate, quiet, sensually receptive, faithful, pure.

-Negative traits:

weak, passive, slavish, weepy, wishy-washy, seductive, flirtatious, vain, chatter-box, silly, sentimental, naïve, moody, petty, catty, prudish, manipulative, complaining, nagging, pouty, smothering, spiteful.

c. **...Is a freeing disposition** =

-disposition to yield/inclination to follow (ultimately under Christ), rather than set of behaviors or roles because mature femininity will express itself in so many ways depending on the situation. Not immediate sensations of unrestrained license or independence, but true freedom seeks to fit smoothly into God’s design. Changed by the Spirit so that you can do what you love to do and know that it conforms to the design of God and leads to life and glory. Some come naturally, others grow into through prayer and practice.

d. **...To affirm, receive and nurture strength and leadership from worthy men** =

-Not merely as a response to whatever sinful men happen to offer up, but rooted in a commitment to Christ as Lord and is discerning it what it approves. Woman should not abandon her femininity, but also recognize that the natural expression of her womanhood will be hindered by the immaturity of the man in her presence.

-Affirm:

Advocate the kind of masculine-feminine complementarity that we are describing here.

-Receive:

Feels natural and glad to accept the strength and leadership of worthy men.

She does not want to reverse these roles. She is glad when he is not passive.

-Nurture:

Not merely to receive, but to nurture and strengthen the resources of masculinity. Partner and assistant. Not mere recipients in relation to men, women bring qualities men do not; they bring things that make the relationship stronger. It is very misleading to put negative values on the so-called weaknesses that each of us has by virtue of our sexuality (men and women are weaker/stronger in different realms). Two columns of weaknesses and strengths; the two will balance out. Complement, not duplicate. Men's weaknesses bring out women's strengths; women's weaknesses bring out men's strengths.

**e. ...In ways appropriate to a woman's differing relationships =**

-Does not express itself in the same way toward every man (the degree to which she welcomes leadership from her husband vs. other men). But she will affirm and receive and nurture the strength and leadership of men *in some form* in all her relationships with men. This is true even though she may find herself in roles that put some men in a subordinate role to her. Some roles might stretch appropriate expressions of femininity beyond the breaking point. Brink of contradiction suggesting that a woman may hold a position of leadership and fulfill it in a way that signals to men her endorsement of their sense of responsibility to lead. But the complexities of life require of us this risk (it is simply impossible that from time to time a woman not be in a position of influencing men). But there is a way for that housewife to direct the man that neither of them feels their mature femininity or masculinity compromised. Better to not provide list of jobs, but rather guidelines (it is hopeless to go case by case and seek a black/white assessment).

## II. Overall Goals for the Class

1. Delight in God's purposes in creating gender
2. Understanding manhood and womanhood biblically
3. Delighting in what God made you to be
4. Honoring what God made others to be
5. Opposing Satanic attacks/argument on this issue
6. Delighting in God-ordained sexuality
7. Embracing holiness as sexual beings
8. Learning to be completely content in what God ordains
9. Celebrating the gospel of Jesus Christ as the only power liberating all sinners from whatever patterns of sin they are displaying in this area