

Day 2 – Male & Female: The Gift of Gender

Let's do a practice exercise to start off our time today:

- List all the ways you can think of that men and women are different, both physically and emotionally.
- Now list the ways that men and women are alike.

Read *Genesis 1:27-28* again (since we read it yesterday).

- Is God only making the male version of man in His image or both male and female?
(*both*)
- Was His direction given in v. 28 just to the man or to both?
(*both – "said to them"*)
- What was the direction given to both male and female?

God may have created Adam first, but it wasn't with less care or effort or interest that He created Eve. Both are made in the image of God and, as such, reflect who He is. God doesn't exalt or favor one sex over another, as that would run contrary to who He is. When He put Adam and Eve together, it showed completion to His creation of man to work together in being "fruitful and multiplying" and also to show dominion over the earth. Teamwork! This was the perfection of relationship between men and women. But it changed with sin.

Read *Genesis 3:16-17*.

- What happened to women because of sin?
(*pain in childbirth, desire to the husband and he now rules over her*)
- What happened to men because of sin?
(*ground is cursed, pain and toil to work for food*)

The fall of man has now led to the ruin of the initial perfection of men and women. Like everything else in our world today, it is messed up and in need of a Savior to repair and restore it. Meanwhile, we now struggle even more with the gift of gender. However, Christ (and the apostle Paul) did not have this same struggle.

Read *Galatians 3:27-28*.

- How are male and female (along with Jew and Greek) portrayed here?
(*one in Christ*)
- Who then is the great unifier in creating healthy gender equality and value?
(*Jesus Christ*)

It is only through Jesus Christ that we will truly see the gift and value of gender. When we make it about human effort or our opinions of what men and women should be apart from the Gospel, we will begin to spiral into differences of opinion and conflict. God has set his creation into His order for it. Sin has temporarily messed this up, like it has everything else, and we will look at the fall of man in greater detail tomorrow.

Until then, pray and thank God for making you as you are (Psalm 139:14) in the gender and image He desired you to be – through His image.