

**Introduction**

During the course of Tour 5 we took a good look at a few of the miraculous ways in which the physical universe declares the glory of its Maker. Now we turn south to consider some of the amazingly detailed reflections of God's nature inherent in the *social* order. According to Dr. Tackett, the evidences of the divine imprint that we see in this realm are even *more* awe inspiring and *more* indicative of the heart of the Creator than the marvels of DNA replication or the complexities of the blood-clotting system. But for this very reason they also stand closer to the focal point of the *Cosmic Battle*.

**Themes**

We begin where we left off in Tour 5: with the voice of nature making loud and unmistakable statements about the nature and character of God. "Ask the animals, and they will teach you," says Job, "and the birds of the air, and they will tell you" (Job 12:7, 8). In this case, *order* is one of the overwhelming messages with which creation bombards us. From the atom to the solar system, from photosynthesis to the cleansing tides, from the human body to the design of a chicken egg – everywhere we look we see obvious indications of purposeful design in the things God has made. This, of course, is a serious problem for those who argue that the universe is the product of "random, mindless forces."

The same element of *order* is apparent in the *social systems* God has instituted. Dr. Tackett lays out six that he see in Scripture: family, labor, church, state, community, and the relationship between man and his Maker. But the order we detect in this area is not simply an expression of the Lord's creative design. Instead, it flows out of His very nature. It is a reflection of *who He is*. As Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the Triune God embodies *in Himself* the ultimate resolution of the old philosophical problem of "the one and the many." He exemplifies *diversity* within *unity* and the answer to *why* it is "not good for man to be alone" is bound up in the Triune Essence. Relationship, union, communion, intimacy, fellowship, love, and community – these things have existed from all eternity within the economy of the Godhead. Accordingly, they serve as the basis for the smooth and ordered functioning of creation. It is for this very reason, Dr. Tackett argues, that basic social institutions such as marriage, family, and church have come under such heavy attack in our day: just as the world, the flesh, and the devil hate the Creator with a fervent and undying hatred, so they inevitably stand opposed to the social order that bears the imprint of His divine nature.

As this tour unfolds, the principles of order and relationship will be examined specifically as we find them manifested in three of the social systems designed by God: the family, the church, and the union between God and man ("The Intimate Three"). During the course of this discussion, Dr. Tackett will explain how the threefold Trinitarian pattern is reflected in and fundamental to the internal functioning of each of these spheres. Special attention will be given to the subject of the family and some of the pathologies associated with disregard for the divine plan in this crucial area of human life.

**Points to Watch For**

Statements from video interviewees poignantly highlight the pain, confusion, and deep emotional reactions connected with almost any examination of family life and family-related issues.

Similar emotions are almost certain to arise during group discussion. The video segments also present a broad range of popular definitions of “family,” a subject that has the potential to stir up equally diversified reactions from group participants. In addition, Dr. Tackett and his students fearlessly broach the often troublesome topic of *authority* and *submission* within the context of marriage, the church, and other aspects of God’s social design.