

Track 2: You Should Love your Body – Graham Nicholls

Intro

Purpose: understanding the separation of body and person and the implications

Based on Nancy Piercey's Book: Love Thy Body

1. The autonomous self

a) Separation of Self and Body

Ancient world – spirit good; body bad

Modern twist: personhood Theory

Person – moral and legal rights.

Body – expendable biological organism

Person: Self-aware, social, embodied, and sentient (able to both think and feel and imagine).

Body is just material. There is no purpose, no right way for it to be treated.

b) Consequence of Personhood Theory

If nature is amoral, we can just impose our will, or the will of the collective.

“Personhood theory provides justification to oppress and exploit the most vulnerable human beings.”

Morality is a social construct. And has no permanent authority.

Species do not really exist – so why not mix them up

Similar argument separating the production from the family in IVF and surrogacy

Materialism ironically ends up devaluing the body. We only look after it to stay alive, achieve some purpose that the community or the self wants.

2. Christian Anthropology

a) Made in his image (Gen 1&2)

- The image of God
 - Made rational: Thinking – conscious, abstract, creative. Moral – innate sense right and wrong. Relational – desire to love and be loved
 - Made to rule: Mandate to “fill, subdue and rule”
 - ⇒ Right to life comes from being image bearers (Gen 9:6)
- Design of the body indicates purpose. It's not just an arbitrary vessel that just does whatever it can do
- A distinct kind of dualism. Soul and flesh/body Psalm 63:1; Psalm 44:25
- Resurrected **bodies** in the new heavens and earth

b) Made Male and Female (Gen 1&2)

- God made male and female – alike. Equal in creative status as image bearers together
- God made male and female – different
 - equipped for different roles
 - fallen: image distorted. Gender wars
 - ⇒ Gender is not a social construct

c) Marriage – part of a bigger story

- Defined in creation (Gen 2:18-25). Part of creation's design, not social construct
 - One man, one woman in an exclusive and lifelong relationship
 - Sex is for marriage only; marriage created for glory not shame
- (Eph 5) The bigger story – Christ and the Church, Intimate unity v23, Passionate, self sacrificial love v25, Exclusive devotion with a purpose v26, Glory and beauty to come v27, and we are part of this bigger love story!
- All sex outside the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman goes against God's plan to fulfil our role to rule the world under God, misused the intended purpose of sex and cannot reflect the covenant love of God for his church