

Of Authority, Leadership, And The PC Police

A sermon by Pr. David Johnson

For many years now, there has been a quiet, but consistent movement to not “major on the minors.” The benefit is that former opponents have worked together as peers. Our AFLC has been exemplary in our cooperative efforts alongside other Bible-centered, evangelical groups on the mission field and in many outreach events.

But along the way, the church in general began to confuse the majors with the minors. In our desire to be welcoming and sensitive, we stopped discussing the painful parts of Scripture. Without intention, or even noticing, we stepped down from our theological soapbox and focused instead on those things that were more culturally acceptable. We handed the baton of being God’s mouthpieces, God’s spiritual Watchmen, over to society’s PC police.

Soon, there were few sermons on sin, sexual purity, marriage/divorce, abortion, male leadership (at home and church), and a host of other emotionally charged topics. After all, the church should be about mercy, inclusion, and grace, right? Who wants to be thought of as the paddle of God; as Elijah, Isaiah, or Ezekiel? I mean, isn’t the church supposed to be the binder of wounds, the supplier of salve; not the scraper of scabs, the wielder of scalpels?

Therefore, as the adage goes, “if the church doesn’t teach you of God, the world will.” And it has. We now have at least 2 generations who believe that God is a kindly grandpa, the Bible (what’s left of it) is an adaptable text for personal edification, and a believer is anyone who’s “personal truth” doesn’t conflict, but enhances a society. God and His Word no longer guide and instruct culture. Rather, they are directed by and conformed to *it*.

That’s why it’s time to address some of the issues our culture has abandoned. After all, if we truly believe the Bible has the solutions to the problems and issues confronting our lives, then we must discuss them...and openly. We can’t hide our conviction (*Biblical Worldview*), nor continually apologize for its perceived offensiveness. We must bring God’s light out into the open, in love, even if the brilliance of Scripture leads some to squint and others to recoil. We’re told this will be the case:

1 Corinthians 1:22-25 For indeed Jews ask for signs and Greeks search for wisdom;²³ but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block and to Gentiles foolishness,²⁴ but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.²⁵ Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

So, today we begin discussing a series of counter-cultural topics that will guide us for the next few months. It won’t be a constant series of sermons, but rather, a pathway that we’ll walk along from time to time. We’re going to call these topics, “*You’ve Got To Be Kidding Me*” sermons.

The Foundations of Roles, Authority, and Leadership

Oh, I know that there have been plenty of examples of abuse and hateful attitudes by many men for eons. It’s good that legitimate perpetrators are being held accountable for their sins. But unfortunately, it’s become popular in today’s #*MeToo* culture to point an accusing finger at all male leadership and call it paternalism and misogynistic. Girls are encouraged to find “strong women” as role models. But boys are discouraged from seeking strong male examples; after all, it will only set them on the same course of abuse and misogyny.

Gone are the days where men are the providers and protectors. A “real man” in today’s “Woke” culture is devoid of traditional drive, aggression, achievement, and backbone. After all, we’re taught these are traits of domination and control; the only possible outcome of an “alpha-male.” And since the rise of feminism in the 60’s and 70’s, this is the message promoted in culture, media, politics and even the church. But this isn’t how God designed the function of roles and leadership in the beginning.

Where Leadership began ... in the Trinity

Some in our materialistic/evolutionary culture claim that roles, authority, and leadership has always morphed within the societies themselves. Roles of men and women, and the authority they carry, have evolved as the various cultures have changed and adapted. They say that even traditional institutions like marriage have been part of, and adapted within every historical culture in one form or another, both secular and Christian, so why even bring the Bible into it?

To which I would responded, “Where do you think all those cultures got the idea; the pattern?” Every culture on earth got its patterns and standards for proper authority from God. All societies from the beginning of time have the common foundation of Genesis 1&2.

Genesis 1:1-3 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.² The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters.³ Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light.

It’s in these first 3 verses of Scripture that we see the inference of the concept of God’s triune nature: God, His Word, and the Spirit of God. The Father determined, He spoke the Word, and the power of the Holy Spirit put the Father’s thoughts and the Word into action. This was always understood as the proper form and function of the 3-person nature of the triune God. It is further expressed at the end of Chapter 1:

Genesis 1:26-27 God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

We see this three-fold arrangement of roles, authority, and delegation expressed all the way through Scripture:

The Father creates and directs

The Son enacts and redeems

The Holy Spirit moves and empowers

Neither is more or less important...all share the same nature and character...all flow from the direction and leadership of the other...with the Father being the greater among equals. You will never find any coercion or abuse, no usurping or abdication. All are content and supportive of the role and authority of the other. It is this example that should be followed and applied to all God's creation, and was, at least at the start. And several enduring principles come from this critical section of Scripture:

Genesis 1:27 God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

- * God created... "ādām" (mankind) neither evolved nor self-determined
- * Both male & female are image-bearers of God
- * Both male & female display attributes of God's character

Genesis 2:7, 15-17 Then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being... **15** The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. **16** And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, **17** but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

- * "Life" comes from God...the material comes from dust
- * "Management" and labor is man's delegated assignment
- * The rules of life were given to Adam, prior to Eve

Genesis 2:18-24 Then the Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him."...**21** So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh at that place. **22** The Lord God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man. **23** The man said, "This is now bone of my bones, And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man." **24** For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.

- * In the creation of "išâ" (woman or wife), God answered Adam's need for both companionship and a helpmeet (suitable helper). (also 1 Cor. 11:8ff)
- * God created woman from the side of (out of) Adam, not from dust, independent of man.
- * It is the man's job to "leave & Cleave" to the woman

It was this very "order of creation" and the authority that was imbedded in it, that Satan so subtly attacked:

Genesis 3:1-7 Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden'?" **2** The woman said to the serpent, "From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; **3** but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die.'" **4** The serpent said to the woman, "You surely will not die! **5** For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will

be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

6 When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate. **7** Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings.

- * It was not by accident that Satan addresses the woman
- * Satan not only attacked the weakest link (she wasn't there for God's instruction), but attacked God's order of authority
- * The woman misquoted God, playing into Satan's advance
- * The woman usurped God's order (gave man the fruit), but man ultimately bore the burden of God's guilt, not woman

Genesis 3:17 Then to Adam He said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat from it'; Cursed is the ground because of you...

Romans 5:12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned—

1 Timothy 2:13-14 For it was Adam who was first created, and then Eve. **14** And it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.