

BEING HUMAN: GROWTH GROUP STUDY 3

In our Sunday services we looked at God's design and intent with making us gendered beings. And we considered how to respond to those who suffer from Gender Dysphoria.

What was helpful? What questions are you left with?

This could last all night! Try to get a range of thoughts – but recognise that next week's growth group will allow for more of a summary of the whole series.

We saw in Revelation 19-22 that the Bible ends with the vision of the marriage banquet between the Lamb and his Bride. We're going to trace a bit more of that image in preparation for this Sunday's sermon on sexuality.

Read Jeremiah 31:31-32 How does God describe his relationship with his people under the Old Covenant?

As a marriage

Read Isaiah 62:5 How does God describe his relationship with his people? What are we to imagine?

God delighting over us – in love with us

(If time, you could go to Ezekiel 16; Hosea 1&2; Jeremiah 6:1-14 – to flag that this is a big Bible theme)

Read Ephesians 5:32; then 22-31. What language and imagery is used to describe "Christ and the church"?

Intimate – cleansing – one flesh: becoming one body.

Which way round is the metaphor? Is Christ's love for us like a husband's love for his wife, or is a husband's love for his wife to be like Christ's love for the church?

How does all of this make you feel?

It is a "mystery" but we also ought to be overwhelmed by the strength and closeness of God's love for us. We dare scarcely believe it!

Read Luke 20:27-36 What does Jesus tell us about marriage?

Jesus taught that human marriage is temporary – for this life only.

How does this make you feel?

Probably a range of thoughts on this! Will have to tread sensitively.

Read and discuss the following which is the conclusion of an article entitled: **Rejoice That Marriage Will Be No More by John Piper**

In sum, marriage ends because its procreating purpose is not needed in the resurrection ([Luke 20:35–36](#)). Marriage ends because all its pleasures are preludes and pointers to something so much better that the human heart cannot imagine ([1 Corinthians 2:9](#)). When the perfect comes, the partial passes away. And marriage ends in order to put the married and the non-married on the same footing for enjoying the fullness of joy and pleasures forevermore ([Psalm 16:11](#)).

Let's end where we began. If the age to come is not only an improvement over the *worst* of this world, but over the *best*, then the end of marriage is spectacularly good news. Do you see this? Marriage in this age, at its best, offers some of life's most intense pleasures, and sweetest intimacies. If you have ever tasted these, or have ever dreamed of tasting them, then you can feel the astonishing force of the promise that marriage will be no more because it was too weak to carry God's best eternal pleasures.

The more you feel like you would miss it, the more you should rejoice that it will be replaced. With every taste or every dream, remember: this is only foretaste — only prelude. "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, God has prepared for those who love him" ([1 Corinthians 2:9](#)). All of us, married or not.

Pray – That we would all find assurance in God's great, faithful love for us in Christ Jesus.