“The Importance of Spiritual Knowledge”

Edmonton, AB February 21-23, 2014

“Things we should know about man.”

**A quick peek at God. Gen. 1:1, 26-2:1**

1. God is the creator of all
2. God dwells in community
3. God created it all good and very good

**Men and women are created**

1. As created beings we \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_:
   1. Owe our existence to another
   2. Are meant to praise our creator (Ps. 139.13-14)
   3. Are to live in humility (Mt. 5.3; Prov. 3.4; 1 Pet. 5.5; Jms. 4.6)
   4. Are to live in submission (Jms. 4.7-10; Phil. 2.9-11; Jn. 14.30-31; Lk. 22.41-44)
   5. Are to give loyalty to God (Acts 4.19; 5.29; Dan. 3.16-18; Josh. 24.14-15)
   6. Are to receive nourishment and direction from God (Mt. 4.4; Prov. 3.5-6; Ps. 1)
   7. Are accountable to our creator (Heb. 9.27; 2 Cor. 5.10)
2. We are image bearers
   1. Structural image bearers such as reason, moral awareness, freedom, etc.
      1. The structural image gives us the capacity to relate to God and others.
      2. Still called image bearers after sin (Gen. 9.6).
   2. Relational image bearers
      1. God is relational: he has dwelt in community for eternity (Gen. 1.26; 3.22 also known as the Father, Son and Holy Spirit in the New Testament). So God is relational to himself and to his creation.
      2. Creation was not complete until Adam’s relational opportunity was created (Gen. 2:18 “not good for the man to be alone”).
      3. Much of Scott Laird can only be defined through his relationships. He is a son, brother, nephew, husband, father, grandfather, uncle, preacher, friend, neighbor, etc. Mankind in general is defined by relationships.
      4. We are created to actually relate well with God and others.
   3. We are created with the capacity to relate well to God and others and we are to actually relate well with God and others.
   4. Because we are created to live in relationships there are implications on how we interact with both Christians and non-Christians. Consider the one another passages of the New Testament. Consider God’s call for us to care for and love even those who do not love us. Does our life reflect the image of our Creator?
3. We are created good (Gen. 1.31; 2:15) and as the pinnacle of the creation account. Because of creation all people have great worth.

**Contrasting views**

1. Atheist view understands that man is material there is no spiritual. Evolution, chance, is the vehicle that produces people.
2. Dualism: We are two distinct eternal elements consisting of material and spiritual. The spirit or mind/heart is good/perfect. The material or body is imperfect. Dualism has no problem with sin because it is the body’s fault yet Jesus noted that sin is from within, Mk. 7.14-23. Gnosticism picked up on this concept.
3. Eastern religions: Spirit is real but the physical is an illusion. (This is the opposite of an atheist.) This view ignores suffering since the body is an illusion and leads to ethical quietism. Reincarnation is common.

**Fallen**

1. Sin’s impact on man (Gen.3.1-24)
   1. 3.8-10 man hides theological
   2. 3.10-11 man knows naked (shame) personal/psychological
   3. 3.12-13, 16 blame game sociological
   4. 3.17-19 ground is cursed ecological
   5. Only Jesus’ coming will reverse all of these curses
2. Additional thoughts on sin
   1. All have sinned (Rm. 3.23)
   2. Sin means we cannot trust our own heart and thoughts without God’s word (Jer. 17.5-9; Prov. 16.25; 14.12; Rm. 8.5-8)
   3. Specific acts impact the whole person (Mk. 7.14-23)
   4. Nations sin (Amos 1-3)
   5. We are responsible for our sin/works (Ezek. 18:1-32; Rev. 20.12; Rm. 2.6-8)
   6. There are evil forces at work (Gen. 3; Eph. 6.10-12)

**In spite of having fallen we are still loved (Jn. 3.16)**