

Text: Genesis 1:26-27

Title: “In His Image ... The Gender Debate”

BUMPER VIDEO – Open your Bibles with me again today to Genesis 1:26. As you’re turning I want to welcome Dr. Robert Lopez to our worship today. Robert is Professor of Humanities at the Scarborough College at SWBTS. Robert, we’re glad to have you, your wife Mia and your children Dane and Irena with us today. We’re in this series exploring what it means for humans to be made in the image of God. **Read Genesis 1:26-27.**

So God created the first humans in His image, and every person born since then is considered to be made in the image of God. We talked last week about what it means to be made in the image of God and that it shapes the way we see ourselves and the way we see others. And one of my goals in this series is to help us understand that being God’s image-bearers gives every person dignity. But it also gives us an identity. Genesis 1:27 says that God creates humans male and female. And God’s beautiful design for humanity allows for them to do what He said they are to do, and that is to be fruitful and multiply ... to have children.

And our understanding of the concept of the image of God helps us know how to lovingly and biblically speak into the discussion today about homosexuality and gender confusion. Robert, you have a unique perspective on this issue having grown up in a rather unorthodox family situation.

1. Why do you feel called to address the LGBT issue?

We’ve been hearing about presidential candidate, Pete Buttigieg (Boot-a-jedge), who is an openly gay mayor in Indiana. When he was challenged by Vice-President Mike Pence about his homosexual lifestyle the mayor said, “The thing that I wish the Mike Pences of the world would understand, that if you have a problem with who I am, your problem is not with me. Your quarrel, sir, is with my creator.” How do we answer that from the Word of God?

2. Can you make the case for a specific position on LGBT issues, based solely on the Word of God? How?

3. Do you believe people can become heterosexual if they already say they are homosexual? Is that a sound biblical goal?

4. What about people who feel their orientation is an unchangeable part of their identity?

5. What can Christians say or do when they encounter people who identify as gay?

6. Is there a place for gay Christianity in the church?

One day a sexually immoral woman was brought before Jesus by some very religious people. They wanted to stone her to death. Jesus said, “If any of you is without sin, you throw the first stone.” And they all had to admit that they were sinners as well; then they left. Then Jesus turned to the woman and said, “Neither do I condemn you. Go and leave your life of sin.”

First, there's a way to show the love of Jesus to people who sin sexually. Jesus didn't hate on her and He didn't permit others to hate on her. None of us have the right to throw stones at sinners, because we are all sinners. We all need Jesus. We need to learn to engage with others whose sins are different from ours to love them to Jesus.

We have a ministry called Safe Place. There's info in the worship guide about how you can connect with this support group.

Second, if you are struggling in sin ... sexual sin, greed, materialism, bitterness, cheating or whatever ... come home to Jesus. Hear Jesus say to you, "I do not condemn you. Go and leave your life of sin." When we receive Christ He gives us the power to actually leave our life of sin.

You were created in the image of God to have a relationship with God and to fulfill the purpose of God through His Son Jesus Christ.