



Five Cultural Lies About Sex, Study Edition

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5 CULTURAL LIES ABOUT SEX

A Biblical Study, prepared by Dr. Andrew Corbett

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

Study 1 - GENDER

“There is no difference between men and women.”

Study 2 - MARRIAGE

“Marriage is just a social construct.”

Study 3 - PORN

“It’s healthy for a person’s psychological well-being, and especially good for a married couple to truly enjoy their times of intimacy.”

Study 4 - FREE LOVE

“Try before you buy is an antidote to divorce.”

Study 5 - REPRESSIVE?

“The Bible was ignorant about human sexuality therefore its sexual prohibitions are also ignorant and actually repressive.”

INTRODUCTION

¶ He [Jesus] is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by Him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through Him and for Him.

COLOSSIANS 1:15-16

We humans were designed by our Maker, the Lord Jesus Christ, to be *sexual*. That is, we were created and intended by our Creator to be a *sex*¹ - male or female - and to be appropriately sexual with a fourfold purpose. After GOD had *created all things in heaven and on earth* He rested after creating the first man and woman *in His image* - His crowning act of creation.

¶ Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

¶ So God created man in His own image,
in the image of God He created him;
male and female He created them.

GENESIS 1:26-27

¹ I have intentionally *not* used the word *gender* and for the sake of precision used the word *sex* to indicated either male or female.

Having made mankind with complementary sexes, male and female, the LORD then declared that they were to also have a sexual purpose - to *reproduce* and to *be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth* (Gen. 1:28). After their creation the LORD declared another purpose for their sexuality - to *become one flesh*, that is, to be so united as complementary equals in a marriage covenant that they find physical satisfaction and consummation exclusively in each other.

No other creature has this same privilege. Animals were never created in God's image, and therefore, human beings can never be considered as simply a higher-developed form of animal life. We're distinct from all other life, and the secular world's efforts to make humanity equivalent to the animal kingdom are misguided and misleading... The imago Dei (*image of God*) and being male or female are essential to being human.

CHRISTOPHER YUAN, *HOLY SEXUALITY AND THE GOSPEL*, 2018: 19, 21

We all bear the image of our Creator. Considering that the apostle John declared that, "*God is love*" (1 John 4:8). This should not be confused with the idolatrous concept that *love is God*. But because GOD is love we can conclude, that humankind was created:

- (i) because GOD loved;
- (ii) to reflect GOD and His love and to love others;
- (iii) to experience love by being loved;
- (iv) to be *loveable*.

Little wonder then, that many people intuitively know this, but don't know what to do with this intuition. People may feel that their highest quest in life is to find another *person* to love and to be loved by and not yet realise that this quest begins with knowing the infinite,

unfathomable, incomprehensible, unconditional pure love that their Maker has for them and longs for them enjoy!

So that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

EPHESIANS 3:17-19

Humankind was created by GOD — not because He needed us — but because He loved what He was about to create, which would ultimately lead to your and my existence, something desperately tragic happened. The result of this tragedy was that mankind forfeited their unimpeded access to GOD and turned their backs on Him through their rebellion. While all people everywhere intuitively know that there is a GOD, the stain of this original rebellion by our forefather and foremother has left an *almost* irreversible scar on the soul of every person. This failure by our fore-parents is referred to as *original sin* not because it was necessarily the *first* act of disobedience, but because it was the act from which all subsequent sin originated.²

This has been a grand deception that has now distorted our perspective of life's *purpose*, our own *identity* and even what *love* really is. Dr. Christopher Yuan, came out of the “Gay lifestyle” after becoming a Christian, reflects on mankind's stain of sin:

[Original sin,] it's a pollution and corruption of our full nature and therefore a distortion of God's image. Sin has changed our overall direction from obedience to rebellion. Original sin is not who we are

² The first act of rebellion was committed by a heavenly creature who conceived of defying GOD because he was filled with pride and envy and sought to sabotage GOD's image bearers.

but rather a pervasive pollution of our essential identity—in other words, it’s how we are.

HOLY SEXUALITY AND THE GOSPEL, 2018: 19, 29

Adam’s original sin was *our* sin because he was, what theologians refer to as, mankind’s “Federal Head”. That is, every human being is a descendant from Adam. Our ancestor’s sin was *our* sin because, (i) we were *genetically in* Adam when he sinned; and, (ii) he was our representative, our spiritual ancestor. Our original sin turned our created dependence upon God into rebellious *self*-dependence. We went from worship of GOD to worship of self. We fabricated an identity on what we felt and did instead of our actual identity as *a son or daughter of God who bears a family resemblance to their Heavenly Father and serves as His representative*. This identity distortion has had a profound impact on how some people now view who they are and how they view sexuality.

But GOD had a remedy in mind even before our ancestor Adam fell from innocence into wilful sin. Despite mankind’s attempts at self-deification and defiance of GOD’s commands, GOD had a plan to redeem mankind and heal them of their original and additional wilful sins. This plan involved the eternal Son of GOD becoming *incarnate*.³

³ “incarnate” means ‘in the flesh’ it is the term used to describe Jesus Christ becoming a human through the normal phases of conception to adulthood. In John 1:14, “the Word became flesh and dwelt among us” the word translated ‘dwelt’ is the Greek word *skeno-ow* which literally means “to tabernacle”. The Tabernacle originated in the Book of Exodus and was the place where God and man could meet and where sins could be atoned for by the blood of animal sacrifices. Later in Israel’s history, the Tabernacle, which was originally a portable tent, was established as a permanent *Temple*. Jesus’ incarnation was the “true Temple”. In a heated discussion the Pharisees, Jesus declared about Himself, “I tell you, something greater than the temple is here” (Matt. 12:6), and when dying on the cross, passerby mocked Christ with the reminder of what He had preached: “And those who passed by derided him, wagging their heads and saying, ‘Aha! You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days’” (Mk. 15:29).

While Adam had been created in the image of GOD (Latin: *imago Dei*), the Son of God *was* the very image of God!

And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of **Christ, who is the image of God.**

SECOND CORINTHIANS 4:3-4

While there were some obvious differences between Adam and Christ such as:

The First Adam	The Last Adam (Christ)
Created	Creator [Col. 1:16]
Immortal (Had a beginning.)	Eternal (Had no beginning and will have no end.) [Col. 1:17]
Was originally <i>posse non peccare</i> (“able not to sin”) and <i>posse peccare</i> (“able to sin”) but after the Fall he was <i>non posse non peccare</i> (“unable not to sin”).	Was only <i>non posse peccare</i> (“unable to sin”). [Jn. 8:46]
Originally had access to ‘The Tree of Life’ but then forfeited that access.	Christ is ‘The Tree of Life’ [Jn. 1:4; 3:15]
First man of creation (the ‘Federal Head’) whose guilt is transmitted to all humans. [Rom. 5:12]	Christ the Instigator of the <i>new</i> creation and is the Source of forgiveness and righteousness available to all humans. Christ is now the <i>New Federal Head</i> of the Human Race. [2Cor. 5:17; Rom. 5:15-16]
Sinned.	Never sinned.
Subject to physical death.	Conquered physical death through His resurrection. [Rom. 6:9]

There is a direct correlation with Adam and Jesus Christ: Adam was the start of the creation of humankind and all people are connected to him via *blood*, but Christ was the start of the *new* creation. Jesus Christ became the Federal Head of the new creations - His church (Col. 1:18) - and all the redeemed are connected to Him via *His blood* (Col. 1:20).

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

SECOND CORINTHIANS 5:17

The One Who Redeemed Us From The Curse of The Law is The One Who Gave and Upheld The Law

Adam's guilt was the result of breaking GOD's law. Breaking GOD's law is referred to as *sin*. Wayne Grudem defines it as, "Sin is any failure to conform to the moral law of God in act, attitude, or nature."⁴ There are various words in the Bible for *sin*:

- * sin - to miss the mark (an archery term)
- * transgress - to pass over (the boundary), to go beyond [1Thess. 4:6]
- * trespass - a false step [Rom. 5:15]

C.S. Lewis remarks that *forgiveness* of sin is often thought of *excusing* sin. But the Forgiver of sin certainly did not *excuse* sin. Sin is an act, attitude, or disposition (nature) of rebellion toward GOD. It is *the* thing that separates a person from GOD and if not confessed, repented of, and forgiven by GOD through a transaction of contrition on the part of the sinner, it will result in eternal separation from GOD. Thus, when confronting incidents or questions of sexual prohibitions during His earthly ministry, Christ reinforced His laws regarding fornication (sexual activity without being married to that person, originally given in Lev. 18:6-22, and restated by Christ in Matt. 15:9), adultery (sex with someone married to someone else, Matt. 19:4-6), and to live sexually pure as illustrated in the story "caught in the act of adultery" (John 8:1-11).

⁴ Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology. An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*, InterVarsity Press, 2005:490.

Christ Taught His Followers to Reset Their Priorities

Culture lies to people about their purpose and their identity. These lies are promoted through “social media”, the arts (film, television, literature) and schooling. “Sexual expression is your right” “You be you!” “Be true to yourself” “Love is love and love is God” are examples of these lies. These lies encourage the vulnerable to regard their sexual identity and expression as their highest purpose and truest means to fulfillment and happiness. Sadly, this often leads people into deeper anxiety and despair. It promotes a false purpose and a desperately untrue view of what it means to be human. This is why what Jesus taught about these two issues urgently needs to be rediscovered.

Five hundred years ago in Westminster England, an important gathering of thinkers discussed these issues seeking a clear, testable, and true answer to the questions of purpose and identity. After very careful consideration they resolved that, “*The chief end of man[kind] is to know and enjoy God forever.*” Their conclusion was a restatement of the words of Christ in the Beatitudes:

Therefore do not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. **But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.** ¶ “Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.”

MATTHEW 6:31-34

Seek first, Jesus said, *the kingdom of God!* Seek to live your life with GOD as your King and Ruler. Make His will for your life your highest priority, Jesus taught. By living like this you will become your true self because you will be living the way your Maker has purposed

for you to live. But it's not just GOD's kingdom that Jesus said that His followers should make their *first* priority. Christ also included GOD's *righteousness* as a first priority for His believers to seek. Righteousness, holiness, and godliness are virtually synonyms.⁵ Each of these synonyms are qualities that reflect what GOD is like. This means that by seeking first the kingdom of GOD and His righteousness we are striving to be loving of others, humble, wise, helpful, prayerful, gentle, courageous, faithful, and considerate. Your highest goal should not be to get married, or even to find someone with whom you can be sexually active. Your highest goal and first priority in life should be to know GOD and to be holy. But if you are hoping to eventually get married, there's some things you should know about GOD's perspective on marriage.

Sex and/or Marriage

God has designed sexual intimacy as a sacred union between a man and a woman who have covenanted with each other before GOD.

...the LORD was witness between you and the wife of your youth, to whom you have been faithless, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant.

MALACHI 2:14

Sexual intimacy is the highest act of physical intimacy between a man and a woman. Because of its sacred fourfold-purpose, it demands the highest possible physical commitment between a man and woman known as a *nuptial covenant*.⁶

⁵ A *synonym* is a word that has a similar meaning to another word.

⁶ 'Nuptial' is from the Latin word *nuptialis* which means "to wed", "to be married".

Marriage is a *covenant*, not a *contract* (Ezek. 16:8). The difference between the two is: (i) the level of mutual commitment between the parties; and, (ii) the duration of the commitment. Sometimes we hear a partnership described in percentage terms as a “50:50 relationship”. But the level of commitment involved in a *nuptial covenant* is a “100:100 relationship”! That is, each spouse gives 100% of themselves to their spouse. This type of relationship is seen in the Bible with expressions that sound like, “*I am yours and you are mine.*” This is also the expression used by GOD to describe His covenant with His people.

I will take you to be My people, and I will be your God, and you shall know that I am the LORD your God, who has brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.

EXODUS 6:7

The prophet Jeremiah later reminded the wayward people of southern Israel (Judah) to honour their initial covenant with GOD.

But this command I gave them: ‘Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be My people. And walk in all the way that I command you, that it may be well with you.’

JEREMIAH 7:23

To form a covenant together in Old Testament times, both parties would publicly make vows to each other, with terms and conditions, before witnesses which involved pronouncing a curse upon the one who ever broke it (note Gen. 31:44-52). They would exchange symbols of their covenant (usually their identifiable weapons such a sword or bow-and-arrows). And in some instances, they would even modify their names to reflect their covenant so that if an enemy considered attacking them they might think twice about it when they discovered that there was a covenant partner who had vowed to defend them. For example, when GOD (Yahweh) and Abram formed a covenant with

each other, Abram had his name modified to *Abraham* (Gen. 17:5), and GOD became known as: *the GOD of Abraham* (Gen. 26:34). The covenant would then be commemorated with the sacrifice of an animal that was then butchered, roasted, and eaten as part of the covenant meal (Gen. 31:46).

The ancient elements involved in making a covenant are now echoed in a modern wedding ceremony.

- Lifelong vows are exchanged between the groom and bride.
- These vows are made before GOD and His representative.
- The vows are also declared before witnesses.
- Covenant vow tokens (usually wedding rings) are exchanged.
- The bride (usually) changes her *maiden* name to her *married* name.
- Then there is a covenant feast to follow for the witnesses to celebrate.
- The newly wedded couple then retreats to consummate their marriage covenant sexually.

Sexual intimacy within a marriage unites and bonds a husband and wife physically, emotionally, psychologically, and spiritually.

Then the man said,

“This at last is bone of my bones
and flesh of my flesh;
she shall be called Woman,
because she was taken out of Man.”

¶ Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

GENESIS 2:23-25

GOD has designed sexual intimacy as His “wedding gift” for a married couple. It is a gift that is meant to be enjoyed throughout their marriage and it has four sacred purposes for enriching their marriage.

He [Jesus] answered, “Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, ‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’? So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.”

MATTHEW 19:4-6

God has Designed 4 Purposes for Sexual Intimacy

Sexual intimacy within marriage satisfies different needs within men and within women. For men it satisfies a deep desire not just for pleasure, but also for *respect*. For women it satisfies a deep desire to be *wanted* and *admired as beautiful*.

Firstly, as we have observed, GOD has designed sexual intimacy as a means for uniting and bonding a husband and wife (which is why the apostle Paul warns against non-marital sex 1Cor. 6:16).

Secondly, GOD has designed sexual intimacy with the purpose of procreating children.

Did He not make them one, with a portion of the Spirit in their union? And what was the one God seeking? Godly offspring. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and let none of you be faithless to the wife of your youth.

MALACHI 2:15

Becoming a mother or a father is one of the highest privileges a human being can be given!

Thirdly, GOD has designed sexual intimacy within a marriage for comfort and pleasure. Unlike in the movies and TV shows which often promotes spur-of-the-moment sexual liaisons, GOD has designed for a sexual intimacy to be the culmination of romance that is undergirded by care and consideration for the other from transparent and honest communication. A husband needs to let his wife know that she is worth chasing, wooing, respect, and consideration before he demands her surrender! The more a married couple develop their intimacy through transparent communication which involves listening, apologising, and proving that they have heard and have responded to what they have heard, the closer they will become and the more likely it will be that they enhance their sexual pleasure with each other.

Fourthly, GOD has designed that sexual intimacy is a theological picture of the believer's union with Christ where the believer is a member of Christ's bride, the Church.

But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with Him.

FIRST CORINTHIANS 6:17

“Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the Church.

EPHESIANS 5:31-32

Thus, GOD's purpose and design for human sexual intimacy is fourfold and bounded by a nuptial covenant between the man and the woman. Because this covenant is for *life*, for better or for worse, for richer or for poorer, and in sickness and in health, it should therefore not be entered into lightly. This is especially so because it is also a shadow, a reflection, a display, of GOD's loving commitment to those who enter into covenant with Him. A marriage covenant between a man and a wife is like a journey. As with any long journey, it not only

needs an unbreakable commitment between the husband and wife, it also demands intentional preparation. When astronauts journey to the moon they undergo extensive periods of rigorous preparation for their 770,000 km, six-day, journey! Marriage is normally *much* longer than a six-day journey and therefore requires appropriate preparation as well!

The Roles of a Husband and a Wife

¶ Three things are too wonderful for me;
 four I do not understand:
 the way of an eagle in the sky,
 the way of a serpent on a rock,
 the way of a ship on the high seas,
 and the way of a man with a virgin.

PROVERBS 30:18-19

Despite the cultural lie that men and women are *equal* (“identical”) in every way, God has made male and female intentionally different and intentionally complementary. These differences are not limited to our biology - although, there are some significant differences that must be acknowledged *and celebrated* (including sexual appetite differences).

¶ Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.

FIRST PETER 3:7

If you are a woman, your femaleness is a gift from GOD. You are made by GOD with certain insights which usually do not come naturally to men. You may have heard of *a woman’s intuition*. This intuition helps you to more easily be considerate of others than most men ordinarily do. When GOD created the first woman she was created as *an aid* (Hebrew word: *ezer*). The same word is often used in the Old

Testament to describe GOD. In Exodus 18:4, Moses says, “(*The God of my father was my help* (Heb. *ēzer*), *and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh*’).” An *ēzer* was not an inferior, as the English word *helper* might conjure, but someone who could provide resources that someone else lacked. Thus a woman should seek to realise her GOD-given potential to develop her physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual, attributes to the glory of GOD.

If you are a man, under normal circumstances, you will possess more physical strength than a woman (1Pet. 3:7). GOD has designed you with this capacity for the good of others. When GOD created the first man, Adam, he was immediately set to very physical *work* by GOD (Gen. 2:15). Within a marriage then, a man, under normal circumstances, performs a role which may necessitate this greater physical strength to *protect, provide for, and pastor*, his wife and family (see 1 Tim. 3:1-5). In the New Testament, the husband within a marriage is a shadow of Christ’s relationship to His Church and is referred to as *the head*. This is not a designation of superiority, but of *responsibility*. Thus, a man should seek to realise his GOD-given potential to develop his physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual, attributes to the glory of God.

Sex and Singleness

It’s time to break free from this [world’s] paradigm and embrace God’s vision for sexuality. Holy sexuality consists of two paths: chastity in singleness and faithfulness in marriage. Chastity is more than simply abstention from extramarital sex; it conveys purity and holiness. Faithfulness is more than merely maintaining chastity and avoiding illicit sex; it conveys covenantal commitment.

CHRISTOPHER YUAN, *HOLY SEXUALITY AND THE GOSPEL*, 2018: 46

If you are single, your highest goal in life should not be to remain single *or* to get married. Your highest goal in life should be to live a life that pleases God. This is the essence of *holiness*. Holiness is the opposite of *idolatry*. Dr. Christopher Yuan says that there are two paths to holy sexuality: chastity in singleness (abstaining from sex in order to obey GOD) and faithfulness in marriage. Both pathways have holiness as their goal - not idolatrous self-fulfilment.

Many people discover that they can live a very fulfilled life as a single as they pursue holiness. Many of these people want to marry, but never do. Many of these singles thought that they would always be single, but discovered that GOD had gifted them with marriage. In each case these singles had learned to live contentedly and surrendered to GOD's will for their lives.

Sadly, for some people, singleness is forced upon them through the unwanted end of a marriage through either, death, divorce, or desertion. While these circumstances leads to grief, it also necessitates turning to the LORD in worshipful surrender, which is *holiness*.

Experiencing God's Forgiveness and Cleansing

In a section titled, *Raging Hormones*, author Josh McDowell writes-

The flood of sexual hormones is intense and continues to build through the early twenties. This is a period of great confusion, curiosity, fear, and excitement. Everything in the young person's body is gearing up for sexual activity, and desire is great.

JOSH MCDOWELL, HOW TO HELP YOUR CHILD TO SAY "NO" TO SEXUAL PRESSURE, MILTON KEYNES, UK: WORD, 1987:18

One of the prevailing lies of culture is that if it feels *natural* it must be right and good. One of the ways we can discern a lie is by its devastating and harmful effects. Josh McDowell recounts such a story:

When I was only fourteen years of age, I dated an eighteen-year-old boy. After a month or so of dating, he told me that he loved me and had to “have me.” He said that if I loved him, I would have sex with him. And if I wouldn’t, he couldn’t control his desire for me and would have to break up with me.

What did I think at fourteen years of age? I knew sex was wrong before marriage, and I didn’t want to lose my virginity. And yet I so desired to have someone love me...So I finally gave in.

I felt so guilty afterwards. I can remember sobbing in my bed at night after I’d come home from being with my boyfriend. I wanted so much to have my virginity back. And yet it was gone, forever. My self-esteem certainly didn’t improve, but worsened, and I needed my boyfriend’s love more than ever. I began to feel so lonely inside, and yet there was no one I could turn to. Certainly not my father, who would really “hate” me if he ever knew that an awful thing I had done.

Well, after two years, I broke up with my boyfriend, but soon had another, and went through the same cycle with him. And then another. Was I any more secure with myself. No, I was a puppet in any man’s hands, for I wanted so desperately to find someone who would love me unconditionally...

I’m 27 now, and about six months ago I wrote in my journal to the Lord these very words: “I felt lonely tonight...I have felt loneliness, intense loneliness. As though I were here in life all alone...And my life has been a search for my daddy’s love. And in Jesus, I am found and I am loved. Forever.”

JOSH MCDOWELL, HOW TO HELP YOUR CHILD TO SAY “NO” TO SEXUAL PRESSURE, MILTON KEYNES, UK: WORD, 1987:34

Sin, including sexual sin, not only breaks GOD’s law, it breaks GOD’s heart. Earlier I discussed how Adam, the father of humankind sinned and stained all his descendants with sin. This sin leads to hurt

and brokenness. But there is some great news. You can have your sin forgiven, your hurt remedied and your brokenness healed. When Jesus Christ entered into our world He dealt with (“atoned for”) our sins as ‘the New Federal Head’ of the human race - “the last Adam”.

For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. Thus it is written, “The first man Adam became a living being”; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. He made a way for all people to have their true purpose, identity, and understanding of love restored.

FIRST CORINTHIANS 15:22, 45

Christ perfectly displayed the love of God, and instructed His followers to do the same. In fact, He stated that the two greatest commandments both involved love - *love GOD*; and, *love others*. Christ showed us that love came in different varieties. There was *brotherly* love, *friendship* love, *parental* love, *selfless serving* love, and *married* love.

The good news - indeed, the great news - is that accepting Christ’s offer of redemption and divine love has a direct bearing on a person’s purpose, identity and understanding of sexuality. In this series we will seek to discover what Christ taught about love and sex and how this challenges many of the current lies in culture that leave people being guilty, ashamed, hurt, and broken. And we will discover why the good news - *the gospel* - really is *great* news!

Dr. Andrew Corbett