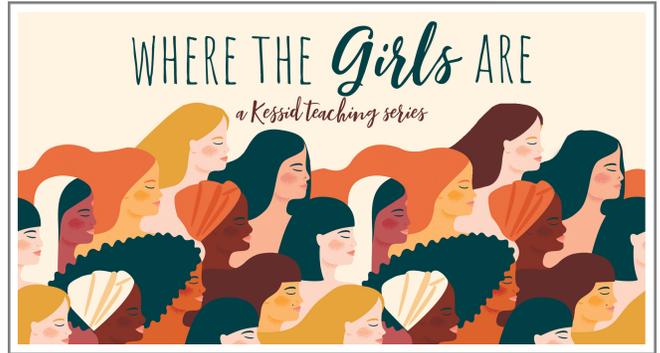


**“THE THINGS WE MIGHT SEE”**

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**Speaker:** Danny Clinton



**With all that we’ve learned in this series, there is an obvious question left yet unanswered... “How does this apply to our church and us as individuals?”**

- ... To answer that, we must stop traveling our own well-worn mental paths, and ponder where we are and where we might have gone astray...

**The Bible teaches us how to live in the light... Not the Shadows filled with Mist and Myths.**

*(Vs) 1<sup>st</sup> John 1:5-7 – “This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. <sup>6</sup> If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. <sup>7</sup> But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.”*

- Light brings Clarity... Clarity is important! ... Even if it’s painful.
- Today, I’m hoping to bring some of that Painful Clarity...

**An example of Painful Clarity...**

**“The Church often teaches us how to Pretend instead of Imagine.”**

**“Imagination happens when we see our lives through the lens of what could and can be.”**

- We saw some of this a few weeks back when we talked about the goodness of God’s original creation, versus the curse and consequences that followed...

*(Vs) Gen 3:16 NIV – “I will make your pains in childbearing very severe; with painful labor you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.”*

**The Myth:** The Myth here would be a belief that... “We should build our homes, marriages and relationships upon the curse and its consequences. Pretending this is the best God has in mind.”

**The Truth:** The Truth here would be that... "God is restoring us back into what He intended... Imagining our lives filled with mutually lifegiving relationships and fellowship."

**Note:** It's these kinds of clarifying insights that give us the freedom to no longer travel blindly in the Mist, while listening to the Myths...

**Instead, we can stop where we are to... "Look Around and Evaluate."**

•I'd like to try this/ First with Women... Let's Look around a bit and Evaluate...

**A Powerful Myth for Women:** The Proverbs 31 Woman is the ideal example of a Righteous Woman. (Vs) Proverbs 31:10-24

- To understand Proverbs 31, the last chapter in the book, we must look at it front to back...
- The whole book begins with a young man, the whole world is before him. The Father, who desperately wants good things for his son, shares that there are two paths... Wisdom and Folly.
- Wisdom and Folly are each represented by a Woman.
- Throughout the book they each try and pull the young man in their direction. The Father implores him to choose well...

*(Vs) Proverbs 2:1-5 – "My son, if you receive my words and treasure up my commandments with you, making your ear attentive to wisdom and inclining your heart to understanding; yes, if you call out for insight and raise your voice for understanding, if you seek it like silver and search for it as for hidden treasures, then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God."*

- He continues proclaiming that "Wisdom is better than Folly..."
- In the end, the young man chooses wisely when he chooses Wisdom.

**A Powerful Truth for Women:** The Proverbs 31 Woman isn't a Woman at all... She is Wisdom Symbolized for all humanity. – Men and Women

**Painful Clarity:** "None of you are Proverbs 31 Women."

- If you thought you had achieved this, you're definitely living with a bit of self-righteous piety. Eeek!
- And, if you thought you were supposed to achieve this, but have always known deep down that you'll continually fall short, eventually you'll definitely live with a constant sense of shame around your failings.

**Now it's the Guy's turn to "Look Around and Evaluate."**

**A Powerful Myth for Men:** That if you notice a woman's appearance, you are left defenseless to lust.

- It's not true!

**A Powerful Truth for Men:** "There's a difference between Lust or Coveting and Appreciation."

*(Vs) Exodus 20:17 – "You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's."*

- Coveting is about property It's about wanting what someone else has.
- 1962 Ferrari GTO 250 – 39 were ever made. – This is the car Jesus is going to drive when He picks me up out in front of Heaven's gates.

**"You can appreciate a beautiful car without feeling like you aren't complete until you own it."**

- Lust is about possession It's about wanting who someone else is.

*(Vs) Matt. 5:27-30 – "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' <sup>28</sup> But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart. <sup>29</sup> If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. <sup>30</sup> And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell."*

- This is referring to scheming, and planning with the goal of consuming another person, whether in fantasy or real life.

**"You can appreciate the beauty or talent in another person without fantasizing about possessing or consuming them."**

- With all this in mind I'd like us now to Look Around, with Painful Clarity, and Evaluate together... Both Men and Women.

**"The Gospel teaches that we are to be brothers and sisters. Close, Connected, and Communal."**

*(Vs) Gal. 5:13 NIV – "You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love."*

**Apparently, this kind of mutual beneficial community comes out of freedom...**

- A Freedom to have their voices heard.
- A Freedom to be equally considered.
- A Freedom to bring their whole selves to the community.

**But again, The Church has a difficult time Imagining this...**

- Men and Women close together leads to "Bad Things," and so more Myths are created...

**A Powerful Church Myth:** Intimacy leads to Sex.

- Not always true... The truth is that sex is only one of the possible expressions of intimacy. Intimacy is much larger and encompasses much more.

**A Powerful Worldly Myth:** Sex leads to Intimacy.

- Also, not always true. The truth is that for many, flesh is much easier to share than feelings.
- Both Myths are proclaiming that we cannot separate intimacy from sexuality.

*(Vs) Hebrews 10:24-25 – “And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, <sup>25</sup> not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”*

- This is a verse with a wonderfully intimate undertone.
- All this just means that we must look and continue to dismantle as many of these Mist bringing Myths that surround us all... Especially the much more pervasive Myths around Women and their Bodies...

**Dual Myths: As pertaining to both Men and Women.****A Powerful Dual Myth:** (Maintain Title above these following slides)

- That Modesty should be used primarily as a service to men.
- Women need to cover up to take care of men's morality.
- Women are responsible for Men's Temptation and Lust.
- Exposure is permission or invitation.
- Women are responsible to keep men safe.
- Women are accountable for men's faithfulness and spirituality.

**Note:** Some of this is so woven into our culture, we don't even know we are doing it...

**Painful Clarity:** I had multiple women tell me the first time they realized their bodies were potentially dangerous was when they started going through puberty and their fathers stopped hugging them.

**It's these Myths and many more that need to be Reimagined, and so used to guide us into the place God has been intending all along!**

- But, for any of that to happen we must start with changing our own Personal and even this Church's Myths...
- It all happens the same way... By standing in the Light and speaking Truth!

*(Vs) John 8:31b-32 – “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”*

**Truth is what happens when Mist and Myths give way to a well-lit reality.**

- So, let's step out into a bit of that bright reality right now.

**A Final Powerful Myth: Kessid Church is a place of equality and shared responsibility.**

**I say this... because right now it isn't...**

- 70-80% of the volunteering here at the church is done by women...
- And yet 100% of the Pastoral and Elder roles are Men.
- This is because the way things have been set up, Women can't be Pastors or Elders.
- Starting today that is changing!
- Imagine what The Lord might create here... Imagine The Things We Might See!