

*designed
to flourish*

GENDER IDENTITY IN LIGHT OF GOSPEL IDENTITY

STUDY
GUIDE

WEEK 6: MEN AND WOMEN IN MINISTRY

1 TIMOTHY 2-3

God created male and female in His image and gave them a common purpose: be fruitful and multiply and steward God's creation for His glory. This speaks of equality.

Jesus does away with any and every wrong attitude and division between gender, ethnicity and social status (Gal. 3:28). All Christians are one united body in Christ.

The gifts of the Holy Spirit are given out impartially to men and women to build up the Body of Christ (Rom 12:4-8; Eph. 4:12).

And yet, as we have seen so far in our study, unity and equality do not equate to sameness but to unity within diversity.

It would appear that God has designed men to fulfill the primary role of spiritual leadership (headship). And if that is the case in the home, what does it mean for roles in the church? How do we exercise our equality, the gifts we've each been given, and the roles we've been designed to play in faithful ways?

By balancing the tension of the fact that men and women are created equal by God, together are image-bearers of God, and are complementary to one another in our varying and mutually beneficial roles in the home and in the church.

MEMORY VERSE

Romans 12:4-5

For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, 5so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

BIBLE READING PLAN

MONDAY ROMANS 12:3-8

TUESDAY TITUS 1:5-2:8

WEDNESDAY 1 CORINTHIANS 11:2-16

THURSDAY 1 CORINTHIANS 12:1-28

FRIDAY 1 TIMOTHY 2:8-15

SATURDAY 1 TIMOTHY 3:1-14

POST SUNDAY STUDY CONTENT

1. Ice Breaker: What are tasks that you would almost always have men perform? What are tasks that you would almost always have women perform?

2. In the last few decades an issue has emerged among evangelicals: the role of women in ministry. The traditional view is called Complementarianism. Which holds the theological view that although men and women are created equal in being and personhood, they are created to complement each other through some distinctions in role, thus limiting women from some (or one: elder) ministry positions.

The second view is called Egalitarianism. Which holds the theological view that because men and women created equal in being and personhood, there are no gender-based distinctions between them in the home and in the church.

Faithful, sincere Christians can hold varying views on this issue and still strive for unity and peace in the body (John 17:23; Eph. 4:1-6).

The leadership in the church, however, must base their policies on their theology and teach from those convictions. Where we differ from other parts of the body, we ask for humble speech and hearts that promote unity rather than division.

It has been said that our culture has lost the ability to disagree with each other without polarizing or disdaining each other.

Discuss how we can study the roles of men and women in ministry well and if we come to varying convictions, still love and serve one another.

3. Read 1 Timothy 2:12-13. What does Paul mean when he writes, “I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man”?

4. The Bible seems to teach that God has designated men to fulfill the primary role of spiritual leadership. Discuss how the Bible illustrates this through the Old Testament priests, the twelve Apostles, and elders in the church.

5. Additionally, when Paul speaks of male leadership in the church in 1 Corinthians 11 and 1 Timothy 2, he appeals to creation. Why is this significant?

6. Half of the population on the planet are women. And due to their tendency towards greater faithfulness than men, more than half the population in the church are women. If the primary spiritual leadership responsibility of men in the home and the church discourages you and makes you wonder how it is you can serve God with the gifts He has given you to the best of your ability, heed these words from the Danvers Statement on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood:

“With half the world’s population outside the reach of indigenous evangelism; with countless other lost people in those societies that have heard the gospel; with the stresses and miseries of sickness, malnutrition, homelessness, illiteracy, ignorance, aging, addiction, crime, incarceration, neuroses, and loneliness, no man or woman who feels a passion from God to make His grace known in word and

deed need ever live without a fulfilling ministry for the glory of Christ and the good of this fallen world.”
What stands out to you about that statement?

7. If you are a woman with teaching and leadership gifts, remember, God hasn't given you those gifts to go to waste. Read Titus 2 and 1 Timothy 2 and discuss the contexts in which those God-given gifts can be leveraged for maximum kingdom effort.

8. We recognize that history has shown that men often use their leadership to oppress women. Some men have caused great harm to women in the name of church leadership. As leadership at Central we desire and pray that we will follow the model of Christ who led with love and empowered the church. Please pray to that end with us. And pray for the flourishing of the men and women in our church, the home, and broader society.

