

/ by design series study guide

Speaker: Dr. Nancy Pearcey

Date: Feb 9/10, 2019

PURSUE RELATIONSHIP: Opportunities to connect and pray as a group

1. What toppings do you like on ice cream? (Or if you don't like ice cream, what is your favorite dessert?)
2. Our speaker this weekend, Nancy Pearcey, talked about how in our culture there is a divide as illustrated below:

Morality	Sacred
Private, Subjective, Relativistic	
Science	Secular
Public, Objective, Universal	

How are you experiencing this divide?

3. Nancy's book, titled *Love Thy Body*, seeks to restore dignity to the human body as something that is part of our whole existence, not just the 'physical' part of us. When do we as Christians focus on the 'spiritual' aspects of life thereby dismissing the physical?

PURSUE GOD: Time that is devoted to the Word of God

1. *Read Psalms 63:1; Proverbs 4:20-22; Psalms 32:3.* Nancy says, "The inner life of the soul is expressed – made visible – through the outer life of the body... The Bible treats the human being as a psychophysical unity." How is Nancy's quote supported by Scripture?
2. Nancy gave some examples of how immoral choices were being made due to living with a divide between soul and body? What are the examples?
3. What hope do you see in some of the examples she gave? What encouragement do you see from these stories?
4. Nancy states, "Christianity's greatest scandal at the time was its claim that the Supreme Deity had actually entered into the realm of matter and taken on a physical body. The incarnation is the ultimate affirmation of the dignity of the human body. What's more, when Jesus was executed on a Roman cross... what did he do then? He came back – in a bodily resurrection..."

Read 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 and Romans 12:1-2. What does it mean for you to honor God with your body?

PURSUE MISSION: Seek to be the community of God's people in your community

1. Nancy stated at the beginning of the message, "Today many people are no longer asking, 'Is Christianity True?' They're asking, 'Why are Christians such bigots?'" In light of previous discussion, how will you respond to this perception?
2. Pastor Henry talked about the story of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32) and cautioned Christians about being like the older brother in the parable. How do we tend to treat others who we think may not be living the way God desires?
3. Pastor Henry introduced a group of messages that will be given over the next five months surrounding God's design for our sexuality and relationships. He said, "We want to be a people who reflect the heart and Spirit of Christ" and mentioned

the three major ways that we as Christians can grow. Those three were: *Lean in with love, uphold truth, offer hope.* Which of these do you feel you can grow in over this next season?

For Personal Reflection/Prayer:

How can you seek to acknowledge the deep/hidden things in your life as we hear more messages over the next several months?

THE WORD (NIV)

Psalm 63:1

You, God, are my God, earnestly I seek you; I thirst for you, my whole being longs for you, in a dry and parched land where there is no water.

Proverbs 4:20-22

²⁰ My son, pay attention to what I say; turn your ear to my words. ²¹ Do not let them out of your sight, keep them within your heart; ²² for they are life to those who find them and health to one's whole body.

Psalms 32:3

When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

¹⁹ Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; ²⁰ you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.

Romans 12:1-2

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. ² Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Luke 15:11-32

This week's writers:

Edi J Dygert, Jan Varner, Deb Matiko, Georgia Harrison, Jared Harrison

/ by design series study summary

Pastor Henry's Introduction to the Sermon:

About 18 months ago Pastor Henry and the CSC leadership felt God leading them to teach on matters of identity, sexuality, and relationships. Everyone needs to know that God is the purposeful Creator: he has handcrafted and shaped every detail of who we are as human beings. Our identity, sexuality, and relationships are to represent this purposeful design. Over the next few months, every few Sundays we will be taking a look at these very relevant aspects of our human existence from a biblical perspective.

As CSC pastors and staff prayed about what God would have them communicate, three things were impressed upon their hearts as the goals of these messages: First, that we as a church would gain a deeper understanding and practice of *leaning in with love*. How is the church supposed to love, not only those of our own faith community, but those of different faiths and worldviews? Our goal is that CSC is a place where people feel welcome, safe, loved and can learn about God's work in their lives that stems from his perfect love.

Our second goal is that we will *uphold the truth*. We live in a post-truth culture that values a person's subjective preference over objective truth. Here at CSC, we believe that God has given us a rock of truth to stand upon — his Word. As we seek to lean into love, we believe this must be done from a stance of standing on the truth of the Bible.

Lastly, our goal is to offer hope. Hope is a keynote theme of the Bible. The Scriptures offer the hope of complete redemption, a life of peace with God in community, and the power to live a purposeful joy-filled life that extends into eternity. Far from being restrictive, the message of the Bible leads to full and eternal life.

Pastor Henry noted that, along with the messages over the next few months touching on identity, sexuality, and relationships, there will also be classes, workshops, and resources offered to continue the conversation and to help us to better *lean in with love, uphold the truth, and offer hope*.

Dr. Nancy Pearcey's Message Summary:

Nancy Pearcey's new book, *Love Thy Body*, covers the cutting edge moral issues of our day, including abortion, euthanasia, transgenderism, and homosexuality. The premise is that our modern society has created a disconnect between our bodies and our inner selves. We are taught that how we think or feel is most important; the body is relegated to having no ultimate purpose (as Richard Dawkins likes to say, our bodies are just "meat machines"). Nancy points out that in this way of thinking, the body is demeaned and gives no clues about who we are and has nothing to say to us about our identity. We see the consequences of this thinking in issues such as abortion, assisted-suicide and even human sexuality. An example of this dualism between the inner life and the body is the 'hook-up' culture. People get together for sex which they believe is purely physical — the inner life of the person, the mind, emotions, spirituality, is completely cut off. Is that possible? Can the emotional experience be cut off from the physical? Or are they indivisible? For issues such as homosexuality and transgenderism we see a similar dualism. The body says one thing but the 'mind' or 'inner person' says something different. From a biological perspective males and females are counterparts to one another, but in our society if a person's sense of attraction is to persons of their same gender, or their inner feeling is that they need to live life as the opposite gender, the 'inner sense' takes priority. There is a dualism where the mind says one thing, but the body another. In our society, the body is subjugated.

The Biblical worldview, however, is holistic — the mind, spirit, and body are meant to be in alignment. We see this from Scriptures such as Psalm 63:1; Proverbs 4:20-22; Psalm 32:3 and in the New Testament in 1 Corinthians 6:19-20. The Christian view of nature is 'teleological', which means it has a purpose. It reflects a higher reality.

Humans were created in the image of God — we are his handiwork. And in the greatest affirmation possible of the dignity of the human form, God Himself became human, in the person of Jesus Christ. And after he was crucified, what did he do? He was resurrected *in bodily form*. And this is a foreshadowing for all of creation: God will not tear down and destroy the universe, he is going to remake it, restore it, renew it. There will be a new heaven and a new earth, and all who inhabit it will be in resurrected, bodily form.

The church must understand the implications of having a 'divided' worldview. We must recognize that many of the moral decisions being made in our society are because of this duality. We must hold on to the value of creation and of our bodies in reflecting who God is and teaching us who we are. And we must be ready to minister to those who are confused and those who have been wounded by living in a society that promotes a dualistic view.

Closing Comments by Pastor Henry

Pastor Henry highlighted something Dr. Pearcey said in her sermon: *The church must be prepared to minister to the wounded*. He pointed out that in reality, all of us are wounded. We have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. He referenced the parable of the prodigal son: both of the brothers, the one who squandered the father's wealth AND the older brother who lived a life of piety were in need of grace, forgiveness and love. We want to be a church who walks alongside one another, and those from outside the church community who are in need of love, healing, hope, and truth.