

September 19, 2023
Rhetoric I

Have you ever felt defeated, like you keep making the same mistake and you just need to shake it off and try again? Maybe you've been caught in a mental game where all you can think about is your mistakes or how you messed up in a certain situation. Other times in life something unfair happens, it sets you back, and it is difficult not to let it get the best of you. These situations I described can happen to any of us on a large or small scale, and it is important that we do not let it get the best of us. I would argue volleyball helps one develop the life skills to help you in these situations.

Volleyball can be underrated and underappreciated as a sport. Maybe you do not like it because it requires hard and sometimes painful practice, maybe you don't like it because you find it boring to watch, or perhaps all you see in a volleyball game is a bunch of girls in spandex running around and yelling. I want you to be able to see the other part of this sport. Beyond the physical aspect, volleyball allows you to develop mental skills that carry into everyday life.

In volleyball, every point is won by someone's mistake. But as soon as you make that mistake, you can't dwell on it because that ball is coming back over to you, and you need to be ready to fix your mistake to earn the next point. This causes the players to have the ability to be able to see their mistake, correct it, and move on. Other times, the referee will make a call you do not agree with, but if you want to win, there is nothing you can do except move on and try to do your best.

Volleyball teaches you that all you can control in life is your attitude and actions. Sometimes you will mess up and sometimes the people around you will. Volleyball helps players develop the skills to be able to move on, encourage one another, and then get up, and try again.

Rhetoric I
Strunk and White Quiz
September 5, 2023

24/27

89%

1. Possessives:

7/7

a. Rewrite the following as possessives Ex: The suits of the men → the men's suits

- i. The sermon of the pastor *the pastor's sermon*
- ii. The fashion department for women *the women's fashion department*
- iii. The testimony of the witness *the witness's testimony*
- iv. The mother of the four kittens *the four kittens' mother*
- v. The actors of the X-Files series *the X-Files series's actors*
- vi. For the sake of conscience *for conscience's sake*
- vii. The rights of him. *his rights*

2/5

b. Use proper punctuation

- i. It's a wise dog, that scratches its own fleas. *dw*
- ii. February to June, 1944
- iii. Wednesday, November 14, 1900
- iv. If, sir, you refuse, I cannot predict what will happen.
- v. He opened the letter, read it, and made a note of its contents.

3/3

2. Identify the correct form

- a. People sitting in the rear, couldn't hear the speaker.
- b. Uncle Ben, being slightly deaf, moved to the front. *correct*
- c. I have heard the arguments but I am still unconvinced.
- d. He has had several years' experience and is thoroughly competent. *correct*
- e. My cousin, Bob, is a talented placekicker. *correct*

- f. The oldest student in the school, George Harris, still cannot conjugate basic Latin verbs. *correct*

3. Which of these is correct?

- 1/3
- a. The bittersweet flavor of youth—its trial, its joys, its adventures, its challenges—are not soon forgotten.
- b. The bittersweet flavor of youth—its trial, its joys, its adventures, its challenges—is not soon forgotten.
- c. Virgil Soames is the candidate whom we think will win
- d. Virgil Soames is the candidate who we hope to elect.
- e. Virgil Soames is the candidate whom we hope to elect

4. Repair these sentences

- 6/7
- a. Me and him had gone to the game.
He and I had gone to the game.
- b. The games was a lot of fun for she and I.
The games were a lot of fun for her and me.
- c. The culprit, it turned out was him.
The culprit, it turned out, was him.
- d. We shot several rounds at they who first shot at us.
we shot several rounds at them whom ^{those/the} first shot at us.
- e. What is the difference in meaning between these two sentences?
i. Do you mind me asking a question? *you mind*
ii. Do you mind my asking a question? *The first asks if the person asking a question, and the second one asks if you mind how the person asks a question.*

May 2, 2023
Rhetoric 1 - Final Draft

Thesis: Christians must regulate the music they listen to in order to maintain a healthy relationship with God.

On September 13, 2006, Kimveer Gill went on a shooting spree at Dawson Junior College, resulting in two deaths and nineteen other injuries. After police forces shot him in the arm, he turned the gun on himself.¹ It is hard to imagine what could drive a person to do such a thing. Perhaps it could be that they were born with severe mental health issues. Perhaps they grew up in an abusive household. Perhaps they were influenced by some outside source. Whatever the cause, there is never an excuse for such actions.

People are unavoidably influenced by their surroundings. The music a person listens to has an influence on their mind and lifestyle. Why is it such an important topic to discuss? Music has become an enormous industry in the past fifty years. Everyone is constantly exposed to it. It is important to be cautious with what we expose ourselves to. Jacques Barzun of Columbia University says, "Art is power; it can weaken or destroy the civilization that created it. It can enlarge or trivialize the imagination."² Barzun is correct in saying that art affects its beholder. He even goes so far as to say art can *destroy*. Barzun uses the broad term "art." Why focus on music in particular? What about movies and books? Movies and books certainly have an equally powerful effect on their viewers and readers. However, people are not constantly exposed to movies and books. Music is playing everywhere we go: the store, restaurants, our cars, at work. Music even has the ability to bring back powerful and distinct memories. People are not

¹ Arun Starkey, "Six Songs that Allegedly Inspired True Crimes," Far Out, Far Out, July 20, 2022, <https://faroutmagazine.co.uk/songs-inspired-true-crimes/>.

² Frank E. Gaebelien, *The Christian, the Arts, and Truth: Regaining the Vision of Greatness*, (Portland, Oregon: Multnomah Press, 1985), 101.

constantly watching movies or reading books, but they are constantly listening to music. Because of this, music can more easily affect someone. Even infants can listen to music, but they are not able to read or typically understand movies.

Many have spoken on the positive effects music can have on a person. Music therapy is often used to cure depression, anxiety, and even speech impediments. However, not many have spoken on the negative effects, specifically in respect to Christians. Philippians 4:8 says, “Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.” Christians have a biblical duty to fill themselves with truth, goodness, and beauty, not with the lies, the evil, and the ugly of this world. Christians must carefully regulate the music they listen to in order to maintain a healthy relationship with God.

Music, especially “pop” music, has become a major industry in the past hundred years. For this thesis, pop music will be defined as music that is popular, with a catchy beat, and often secular lyrics. It is “the music which has formed the backbone of the music recording industry from 1950 to present day.”³ The average person listens to 961 hours and ten minutes of music per year. They listen to an average of 1.3 million songs in their lifetime.⁴ 489 million people have Spotify accounts, 205 million pay for a Spotify Premium account, and the longest ever spent listening to Spotify is 403,418 minutes.⁵ Today, with the platforms Spotify, Apple Music, and

³ Business Bliss Consultants FZE, “The Development of Pop Music from 1950 to the Current Day,” UKDiss.com, Business Bliss Consultants FZE, September 1, 2021, <https://ukdiss.com/examples/development-of-pop-music.php>.

⁴ Matija Ferjan, “30+ Official Listening to Music Statistics (2023),” Headphones Addict, Headphones Addict, February 13, 2023. Accessed April 13, 2023. <https://headphonesaddict.com/listening-to-music-statistics/#:~:text=An%20average%20person%20listens%20to%20961%20hours%20and,to%20listen%20to%20every%20son.>

⁵ Daniel Ruby, “Spotify Stats 2023 (Listed Facts & Data Listed),” Demand Sage, Demand Sage, February 23, 2023. Accessed April 13, 2023. <https://www.demandsage.com/spotify-stats/#:~:text=Spotify%20is%20the%20world%E2%80%99s%20leading%20>

Pandora, and with CDs and record players, music is accessible to all. In the past, music was only live.

In 1877, Thomas Edison invented the gramophone, a device that made music far more accessible. Multiple different genres of music were also invented throughout the twentieth century; the Blues in the 1950s, Rock with the Beatles in the 1960s, jazz and rock in the 1970s, electronica and heavy metal in the 1980s and 90s.⁶ The music of today is often a mixture of these styles. It's often filled with evil ideas. The most popular songs tend to be the most perverse.

Montero, by artist LilNasX, was released in 2021. The song has 1.6 billion streams on Spotify alone and 519 million views on Youtube. The music video is heinous. LilNasX goes to what is supposed to be Hell, kills who is supposed to be the Devil, and takes his throne. The song explicitly talks about embracing his homosexuality and is extremely blasphemous. He presses his worldview on others and praises his sinful lifestyle. *Montero* was at the very top of the Billboard Hot 100, which is a list of the current 100 most popular and successful songs. This is only one of the many inappropriate songs today that people are constantly being exposed to. The tune of these songs are intentionally made to be catchy so that the listener is often unable to get these evil ideas out of their head.

What is the purpose of music? Philip Graham Ryken says, "Art is an incarnation of the truth."⁷ When art serves its purpose, it shows truth. Music lyrics can show truth simply by speaking truthfully about creation. Lyrics written by unbelieving artists can certainly show truth. All human beings are exposed to general revelation, which is truth about God that is shown

audio%20streaming%20service%2C,and%20205%20million%20premium%20subscribers%20across%20180%20regions.

⁶Business Bliss Consultants FZE, "The Development of Pop Music from 1950 to the Current Day," <https://ukdiss.com/examples/development-of-pop-music.php>.

⁷ Philip Graham Ryken, *Art for God's Sake*, (Philipsburg, New Jersey: P&R Publishing Company, 2006), 39.

throughout creation. Everyone, whether saved or not saved, is exposed to truth, and thus capable of expressing truth in their art. Artists can express truth about God, His creation, and even evil. Listeners must be careful to not constantly fill their ears with words that are true, but speak truth about evil. It is good to be aware of evil, but constantly being exposed to it can lead to a dark path. Music that contains lyrics that speak truth, whether about God or not, is true art. Art is good if it serves its purpose, which is portraying truth. Music is good if it expresses truth. Music can also be beautiful if it expresses truth and goodness. Beauty is not subjective, but objective. Something is truly beautiful if it teaches truth and radiates goodness. Therefore, art, specifically music, is beautiful if it contains lyrics that are true and good.

This thesis will focus on the effect of music lyrics. In no way is this thesis arguing that music that is explicitly about God and made for Christians is the only good music. The thesis will begin by arguing that 1) music lyrics influence mood, 2) music lyrics influence thoughts, and 3) music lyrics influence behavior. With each point, there will be a claim, evidence, and a warrant. These arguments will then be challenged by two antitheses: 1) because I only listen to the beat, not the lyrics, bad lyrics do not matter, and 2) the Bible says nothing about the sin of listening to worldly music. The thesis will respond to these arguments and refute them. Lastly, it will conclude by summarizing the three points and encourage the reader to make a change.

Music lyrics influence the mood of the listener. Many rock songs are filled with depressive ideas. Many of these songs speak of life as having no value and praise suicide. They encourage a life of drugs, alcohol, and immorality; a life dedicated to ruining the soul. For example, Queen's hit, *Bohemian Rhapsody*, is all about suicide and selling oneself to the devil. Constantly filling your mind with ideas of a pointless life and encouragement of abusing your soul will inevitably affect your mood.

The Default Mode Network of the brain helps you understand, analyze, and focus. It helps us connect ideas and create new ones. It is related to identity formation and decision making. This part of the brain helps us imagine and feel the emotional state of others and plays a huge role in development and well-being. The Default Mode Network is activated when listening to music.⁸ The Default Mode Network of the brain allows the listener to feel the emotion of the song lyrics, or the emotion of the musician.

This is one of the reasons why Christians must be extremely careful when listening to music. If the lyrics are about depression, the listener can easily become depressed. If the lyrics are about suicide, the listener can easily lose sight of the value of life and potentially become suicidal. Both depression and suicidal thoughts cause a believer to drift away from God and His truth, beauty, and goodness.

Moving to the second argument, lyrics influence the thoughts of the listener. The lyrics of today's music are almost always filled with non-biblical ideas and explicit, inappropriate language. Words have immense power and easily affect our minds. Whatever someone puts in their head will, inevitably, affect the way they think. Christians must guard their thoughts. 1 John 3:15a says, "Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer." Matthew 5:28 says, "But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart." Both of these passages tell that sin is not merely an action, but is often a simple thought. Music that causes us to think ungodly things should be avoided in order to avoid sin.

Years ago, Dr. Matthew Burt was reading *Catcher in the Rye*, a book filled with foul language and perverse ideas. He later found himself almost involuntarily thinking these foul words. This is something almost everyone has experienced. When we read a book or listen to

⁸ Donald Hodges and Robin Wilkins, "How and Why Does Music Move Us? Answers from Psychology and Neuroscience," *Music Educators Journal* 101, no. 4 (2015): 41-47. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24755599>.

music with foul language, we catch ourselves saying these words in our heads, or maybe even out loud. Christians are called to fill their minds with goodness, truth, and beauty. Music flowing with evil ideas is not good, true, or beautiful. It is not healthy and does not encourage godliness.

This leads to the third argument. Music lyrics influence the behavior of the listener. As stated above, music affects thoughts. Thoughts affect behavior. Therefore, music affects behavior. Frank E. Gaebelien says, “Music that is pretentious, music that is vulgar, music that reeks with sentimentality, that shows off by resorting to empty, ear-tickling adornment...lacks integrity.”⁹ Integrity is another word for moral uprightness. If the listener constantly listens to music containing foul language and lyrics that lack integrity, they will begin to think these words. Eventually, these words will actually come out of their mouths and become part of their regular vocabulary. People often act upon their thoughts, which will lead to a loss of personal integrity. In order to behave in a godly manner, Christians must avoid inappropriate language in music.

Psychology researchers conducted a study where the volunteers were given multiple scrambled sentences to unscramble. They were then told to let the researchers know when they were finished. The volunteers whose sentences contained words such as “rude” or “interruptions” let the researchers know they were finished in a rude and interrupting manner. Similarly, the volunteers whose sentences contained words such as “nice” and “respectful” let the researchers know they were finished in a kind and respectful manner.¹⁰ Clearly, the words someone is reading or listening to affects their behavior for good or for bad.

⁹ Gaebelien, *The Christian, the Arts, and Truth: Regaining the Vision of Greatness*, 166.

¹⁰ Elena Bernier and Omolara Osofisan, “How the Songs We Listen to Affect the Way We Think,” *The Communicator*, *The Communicator*, February 20, 2017, <https://chscommunicator.com/52283/opinion/2017/02/how-the-songs-we-listen-to-affect-the-way-we-think/>.

Many rap songs contain demeaning ideas, specifically misogyny and fornication. Artists such as Future, Nardo Wick, and YoungBoy Never Broke Again make especially misogynist music. Female artists such as Nicki Minaj and Cardi B make music that portrays women as objects. Some artists go so far as to praise Satan, such as Lil Uzi Vert. Terry Johnson says, “pop language and music express and actively promote the cool, the trivial, and the illicit. Rock music, in particular, has been the engine of the sexual revolution, its implicit message being one of impulsive expression, immediate gratification, and the casting off of self-restraint.”¹¹ Listening to these songs could possibly cause the listeners to act in this way. Christians must not listen to music that causes them to act in a way that does not promote goodness, truth, and beauty.

While these three arguments strongly suggest that Christians ought to avoid music containing explicit language, some may still find reason to believe they can still regularly enjoy this type of music. For example, some may say that they only listen to the beat or the tune, not the lyrics. Because of this, they think it does not matter whether or not they listen to music with bad lyrics. If they do not listen to the lyrics, but just the music, they think it is fine. After all, they only listen to worldly, secular music because it has a good beat and a catchy, enjoyable melody.. They do not feel any effect from the lyrics, so they can continue to listen.

While this argument does seem reliable at the surface, and many of us may be tempted to say the same, it can easily be refuted. Just because you do not feel it does not mean it is not there. Ninety to ninety-five percent of mental activity happens unconsciously. Subconscious activity heavily impacts behavior. The person will act consistently with the stimulus without realizing it.¹² The lyrics will often affect the listener involuntarily. Constantly hearing foul language and evil ideas will have a negative effect on them, even if the listener is not concentrating on them.

¹¹ Terry Johnson, *Contemporary Music*, (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2014), 17.

¹² Bernier and Osofisan, “How the Songs We Listen to Affect the Way We Think,”<https://chscommunicator.com/52283/opinion/2017/02/how-the-songs-we-listen-to-affect-the-way-we-think/>.

These words and ideas will start to become normal to them and spill out of their mouth, which does not honor God.

Others may argue that the Bible says nothing about the sin of listening to worldly music. If the Bible never says Christians should avoid listening to certain music, it is perfectly fine to listen to whatever music they like. The Bible hardly even discusses music, so it certainly does not have a negative effect on someone's relationship with God. In fact, in the few places the Bible does mention music, it only speaks of it in a positive way. It shows music as having a positive effect on the listener. In 1 Samuel 16, David plays the lyre for Saul in order to remove a harmful spirit from Saul. It mentions nothing about music's negative effects.

This person is correct to some extent. The Bible does not explicitly say, "You shall not listen to worldly music." However, there are many actions that the Bible does not explicitly say are sinful. For example, pornography is not explicitly condemned. However, I trust that most, if not all, people who consider themselves Christians believe pornography is ungodly and a sin. The Bible says nothing concerning the use of marijuana, movies, or driving a car. God gives His people broader commands that can be applied to many things. God calls His people to fill themselves with goodness in Philippians 4:8. He says to not be conformed to this world in Romans 12:22. He calls His people to not be friends with the world in James 4:4. In fact, He says that friends of the world are enemies with God. Therefore, one who listens to music that causes them to be friends with the world damages his relationship with the Almighty God and becomes His enemy.

If music affects mood, thoughts, and behavior, how ought a Christian go about choosing the music they listen to? One way is to simply put a filter on the app you stream music on that eliminates explicit music. However, this merely eliminates music with explicit words, not all

music with explicit messages. It is difficult to eliminate all inappropriate songs, especially if you have never heard a song before but would like to find new music to listen to. Christians need to be familiar with artists and know what they tend to put into their music. As a child, it is beneficial to have a parent guide them as they explore the vast world of music. As an adult, it is beneficial to take advice from older, respected peers who are rooted in God's word. If a Christian is unable to find someone to guide them, there is no long-term damage that comes with listening to new songs without knowing what to expect. Typically, you are able to receive a song's message early on and can turn it off if it is harmful towards your mood, thoughts, and behavior. As long as you do not listen to these demeaning songs consistently, your relationship with God will not be damaged.

So what did inspire Kimveer Gill to shoot twenty young adults? Investigators found, among many other disturbing things, one of Gill's latest blogs. It referenced the Megadeth song *A Tout Le Monde*, and said the song had convinced him to hurt innocent people. The song was written for the lead singer's mother who had passed, but is often interpreted as a suicide note.

Christians must carefully regulate the music they listen to in order to control their emotions, thoughts, and actions in a God-glorifying manner. In his *Essays Ancient and Modern*, Eliot says:

What is incumbent on all Christians is the duty of maintaining consciously certain standards and criteria of criticism over and above those applied by the rest of the world. We must remember that the greater part of our reading matter is written...by people who have no real belief in a supreme order.¹³

Eliot says that as Christians, we must have higher standards than those who do not live to glorify God. We must remember that the majority of artists are unbelievers and are not

¹³ T. S. Eliot, *Essays Ancient and Modern*, (New York, New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1936), quoted in Frank Gaebelein, *The Christian, the Arts, and Truth: Regaining the Vision of Greatness*, (Portland, Oregon: Multnomah Press, 1985), 101.

making their music to glorify God. Our standard for music is not music that is catchy and makes us bounce. As Christians, our standards ought to be that which is true, good, and beautiful. Our standard for music is lyrics that teach truth to its listeners, radiate absolute goodness, and are objectively beautiful.

Not controlling emotions, thoughts, and actions will make it easy for a Christian to drift away from God. When a Christian does start to turn from God and reject his old beliefs, it almost always begins with a lack of control. There are so many examples of young people falling into the evil things of this world and running from God. Filling yourselves with immoral ideas through immoral music is one step in the wrong direction. I encourage you to be careful with what you fill your mind with in order to better your relationship with God.

March 22, 2023
Rhetoric II

A Little Lower Than the Heavenly Beings

Let me introduce you to a little girl, born in a small village in Ireland. As a child, this little girl was discontent with the way that God had designed her. She desperately wanted blue eyes, not brown. She wanted them so badly, she often prayed and asked God to change the color of her eyes from brown to blue. She was continually disappointed when she did not get the result she desperately wanted. This girl grew up and went to Harrogate Ladies College in Harrogate North Yorkshire. It was here that she became a Christian. It was during this time she heard Hudson Taylor, an experienced missionary, speak about mission in China. Now a young woman, the brown-eyed girl decided to devote her life to being a missionary. This brown eyed girl is Amy Carmichael. Amy started her missionary work in Japan where she served for fifteen months. Then she moved to India. This is where she discovered her life's passion. In India, Amy founded an orphanage for children she had rescued from prostitution in the temple, and from being devoted to the Hindu gods. Amy had a heart for the Indian children who had been abandoned, abandoned by all to be slaves in the temple. And still, she had brown eyes. What the Hindu people failed to see is that all human beings have purpose, worth and dignity because they have been designed by God. Each person in this room has been perfectly designed by God to have purpose, worth, and dignity. Each person in this room is a valuable human life, created in the image of God. Our design reveals both our purpose and our worth.

Purpose can be defined as the reason why something is in existence. The sun exists to give light to the earth during the day, and the moon is in existence as a lesser light to light the night. The purpose of the sun and the moon is to give light and visibility to the earth. Worth can be defined as the significance or value to something. Money has worth because it can be used to

obtain things necessary for life like food and shelter. If something has dignity, it has superiority, or integrity in regards to character. And design means to make something with skill for a specific purpose. For example, an architect designs a building for a church. The building's purpose is to serve the needs of the church. Purpose, worth, dignity, and design can all be applied to the human body. This is valuable because of the decreasing view of the human body. Many do not recognize the value and honor that was intended when humans were fashioned by God. It is valuable to see our design in order to better understand our bodies, and to see how they reflect the image of God. By considering the design of the body, we will become aware of its dignity. We will see that we were made for a purpose. From there we will learn to live out our purpose according to our design.

There has been a fascination with the human body throughout history. This fascination with the body goes back as far as ancient Greece. Greece made the first significant developments in the study of anatomy. One very influential Greek anatomist was Hippocrates. Hippocrates' work contained simple language that was easy to understand. He, and his work, had a tremendous influence on the future of physicians and anatomy. Aristotle was the first to dissect animals. As he studied the anatomy, he concluded that the source for life in the body is the soul. Herophilus of Chalcedon was the first to dissect human bodies. He is known as the "founder of anatomy."¹ The Greeks were not the only ones who were interested in studying the human body. The Romans were also intrigued. However, it was harder to study the human body because the dissection of human bodies was forbidden. Thus, they had to rely on animal dissections, and observations from caring for external wounds. The Romans gained a substantial amount of knowledge by caring for gladiator wounds. Galen was a Greek physician, but a

¹ Habbal, Omar. "The Science of Anatomy: A Historical Timeline." *Sultan Qaboos University Medical Journal* 17 (1): e18-22. <https://doi.org/10.18295/squmj.2016.17.01.004>, 2017.

citizen of Rome. His studies were based on animal dissections. Since he was basing his information on animal dissections, his information was not always accurate. During the time of the Renaissance, the human body was studied by artists. Artists were interested in studying human anatomy and how it worked in order to paint and sculpt the body in different ways. For example, Leonardo Da Vinci sketched many anatomical drawings of the human body. His goal was to be able to portray the body through painting and sculpting in a more realistic way. Even though it was outlawed by the Catholic church, the dissection of humans was still practiced. Galen's work was used as a guide. Andreas Vesalius wrote *De Humani Corporis Fabrica*. This book was a high point in the history of anatomy because it sparked amazement throughout the scientific community. The study of anatomy continued to advance throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth century. Anton van Leewenhoek invented the microscope and was the founder of microscopic anatomy.² Robert Hooke was the man who discovered and named cells. Throughout history, there was a fascination with the human body, as people were trying to learn more about it and understand it. However, the view of the human body has changed drastically. Now, in modern times, the body is viewed as a piece of worthless matter through which to express oneself. Many moderns believe that they own their bodies and can do whatever they want with them. By doing so, they are excluding God from the picture and denying his purposeful design. What these moderns have forgotten is the intricacy and wisdom in our design, and that humans were created by God to bear his image. Human beings have purpose, worth, and dignity because we have been designed by God.

St. Augustine said, "men go out and gaze in astonishment at high mountains, the huge waves of the sea, the broad reaches of rivers, the ocean that encircles the world, or the stars in

² Habbal, Omar. "The Science of Anatomy: A Historical Timeline." *Sultan Qaboos University Medical Journal* 17 (1): e18-22. <https://doi.org/10.18295/squmj.2016.17.01.004>, 2017.

their courses. But they pay no attention to themselves.”³ Augustine is saying that human beings are a marvelous part of creation and are worth admiring. His point is that people look outward at creation and are amazed, but they often forget that they too are a marvelous part of God's creation, and were masterfully designed by God. Continuing, Augustine gives credit to God as the creator; we are able to see all of these wonders in creation because of our design. God gave us eyes to see, ears to hear and a brain to interpret and remember the images seen and the sounds heard. God also has given us beautiful things in creation to look at and listen to. David writes, “for you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mothers womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.” (Psalm 139:13-14) Human anatomy is perfectly and wonderfully designed by God. In addition, human beings have also been created in the image of God. This gives humans purpose, worth, and dignity.

First, the anatomy of the human body is perfectly designed and all of its parts are complimentary. Human anatomy is so complex, it would take hours to explore every system in the body. There is enough complexity just in the human cell, the eye, and the nervous system to show the mighty hand of the Creator. The cell is the foundational unit of life, yet they are so small they cannot be seen by the naked eye. Every detail of microscopic cells are so perfect; each one is equipped and designed with everything it needs to thrive and to aid the rest of the body. The cell is “like a fully active and organized city, doing jobs necessary for our being and well being.”⁴ They are composed of many different organelles, which are specialized structures, each with a different specific function. As each organelle does its job, the cell is able to function correctly and benefit the rest of the body. To protect everything going on inside, the cell is

³ Saint Augustine. *The Confessions* in *The Great Books of the Western World*, 2nd edition, ed., Mortimer Alder, (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1990), 16: 94.

⁴ Jay Schabacker. *Purposeful Design: Understanding the Creation*. (United States, 2013), 74.

surrounded by a plasma membrane. The plasma membrane is a phospholipid bilayer. A phospholipid bilayer is a double layer that is both water and oil soluble. A phospholipid is composed of fatty acids and a phosphate group. This makes a molecule that is water soluble on one end, and lipid soluble on the other end. This double layer of the plasma membrane is important because it is a wall between the fluid inside the cell and the fluid outside of the cell. The plasma membrane has several functions. It holds the cell together, it has receptors that allow the cell to detect the environment, and selective permeability of the plasma membrane enables it to allow certain substances in and reject others that are harmful. God designed this outer layer to protect all of the vital processes that occur inside the cell. One of the processes inside the cell is protein synthesis. This is the process by which the cells make proteins. Proteins are important to the body because they can act as catalysts to speed up reactions within the body. They can be hormones and they can be antibodies.

Another part of the cell that is protected is the mitochondria. The mitochondria is where most of the cell's energy is produced through the amazing process of cellular respiration. This is merely a basic overview of only a few parts of the cell. It would take a whole book to describe every function of every organelle in the cell. However, even the small portion that was described is enough to see its amazing design.

Think about a beautiful sunrise on the beach. The sun is just peeking up over the horizon, about to rise up over the deep blue ocean. The clouds in the sky have a soft pink glow. As the sun rises, that soft pink glow begins to brighten into a brilliant orange. Doubling this beauty, this whole painting in the sky is reflected onto the calm waters of the ocean below. This beautiful sunset is perceived by humans with their eyes. The human eye is perfectly designed, placed, and protected. The eyes are located in the head so that humans can have a perfect view

from the highest point of the body. God designed the eye with certain features to keep it protected. He designed them to blink. He designed them to produce tears to keep the eye moist. He designed eye brows and eye lashes to keep foreign objects from harming the eye. The eye is perfectly formed so that humans can see and focus on people, images, and objects in the most efficient way. The eye is further protected by three layers of tissue. The outermost layer is called the fibrous tunic, and is composed of two parts, the sclera and the cornea. The sclera is a layer of tissue that protects the eye and helps keep the eye's shape. The cornea is a transparent layer of protection for the eye. The middle layer is called the vascular tunic because it holds many blood vessels that supply the eye tissue with oxygen and nutrients. Contained in the vascular tunic is a layer called the iris. This is what gives the eye its color. The iris is muscle that envelopes the pupil, which is the opening in the eye. The iris opens and closes the pupil based on the amount of light entering. The process by which the eye is able to see is extremely complicated, but simply put, light travels through the cornea, pupil, and lens. It then reaches the retina which is contained in the final layer of the eye called the nervous tunic. The retina receives and interprets the images which creates electrical signals that are sent by optic nerves to the brain. In order to focus the light that enters, the lens changes shape. Tiny muscles attached to the lens are called ciliary muscles. When these muscles contract, they change the shape of the lens. This marvelous process is called accommodation. Accommodation cannot be matched by modern technology. Even the most advanced cameras have a less efficient way of changing focus than humans. Camera lenses have to be moved back and forth, either manually or electronically, in order for the camera to focus. This would be inefficient for humans because we would need tubes connected to the head to allow the lens mobility back and forth. Instead, God

designed the lens to change shape so that it can quickly focus on images. Even the best man-made camera pales in comparison to God's design of the human eye.

The nervous system is the system that connects all of the other systems in the body. Humans are made up of skeletal muscles, bones, skin, and nerves. The nervous system is what connects them all. The brain is responsible for human thinking, memory, and emotions. Hippocrates noted, "from the brain and from the brain only, arise our pleasures, joys, laughter and jests, as well as our sorrows, pains, griefs and tears."⁵ The nervous system is divided into two systems: central nervous system and peripheral nervous system. This section is going to focus on a certain part of the central nervous system- the brain. The brain is the most complex organ in the body. The brain contains millions of neurons, all connected in an orderly way. Adults have one hundred billion neurons in their brains. In addition there are trillions of links among the neurons. The brain has more neuron links than all of the computer system links combined. It processes information faster than the most high-tech computer. The brain sends out thousands of signals to effectors all over the body through the spinal cord. And at the same time it receives and processes millions of signals from sensory receptors. After studying the brain, it is apparent that, "the central nervous system is probably the pinnacle of complexity in design, and it cries out in testimony for its designer."⁶

The wisdom and design of God is evident in human anatomy. Every system was masterfully designed to work hand in hand with the other systems. All of the engineering of modern technology is no match for the efficiency in the design of the human body. Cameras cannot focus as quickly and efficiently as the eye, and the most advanced computers cannot

⁵ Dr. Paul Brand, and Philip Yancey. *Fearfully and Wonderfully: The Marvel of Bearing God's Image*. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2019), 203.

⁶ Marilyn Shannon and Dr. Jay Wile. *Exploring Creation with Advanced Biology: The Human Body*. (Apologia Educational Ministries, USA, 2013), v.

process information as fast as the brain. God is the supreme designer. Therefore, “the efficiency with which each system works, and the seamless integration of one system with the other represents a feat of engineering and design prowess that will never be matched by modern technology.”⁷ The wondrous design in the human body shows that humans are truly “fearfully and wonderfully made.”

Second, human beings have worth and dignity because they have been created in the image of God. The first two chapters of Genesis give the account of the creation of the world and everything in it. First, God created the heavens and the earth, the sea and dry land. Then he filled each part. He created the sun, moon and stars to fill the heavens, he created plants and vegetation to fill the dry land, he created birds to fill the sky, he created fish and sea creatures to fill the sea, and he created animals to fill the earth. And finally, God created man for himself. He created man to glorify himself. Psalm 100:3 declares, “it is [God] who made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.” Man is the pinnacle of God’s creation. Man is the high point of creation because man was created in the image of God, and stamped with the very image of his creator.

There is a uniqueness to the creation of man. Man was created differently from animals, and God is described with plural nouns only when man was created. First, there is a distinction between the creation of animals and the creation of man. Genesis 1:24 says that God created, “living creatures according to their kinds.” Only man was created in the image of God. “Then God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.’” (Genesis 1:26) Herman Bavinck said, “But among all creatures only man is the image of God, the highest and richest revelation

⁷ Marilyn Shannon and Dr. Jay Wile. *Exploring Creation with Advanced Biology: The Human Body*. (Apologia Educational Ministries, USA), 2013, v.

of God, and therefore head and crown of the entire creation.”⁸ Since man was created in God’s image, humans are the high point of creation and thus have dignity and worth. The creation of man is unique from other creatures because no other living creature was created to reflect their creator. Second, when God created man, he was described as a “plurality.”⁹ This tells us that God is not a solitary being. It is also a hint at the Trinity. God took divine council with himself for the creation of man. The divine council shows the uniqueness of man’s creation from the rest of creation because man was the only created being in which God had a council with himself. Man has been set apart from creation by God. This is evidence for the worth and dignity of human beings.

What does the image of God really mean? Simply put, humans were designed and created to image God and to reflect God. Just as one’s image is reflected in the mirror, so the image of God is revealed through humans. How is the image of God reflected in human beings? God’s image is reflected through humans by their dominance over creation, human companionship, human responsibility, and morality. First, Adam was given dominion over the other living creatures and the earth. How did man get dominion over the earth, and not animals. Humans cannot run as fast as a horse, human eyesight is not as keen as a hawk, human hearing is not as sharp as owls, and humans' sense of smell is not as precise as an elephant. Even so, human beings were perfectly designed, “to make our dominance over [the rest of creation] necessary.”¹⁰ Gregory of Nyssa says, “it was the slowness and difficult motion of our body that brought the horse to supply our need, and tamed him... it was the fact that we cannot eat grass

⁸ Herman Bavinck. *Gereformeerde Dogmatiek*. 3rd ed. 4 vols. Kampen: Kok, 1918 quoted in Anthony Hoekema. *Created in God’s Image*. Grand Rapids, MI. ; Cambridge, U.K.: Eerdmans, 1994, 12.

⁹ Anthony Hoekema. *Created in God’s Image*, 12.

¹⁰ Basil of Caesarea, and Gregory Nyssa. *Hexaemeron with on the Making of Man (Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nyssa)*. Brookline, MA: Paterikon Publications, 174.

like cattle which brought the ox as service to our life, who makes our living for us by his own labor.”¹¹ Man’s dominion over the animals and the earth is a reflection of God because God is the supreme ruler of the whole world. In addition, humans' need for a companion is a reflection of God. Woman was made for man, and each complements the other. Humans are social beings. God too is a social being, existing in a divine fellowship. God is one being but three persons; the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. And third, humans reflect God because they are responsible beings. As responsible beings, humans are able to rule, make decisions, and communicate with God. In Genesis 1:28, God gives two things to Adam and Eve. He gives them a blessing, and he gives them a command. God commands Adam and Eve to, “be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth.” Just as God reigns and makes decisions too, so are human beings able to rule and decide. Another aspect of this decision making is that humans can discern between right and wrong. Humans image God by choosing what God chooses. Edward Welch says, “When God says no, we imitate him and say no. That is the way we look like our God and enter into his fellowship.”¹²

Think for a moment about the great artists and their art work throughout history. Some of these artists include Leonardo Da Vinci, and Vincent Van Gogh. Each of these famous artists have a style that is distinctly their own. Every artist has defining characteristics in their artwork that points back to the artist and gives them ownership. Think about Leonardo Da Vinci’s famous painting the *Mona Lisa*. This piece is distinctly Da Vinci’s work because of its great detail of the human. Da Vinci was known for his great knowledge of human anatomy that allowed him to paint and portray humans like no other artist. Now think about Van Gogh’s *The*

¹¹ Basil of Caesarea, and Gregory Nyssa. *Hexaemeron with on the Making of Man*, 174-175.

¹² Edward Welch. *Created to Draw Near*. (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2020), 33.

Starry Night. This piece is distinctly Van Gogh's because of its resolute and vivid brush strokes that bring out the emotions in the painting. Artwork reveals its artist. The same is true for God and his creation. Everything God created reveals God, the creator, the divine artist. Humans were created by God, so they too reveal him. Sinclair Ferguson states, "the invisible God makes his invisible attributes known to us in visible things."¹³ In his creation, God makes himself known. God is revealed in man because man bears the image of God. Because God makes himself known through human beings, humans are valuable creatures, and have purpose.

Human beings are wonderfully designed by God, and are made in the image of God. This leads to the third point that humans have purpose, worth and dignity. First, humans have purpose in life. God has designed humans in such a perfect way. Every part of human anatomy has a purpose. The cells are a vital part of life. The human body contains millions of cells that all perform specialized tasks to keep the body functioning. The eye is purposely designed to let us see clearly and focus on things with speed and ease. The nervous system has a vital purpose. It controls all of the other systems in the body. Without the nervous system, the body would not be able to survive. As each part of the body operates according to its purpose and design, the human body thrives. Just as each part of the body has a purpose, so does the human being. The Shorter Catechism says that man's ultimate purpose in life is to glorify God and enjoy Him for all eternity. Our design allows us to praise him with our lips, share the gospel with others through communication, understand God's word with our minds, and have a relationship with God.

¹³ Sinclair Ferguson. "Creation Reveals the Creator." Ligonier Ministries. <https://www.ligonier.org/podcasts/things-unseen-with-sinclair-ferguson/creation-reveals-the-creator>. January 9, 2023, Accessed February 3, 2023.

Humans have worth. Every part and system of the human body has worth. The cells are valuable because even “the failure of one type of cell can bring tragic consequences.”¹⁴ Every type of cell has worth and value, because without it, the body would have complications, even death. The eye is valuable because without it, humans could not behold all of the beauty and wonder of God’s creation. The nervous system is valuable because without it, none of the systems in the body would be able to function. Each part is equally valuable, because each part is absolutely necessary for the body to survive.

Paul says, “Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.” (1 Corinthians 6:19-20) Paul makes three main points in these verses. First, he says that humans are more than flesh and bones. The human body is also the dwelling place for the Holy Spirit. Second, he says that humans do not own themselves. They are owned by their creator. Jesus paid the ultimate price for us on the cross out of his amazing love. Thus, we owe our lives, and our bodies to him. As humans live for Christ, they are to give glory to God in our bodies, which is Paul’s third point. This shows the value in the human body- a dwelling place for the Holy Spirit. All people are owned by God because he made them and gave them life. But for those who have been saved by Christ, there is a dual nature of their ownership by Christ. Christ has bought us with his blood. Since believers have been bought by the blood of Christ, we owe our lives to him. As Isaac Watts beautifully writes in his hymn, “love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life my all.”

¹⁴ Dr. Paul Brand, and Philip Yancey. *Fearfully and Wonderfully Made*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004.

It is common in our society today to rate things. For example, people rate restaurants, food, and sports teams based on the worth of the restaurant, food or team. This is essentially what the Romans did in ancient Rome, except with human beings. As entertainment, the Romans held gladiatorial games, where human gladiators would fight to the death. These gladiators were rated based on skill. The higher the skill, the higher their worth. But at the same time, the gladiators were viewed as one of the lowest life forms. They were treated as property, seen as worthless, and mere vessels for entertainment. This is a horrible and inhuman way to view and treat human beings. It is even blasphemy because it is God-denying and God dishonoring. Every human is equally worthy and valuable because every human has been created in the image of God. Every human being bears the mark of God's goodness and his handiwork. Every human reflects God's image. This makes every human valuable.

And finally, human beings have dignity. Dignity can be defined as superiority, or integrity in regards to character. There is dignity or superiority in our design. God set us apart from the rest of creation. Our design is unique from animals. We are able to think, reason, communicate, express emotions, have a sense of morality, and we are creative. All of these things God has designed into us so that we can know him and live for him. We were made to know God. Saint Gregory of Nyssa makes the point that, "man's form is upright and extends aloft towards heaven, and looks upwards: and these are the marks of sovereignty which show his royal dignity."¹⁵ Saint Gregory continues to make the point that man is the only creature that walks on two feet and looks up towards heaven. He says that the bowed down position of animals that walk on all fours shows the difference between dignity. Human beings are also the only creatures that God blessed in the garden. Genesis 1:22 and 28 both say that, "God blessed

¹⁵ Basil of Caesarea, and Gregory Nyssa. *Hexaemeron with on the Making of Man*, 175.

them.” Human beings are God’s special creatures that he designed and placed his image on. It is important for us to recognize the wisdom in the design of human anatomy and give glory to our creator. Our creator has given us purpose, worth, and dignity in our design.

To summarize, human beings have an incredible design. Each part of the body is intricately designed to work in unison with the rest of the body. Humans were also created in the image of God. This means that humans reflect God. Since humans are marvelously designed, and bear the image of God, we have purpose, worth and dignity. We should be caught up in astonishment and amazement with David as he praises God that we are “fearfully and wonderfully made.” (Psalm 139:14) The word “fearfully” that David uses has the same sense of God’s eternal and awe inspiring power. Our design shows the power and might of God as creator, and causes us to wonder in amazement at the true wisdom in our design.

We as humans are God’s marvelous creation which he designed in wisdom. Since we are perfectly fashioned by God, we are valuable creatures. Here are my three points restated. First is the complexity of our design. Human anatomy is truly wondrous. There are many parts and functions of the human cell, which cannot be observed by the naked eye. The cell alone shows the mighty hand of the Creator. Second, humans are created in the image of God. We are made to bear God’s image. Thus, we are designed by God. Because we are created by God’s wisdom and in his image, we are valuable and have a purpose, which is my third point. Since we are made with a purpose, it is important for us to live out our purpose according to our design.

People today have a very different view of the human body. The reason for this negative view of the body stems from the fact that these people do not believe that human beings are designed and created by God for a purpose. This leads some to believe that we own our bodies and can treat them however we want. Three ways that moderns discredit God as the creator, and

view the body and life as worthless are the theory of evolution, the practice of abortion, and transgenderism.

There are those who believe that God did not create life. They believe life came into existence randomly and slowly developed over time. This view is known as the Theory of Evolution. Evolution denies God as the creator of all things. Instead of a creator, evolutionists hold the view that humans randomly came into existence. Because we are merely the result of randomness and not designed, it is believed that we have no value. Charles Darwin laid the foundation for evolutionary studies. His theory rests on two pillars: universal common ancestry and natural selection.¹⁶ He taught that all life came from a “common ancestor simply by time plus chance plus the laws of nature working on matter.”¹⁷ Darwin did not believe in a creator. He taught that new species came into existence naturally, rather than designed and formed by a creator. Species develop and adapt over time in order to survive in certain habitats. It is logical to say that if something was not designed, then it has no value or purpose. Evolutionists believe we are the result of random chance; thus, we are not designed. If we are not designed, then we can have no purpose. How can we have a purpose if we are not carefully designed for an intended purpose by the wisdom of a higher being? We cannot. Purpose does not spring from random, impersonal chance.

Richard Dawkins is an evolutionary biologist who is a big supporter of Darwin’s Theory of Evolution of natural selection. Dawkins acknowledges the beauty of the universe. He says in his book *The Magic of Reality*, “we gaze up at the stars on a dark night with no moon and no city

¹⁶ Stephen Meyer. *Darwin’s Doubt*. Harper Collins, 2013.

¹⁷ Terry Mortenson. “Intelligent Design or Designer?” Answers in Genesis. March 1, 2020. <https://answersingenesis.org/intelligent-design/intelligent-design-or-designer/>.

lights...”¹⁸ However, Dawkins concludes this sentence by saying, “and with breathless joy, we say the sight is ‘pure magic.’”¹⁹ Dawkins ascribes the beauty of the cosmos as magic. He believes that everything can be explained by science, and does not believe in anything supernatural. Dawkins says, “to claim a supernatural explanation of something is not to explain it at all, and even worse, to rule out any possibility of its ever being explained.”²⁰

Evolutionists fail to acknowledge that design implies a supreme designer. This does not mean that all evolutionists are atheists. It means that some evolutionists fail to see God’s wisdom in creation. Evidence for God’s design can be seen throughout creation in that everything is designed with a purpose. This is what is known as the teleological argument. We have eyes for seeing, mouths for speaking and eating, and lungs for breathing. Birds have wings to fly, turtles have shells for protection, and mammals have hair for warmth. We can also look upwards at the vastness of the heavens and the innumerable stars. The beauty, purpose, and intricacy of God’s creation point to him as the designer. The hymn writer Isaac Watts writes, “there’s not a plant or flower below but makes God’s glories known.”²¹ The wisdom in the design of everything God created far surpasses anything man or random chance could ever produce. The most updated lens on the newest most sophisticated camera does not even come close to changing focus as quickly and efficiently as the human eye. No man-made sensory system truly compares with the sensitivity of human skin which is “responsive to almost incredibly minute stimulations.”²² No man-made machine can maintain balance and equilibrium

¹⁸ Richard Dawkins. *The Magic of Reality: How We Know What's Really True*. New York; London; Toronto; Sydney; New Delhi: Free Press, 2011, 22.

¹⁹ Richard Dawkins. *The Magic of Reality*, 22.

²⁰ Richard Dawkins. *The Magic of Reality*, 23

²¹ Ferguson, Sinclair. “No Real Atheists | Ligonier Ministries.” www.ligonier.org. <https://www.ligonier.org/podcasts/things-unseen-with-sinclair-ferguson/no-real-atheists>. January 10, 2023.

²² Cannon, Walter B. *The Wisdom of the Body*. New York: Norton & Co, 1967, 19.

as the human body does. God is the designer of all things, including human beings. And with design comes purpose.

The practice of abortion is evidence for the denial of a supreme designer. Those who support abortion believe that it is morally permissible to kill a human child developing inside the womb if the mother does not want the child. The fundamental principle behind abortion is a distinction between the body and the person. Culture today believes in an upper and lower level of reality. The upper level consists of subjective values (theology and morality) while the lower level contains facts and science. Culture has taken this idea and applied it to humans. This is the source for seeing the distinction between person and body, a distinction called the personhood theory.²³ By this theory, the body is defined as a disposable piece of matter that has no intellectual capacity, moral standards or intrinsic value. A person is defined as something that has moral and legal standards. Thus, by separating moral and legal value from the body, the body is seen as simply materialistic with no worth. The body has to obtain personhood by gaining a certain level of intellect, and identity. Many who believe in abortion also acknowledge that human life begins at conception. There are four criteria for life: the organism must sense and respond to changes in the environment, develop and grow, be able to reproduce, and maintain homeostasis. Most admit that an unborn baby meets all of these criteria. Nancy Pearcey says that “virtually everyone today agrees that the baby in the womb is human—biologically, physiologically, genetically human. ...Virtually no professional bioethicist denies that life begins at conception.”²⁴ However, the reasoning justifying abortion is that the baby is just a body, and a body without a person is viewed as worthless. By categorizing the body at the

²³ Nancy R. Pearcey. *Love Thy Body: Answering Hard Questions about Life and Sexuality*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2019, 19

²⁴ Pearcey. *Love Thy Body*, 51.

lower level, they are degrading life to organic material that has no purpose or worth. Reducing life to pure matter also entails the lack of a designer, who is the giver of life. Furthermore, the abortion argument continues to claim that humans are the owners of their bodies, which leads to the saying, “my body, my choice.” This opposes the fact that we bear the image of another.

Those who believe in abortion and the separation between body and person have it backward. They say that a body can exist without a person, but a person cannot exist without a body. However, this is not true. God is a person without a body like men. There are also the souls that have left their bodies in death. The Christian view is that the only time body and person (or soul) are separated is at death. Human life means there is a body and a soul that has been created by God for a purpose. To repeat, unborn infants meet all of the requirements for life, therefore they are living beings. Thus, they are valuable human beings with souls. Killing one of these precious lives is murder. It is also argued by abortionists that we own our bodies, which gives us the liberty to do with them what we want. However, we do not own our bodies. Christian Apologist, Jonathan Noyes, in his article, *Our Bodies Have Purpose and Value*, says that “We bear the image of another; this image is what gives us transcendent value and dignity. The ownership of that image belongs to God.”²⁵ Since it is God’s image that we bear, we do not have ownership over our bodies. Furthermore, because we do not own our bodies, we should treat them in a way that honors the Lord, and upholds the image of God. Let us “protect every human life and treat it with utmost dignity since every human’s life is created in the image of God.”²⁶

²⁵ Noyes, Jonathan. “Our Bodies Have Purpose and Value.” [Www.str.org](https://www.str.org). 10, 2022. https://www.str.org/w/our-bodies-have-purpose-and-value?utm_source=feedblitz&utm_medium=FeedBlitzEmail&utm_campaign=Once%20a%20day_2022-10-26_08:30:00&utm_content=5575, 2022.

²⁶ Lin, Abigail. “Six Ways Pre-Born Babies Glorify God.” Focus on the Family. <https://www.focusonthefamily.com/church/six-ways-pre-born-babies-glorify->

The third view that devalues the body and denies the design of the Creator is transgenderism. The argument for transgenderism hinges on the same cultural truth as the argument for abortion. Body and person, “are two separate things merely stuck together.”²⁷ The separation between body and person leads to several different problems. First, it leads to war between body and person. If a boy thinks and feels that he is a girl, he will say that he as a person is a girl, but with the wrong body. When this conflict arises, the mind (person) will always win. The individual concludes that how they feel as a person is true, so they take measures to change their body to be in unison with their mind. Their viewpoint is mind over matter, so they try to match their body with their mind. Once they have triumphed over the body, the body is deemed worthless. This leads to a disregard for the body. Since the body means nothing to them, they see no wrong in doing whatever they want with it. Second, it also leads to the denial of biological sex. Nancy Pearcey says there is a belief “that gender identity can be disassociated from biological sex”.²⁸ It is believed that gender is assigned to them by the doctor on the birth certificate. Thus, if their assigned gender does not match the way they feel as a person, they can change it. All of this ultimately leads to the rejection of a perfect designer.

Again, the Christian view is that the body and the person are connected, and are only separated at death. God designed all the parts of the body to function in unison and rely on each other. Furthermore, God designed humans as either male or female, and each is designed differently in order to live out a certain purpose. The Bible teaches the roles of man and woman. The part of our design that plays the biggest role in life is one's gender. And our gender was appointed by God. God is the one who decided to create two different genders. He created two

god/?utm_source=feedblitz&utm_medium=FeedBlitzEmail&utm_campaign=Once+a+day_2023-01-21_08%3A30%3A00&utm_content=5575. January 19, 2023.

²⁷ Pearcey. *Love Thy Body*, 21.

²⁸ Pearcey. *Love Thy Body*, 199.

genders that are different but complementary. Since men and women are two genders, they cannot be interchanged.²⁹ Men and women were designed to complement each other. Other pairs can be seen in the order of creation, “like the sun and moon, morning and evening, day and night, the sea and dry land, and plants and animals.”³⁰ Like male and female, each of these pairs go together and cannot be switched. Men and women were both created in the image of God which means that they have equal worth. They were created to rule over creation together. Furthermore, they were given different functions and were designed accordingly. In the garden, God commanded Adam “to work it and keep it.” (Genesis 2:15) Thus, God designed males to be stronger. God commanded both Adam and Eve to “be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it.” (Genesis 1:28) Thus, God designed women to be able to carry life into the world. Genesis 2:18 says, “it is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.” God could have given Adam another male as a friend and helper. While this second male would have been helpful to Adam working in the garden, he would not have been a helper in bringing and raising offspring in the world. Thus, Eve, a woman, was a fit helper for Adam in the garden. Men and women were designed differently according to their different functions, but have the same worth. Both were created in the image of God. Kevin Deyoung says that men and women, “reflect the sort of differentiated and complimentary image bearers God designed them to be from the beginning.”³¹ God gave men a design and purpose, and he gave women a specific design and purpose. Their design corresponds with their purpose. No matter how hard they try, transgenders can never fully change their God-given design. The design and biology of

²⁹ Kevin Deyoung. *Men and Women in the Church : A Short, Biblical, Practical Introduction*. Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway, 2021.

³⁰ Kevin Deyoung. *Men and Women in the Church*, 14-15.

³¹ Kevin Deyoung. *Men and Women in the Church*, 25.

the body always win.³² Trying to change your gender is trying to redefine your purpose. Every human being was designed perfectly by God for his intended purposes.

My first counterargument is evolution. Evolution denies God as the supreme designer of all things. However, without a design, there can be no purpose. The teleological argument argues that God has designed everything for a purpose. The second counterargument is abortion. Those who support abortion believe that the body and person are split. At the beginning of life, human life is merely a body and must develop its personhood. The body apart from the person is worthless. They view unborn infants as simply bodies. Thus, unborn infants are seen as worthless and disposable. However, the Christian view is that body and soul are united. Therefore, every life is valuable. The third counterargument is transgenderism. The argument for transgenderism also makes a distinction between body and person, which leads to conflict between the body and person if the person feels that they do not match their body. In response, God created males and females differently. He designed them according to his intended purpose for them. God has given us both design and purpose.

In India, Amy Carmichael was able to rescue many children who had been abandoned and left to be devoted to Hindu gods. The children Amy rescued loved her, and some even called her mother. In order to respect the Indian culture, Amy and her companions wore Indian clothing and even dyed their skin. Because of her brown eyes, she was able to fit into the Indian culture. This is something Amy could have never done if God had answered her prayer for blue eyes. What Amy came to realize was that she was perfectly designed by God according to his plan and purpose for her. God has designed everyone with a purpose. Her love and care for the Indian children shows her love for all people. Amy saw the children she rescued as valuable and

³² Pearcy. *Love Thy Body*, 199.

precious lives, while others saw them as worthless things they could give to the false Hindu gods. Amy saw that these children had been created equally with everyone else, in the image of God, while the Hindu saw the children as inferior.

God has designed every person with purpose, worth and dignity. Start by looking at your own body's anatomy. It is truly wondrous. Everything inside works together in perfect unison to keep you alive. The cells perform many tasks to help aid the rest of the body. The eye helps you to see and focus on images in the most efficient way. And the nervous system controls all the other systems in the body. As you study anatomy, you will begin to see that each part of you has value and purpose. Each part is vital to the whole. Without the cells, the body would not receive proper nutrients. Without the eye, the body would not be able to see. And, without the brain, you would not be able to move, breathe or think. Thus, God in his wisdom has perfectly designed the human body. It is important to recognize the worth and the value in your body so that you can give the creator the glory he is due. Never forget that you are “fearfully and wonderfully made” by God, and that you bear the stamp of your creator.

Humans have purpose, worth and dignity because we were made in the image of God. Humans are God's handiwork, whom he set apart from the rest of creation, blessed, and created to reflect himself. Human beings bear the image of God. It is necessary to realize that we were created to reflect God himself. We are to honor the greater image that we bear. In order to do this, “we should live consistently with the character of the one we portray”.³³ Live in a way that truly reflects the image of God in yourself. This is not merely an individual call, but a truth relevant for society to promote the God of the image, and to live out your purpose according to your design.

³³ Noyes, Jonathan. “Our Bodies Have Purpose and Value.”

SENIOR THESIS EVALUATION

Please use the following categories to assess the students' performance on their senior thesis. Please note carefully what each number signifies and do not feel the need to inflate their scores. These scores are for the teacher's purposes only and will not be given to the students.

- 1 - Very poorly done
- 2 - Needs significant improvement
- 3 - Some gaps/inconsistencies, but covered the basics
- 4 - Did a good job, but could see a few minor areas for improvement
- 5 - Did an excellent job, almost no comments or suggestions for improvement

I. PAPER

A. Content:

- 1. Clear set-up of research problem/question
- 2. Clear thesis statement
- 3. Covers all background/definitions necessary to understanding topic and setting up arguments
- 4. Arguments are clearly articulated, relevant to topic, soundly argued, and demonstrate accurate research
- 5. Counterarguments are legitimate (not "straw man"), fairly stated, and convincingly addressed
- 6. Clearly demonstrates the relevance and importance of the topic to current issues and calls audience to action/change in thinking where necessary

_____/5

B. Style:

- 1. Style is clear and easy to understand
- 2. Grammar is correct
- 3. Phrasing is elegant and not awkward or confusing
- 4. Flow of writing from sentence to sentence and from section to section is logical and fluid, not choppy or abrupt

_____/5

C. Worldview:

- 1. The thesis and supporting arguments are in line with Scriptural truth
- 2. The students clearly brings Scripture to bear on specific arguments and points of contention
- 3. The student's conclusions bring theological truths directly to bear on their topic, and their extrapolation shows an understanding of how those truths ought to be applied practically to our thinking and actions

_____/5

II. PRESENTATION

A. Content:

1. Student followed the main ideas of his/her paper
2. Flow of thought was logical and not difficult to follow
3. Argument, overall, left the audience convinced/favorably impressed by its thoughtfulness and validity

_____/5

B. Vocal performance:

1. *Pace* – slow enough that the audience was easily able to follow and comprehend, but fast enough to keep attention from flagging
2. *Volume* – loud enough to be heard clearly by everyone in the room
3. *Enunciation* – all words are clearly articulated and easy to understand
4. *Variation of tone* – Student's tone modulates appropriately to each particular point he/she is addressing; the voice is neither too monotone nor overly theatrical

_____/5

C. Physical gestures:

1. *Eye contact* – the student maintains good eye contact with the audience; does not read from his/her notes too much, does not look at the ground or stare at the wall, nor choose only a select few of the audience to focus on
2. *Hand gestures* – hands do not hang at the sides or rest too heavily on the podium; hand gestures are used in a natural manner to appropriately emphasize the speech; they are not forced and awkward, nor overly dramatic and distracting
3. *Feet/posture* – students stand up straight, do not lean on the podium, do not shift weight back and forth, rock, fiddle with their clothes/hair/glasses, etc.

_____/5

D. Defense:

1. Student clearly answers the question he/she is being asked without digressing or obfuscating
2. Student is ready and able to answer all questions that are directly and fairly relevant to the topic
3. Student's answers demonstrate that his/her depth of academic knowledge and worldview understanding of their topic is not limited to only the words of their presentation
4. Student is facially and physically pleasant and engaged with the audience and their questions; comfortable/confident in posture and form of address

_____/5

Veritas Academy
Rhetoric II
Final Thesis Grading Rubric
Matthew Burt, Instructor

Final Draft Due March 22. **No late work will be accepted** except for excused absences.

1. Grammar 20%
 - a. Spelling
 - b. Punctuation
 - c. Foot Note Format
 - d. Bibliography Format
 - e. Voice/Person (not first person)

2. Outline—Classic Form 20%. Are the classic elements Present?
 - a. Exordium (engaging opener)
 - b. Narratio (Statement of Facts, History of the Great conversation, Stasis Points)
 - c. Confirmatio Body
 - i. Claims clearly stated
 - ii. Claims Proven
 - d. Refutatio (counter arguments)
 - i. Counter arguments clearly stated
 - ii. Counter arguments refuted
 - e. Peroratio (Conclusion)
 - i. Summary
 - ii. Closing
 - iii. Call to action

3. Content 60%
 - a. Quality of Arguments.
 - i. Is each argument or claim in support of the thesis statement clearly and convincingly articulated?
 - ii. Is each counter argument clearly and honestly stated? Is each counter argument convincingly refuted?
 - b. Evidence of Research fulfilling minimum requirements.
 - i. Books
 - ii. Articles
 - iii. Utilizing the great conversation.
 - c. Exhibition of Classical virtues (goodness, beauty, and truth).
 - d. Clearly exhibits a Christian and Biblical Worldview.

Content Rubric

60%	Grade	3	2	1
Exordium		Creates Interest and clearly lays direction of the paper	Creates only interest, or direction	Does not create interest or give direction
Narratio		Presents clear background for the paper and addresses the Great Conversation	Lacks clear background or connects to the Great conversation	Does not address background or Great conversation
Confirmatio-1		Clear, logical presentation of argument with documented sources/proofs	Could be clearer of have better proof or documentation for argument	Lacks proper proof, logic, or clarity.
2		Clear, logical presentation of argument with documented sources/proofs	Could be clearer of have better proof or documentation for argument	Lacks proper proof, logic, or clarity.
3		Clear, logical presentation of argument with documented sources/proofs	Could be clearer of have better proof or documentation for argument	Lacks proper proof, logic, or clarity.
Refutatio- 1		Clear, logical presentation of counter argument with sources.	Could be clearer of have better proof for and against counter-argument	Primarily opinion, no proof, poor logic
2		Clear, logical presentation of counter argument with sources.	Could be clearer of have better proof for and against counter-argument	Primarily opinion, no proof, poor logic
3		Clear, logical presentation of	Could be clearer of have better	Primarily opinion, no

		counter argument with sources.	proof for and against counter-argument	proof, poor logic
Peroratio		Clearly summarizes the paper with a clear call to action	Has only summary or call to action	Fails to conclude properly

Grammar and Format 20%				
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Spelling				
Punctuation				
Footnote Format				
Bibliography Format				
Voice/Person				

Assignment Specifics 20%				
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Research			
Classical Virtues			
Biblical Worldview			