

I. Introduction: Why do we need to talk *again* about the family?

II. Understand our times: Postmodernism and the family. I Chron. 12:32

- A. Traditional Christian thought seeks to understand the world through God's revelation in Scripture which is the rule for life.
- B. Modernism looks to man to understand the world and solve his problems through intellectual and scientific endeavors.
- C. Postmodernism denies the existence of fixed absolute universal and objective truth.
 - 1. There is no *meta-narrative* (the big story which explains everything).
 - 2. Truth is a construct and is relative.
 - 3. Those who claim to have absolute truth have used their truth claims (meta-narratives) as instruments of oppression to stay in power.
 - 4. Truth claims and meta-narratives, therefore, must be deconstructed so that society can be liberated.
 - 5. The meaning of words and texts is determined by the reader, not the author.
- D. How does postmodernism affect the family? Isa. 5:20
- E. Tragically, even the professing church has been influenced by postmodernism.

III. How can a Christian answer postmodernism?

- A. Postmodernism is internally inconsistent: It collapses upon itself.
 - 1. Postmodernism itself is a meta-narrative which tries to explain reality.
 - 2. Postmodernists are intolerant of those who question their meta-narrative by believing in some other absolute truth. Isa. 5:20
 - 3. Postmodernists cannot consistently apply their system in the real world.
- B. There is a personal God Who has created all things and has revealed Himself to us. Genesis 1:1f
 - 1. He has created us in His Image for His own glory. Gen. 1:27
 - 2. He rules over us.
 - 3. He speaks with clarity and authority. II Ti. 3:16-17
- C. How can you persuade modern people that the God of the Bible exists?
 - 1. Deep down everyone knows God exists and that they are accountable to Him. Romans 1:19-20,32
 - 2. False thought, including both modernism and postmodernism, is an attempt to suppress the knowledge of God. Rom. 1:18b,21,25
 - 3. Immorality is an expression of rebellion against God. Rom. 1:26-31
- D. Postmodern thought is not really new. Genesis 3 Isa. 5:20
 - 1. Satan deconstructed God's Word. Genesis 3:1,4-5
 - 2. Eve chose to remake herself and to establish her own truth/reality. Genesis 3:6
 - 3. The heart of sin is seeking autonomy from God.

IV. Biblical foundations for the family. Genesis 2:18-25

- A. God originated marriage for our good. Gen. 2:18a**
1. This is our *meta-narrative*: on which is based the entire biblical teaching on the family. Eph. 5:22f I Pet. 3:1-7 Mt. 19:1f
 2. For most of us, it is not good to be alone.
 3. God has given marriage to complete us.
 4. Some are called to a single life. I Co. 7:1,7-8 Mt. 19:12
- B. God designed marriage as a lifelong covenant between one man and one woman. v. 19-22 God defines the family!**
1. Only a woman can complete a man (and only a man can complete a woman).
 2. Homosexuality is a perversion of God's design. Lev. 18:22-25 20:13 Dt. 22:5 I Co. 6:9 Ro. 1:26-27
- C. God established gender and gender roles within marriage. v. 18b, 20a, 23**
1. The man exercises loving headship. I Co. 11:3 I Ti. 2:11-13 Eph. 5:25f
 2. The wife is to be his helper. I Co. 11:8-9 Eph. 5:22-23
- D. God has given directives for marriage. Genesis 2:24**
1. Leave: Marriage is the creation of a new family unit.
 2. Cleave: Marriage is meant to be an intimate lifelong union. Mt. 19:3-9 Mal. 3:14f
 3. One flesh: Marriage is the only place for sexual expression.
 - a. Sexual union is designed by God as an expression of the marriage covenant.
 - b. Sex is designed by God to produce children. Gen. 1:27-28 Ps. 127
 - c. Sex is designed by God to bring happiness to the husband and the wife as they express their love to one another. Pr. 5:18-19 Song of Solomon Dt. 24:5
 - d. Every sexual expression outside of marriage is a sin against God. Heb. 13:4 . Mt. 5:27-28 Ex. 20:14 Pr. 6:26,32-33 5:22-23 7:23 I Co. 6:9f
- E. Marriage is a blessing from God! 2:23 Prov. 18:22**
- F. The fall has had a terrible effect on marriage. Gen. 3:16 Ecc. 7:29**
1. Women desire to usurp male headship in the home. Gen. 4:7
 2. Men become domineering and abusive.
 3. God's design for marriage has been twisted in countless ways.

V. Concluding applications: Who is in charge of your family?

Discussion questions

1. Why is the state of the family deteriorating so rapidly in America?
2. Define modernism.
3. What is postmodernism?
4. How does postmodernism affect the family?
5. How has the church been influenced by postmodern thought?
6. How can Christians reach our postmodern culture?
7. Why is Genesis 1-2 so important in forming our view of the family?
8. Why did God establish marriage?
9. What do we learn about God's design for marriage from Genesis 2?
10. What do we learn about God's directives for marriage in Genesis 2:24?
11. What effect has the fall had upon marriage?