

# PARADOX CHURCH | BEING MEN, BEING WOMEN

## INTRO:

- Clarity  
A church plant asked an older church minister to give them some advice. Among other things, he said: “This is how you can develop ministry amongst women in the church, especially mothers. Teach the women how to submit to their husbands; Teach them how to work at home, care for the home; Teach them how to love their husbands and children”
- Patterns and principles

## 1. MEN AND WOMEN: THE BIG PICTURE

### *The God who Forms and Fills*

When God forms creation in days 1-3, He establishes order and rule; he creates boundaries and protects/divides the land from the sea and the water from the sky and heaven from earth.

When God fills creation in days 4-6, He doesn't just add stuff, He glorifies and adorns and enhances and makes fruitful what was already there.

### *Adam and Eve are the Same*

- Both made in the image of God
- Both given responsibilities to rule and fill (Creation Mandate)
- Both approach God in the garden
- Share same value and dignity before the Lord (Gen 9:6)

### *Adam and Eve are different*

Adam tends towards forming/ruling (like God in Days 1-3)

- Adam is the Pilot (Gen 2:15-17; Gen 2:18-20; Gen 3:9-11, 17)
- Adam is the Provider (Gen 2:15-16)
- Adam is the Protector (Gen 2:15-16)

Eve tends towards filling (like God in days 4-6)

- Eve is the Life-giver (2:20-22; 3:20)
- Eve is the nurturer – orientated towards the home/family (2:20-22; 2:25)
- Eve is the glorifier – taking what is there and enhancing it (Like the Lord in days 4-6; 1 Cor 11:7)

Adam establishes and protects and brings rule to Eden.

Eve makes Eden a place worth living.

## 2. MEN AND WOMEN IN THE OT: THE PATTERN CONTINUES

### *THE SAME:*

Both approach God in worship, both make offerings, both receive the covenant blessings (and curses), both pray.

### *DIFFERENT:*

Men tend to progress the purpose of God by being orientated more towards leading/forming.

- They pilot, protect and provide.
- Kings, Priests (like church leaders), soldiers, shepherds, elders of community.

Women tend to progress the purpose of God by being orientated more towards filling.

- They are life-givers, nurturers (family builders) and glorifiers.

Lots of examples of women doing heroic things, taking initiative, being extraordinary and helping to bring salvation to God's people... Deborah – the prophetess and judge of Israel (Judges 4+5); Esther; Jael (Judges 4); Women of Exodus 1+2 Ruth; Proverbs 31

Nb: many of the heroic acts of women are orientated around the home, and domestic life.

### 3. MEN AND WOMEN IN THE NT: THE PATTERN CONTINUES

**THE SAME:**

- Both share in the promises and blessings of Christ
- Both disciples of Christ
- Both further the Kingdom of God
- Both seated in the heavenly places with Christ

**DIFFERENT:**

Jesus treats men and women differently...

- The 12 apostles are men
- Jesus ensures his mother is provided for and protected as he dies on the cross.

|   | <b>MEN</b>  | <b>WOMEN</b>   | <b>TOGETHER</b>  |
|---|---|--|--|
| <b>CHURCH</b><br>1 Cor 11:2-13<br>1 Cor 14:26-40<br>1 Tim 2:8-15<br>1 Tim 3:1-5                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Authority/Leadership</li> <li>• Eldership</li> <li>• Teaching mixed gathering</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching woman</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-workers</li> <li>• Sing</li> <li>• Pray</li> <li>• Individual teaching</li> <li>• Children's work</li> <li>• Submit to elders</li> </ul>   |
| <b>HOME</b><br>Eph 5:22-33<br>Col 3:18-19<br>Titus 2:3-5<br>1 Tim 5:14<br>1 Cor 11:3-4<br>1 Peter 3:1-7 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Head</li> <li>• Love</li> <li>• Sacrifice</li> <li>• Provide</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Submit</li> <li>• Respect</li> <li>• Orientated towards the home</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parenting</li> <li>• Hospitality</li> <li>• Work (primary responsibility husband)</li> </ul>  |
| <b>WORLD</b><br>1 Cor 7:1-41<br>Gen 1-3<br>Proverbs 31  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pilot</li> <li>• Protect</li> <li>• Provide</li> <li>• (Spiritually as well as physically)</li> <li>• The Glad Assumption of Sacrificial Responsibility</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Life-giver, fruitfulness</li> <li>• Nurturer</li> <li>• Glorifier</li> <li>• (spiritually as well as physically)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lots and lots</li> <li>• Fruits of the Spirit</li> <li>• 10 Commandments</li> <li>• Make most of time</li> <li>• Single – advantages and struggles</li> <li>• Married – joys and struggles</li> <li>• Work</li> </ul> |

**IN THE HOME** (Eph 5:22-33; cf Col 3:18-19; 1 Peter 3:1-7)

**HUSBAND:**

- They *are* the head. Offer leadership. Set the tone of the family. "This is the kind of family we are"
- Commanded to love their wives sacrificially. Not fulfil every wish of their wife... rather to lead in such a way that the wife and whole family become the best Christians they can be under Christ. That will include sacrifice.
- Don't abdicate. Don't abuse. Treat the weaker vessel with honour.
- Pilot, Provide, Protect – spiritually and physically

**WIFE:**

- Commanded to submit to their husbands. To follow the lead he sets down. Contribute in setting direction, but let the husband lead. E.g. Going to make church a priority on a Sunday (even it means kids can't do sports). "Great idea". Submit as to the Lord – a limit to submission.
- Commanded to respect their husbands. To hold them in high regard, be thankful for who they are, encourage them and help them.
- Life-giver, nurturer and glorifier – spiritually and physically
- *"Be the glory of your husband. Be fruitful. Build your house. Work hard. Be ambitious. Be productive. Learn more. Run harder. Take the gifts God has given you, the desires He has given you, the constraints that He has given you, and then figure out how to weave those into something glorious, something compelling, a beautiful aroma that can't be contained and that beckons a broken world to come and taste, to see that the Lord is good"* (Rebecca Merkle, *Eve in Exile*)

**PARENTING** (Eph 6:1-4):

- Both discipline; Both respected; Both teach and disciple; Family worship?

## IN THE CHURCH

|                         | Context   | Men  | Women   | Both   |
|-------------------------|---|--|---|--|
| <b>1 Corinthians 11</b> | A church gathering                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Show they are under authority of Christ by keeping his head uncovered (v4)</li> <li>Men to appear like men – short hair (v13-14)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wife shows she is under authority of her husband by keeping head covered (v5)</li> <li>Women to appear as women – long hair</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribute/pray</li> <li>Under authority</li> </ul> |
| <b>1 Corinthians 14</b> | A church gathering. The weighing up of prophecy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Weigh up prophecy</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not contribute to the weighing up of prophecy</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sing, pray, bring a word (v26)</li> </ul>           |
| <b>1 Timothy 2</b>      | Church leadership/gathering                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Holy Hands</li> <li>Not quarrelsome or divisive</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not adorned outwardly, but inwardly</li> <li>Not to have authority</li> <li>Not to teach</li> </ul>                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learn</li> </ul>                                    |
| <b>1 Timothy 3</b>      | Church leadership                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Qualified men as elders</li> </ul>  |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deacons</li> </ul>                                  |
| <b>Titus 2</b>          | Church life                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Self-controlled</li> <li>Worthy of respect</li> <li>Sound in faith, love and endurance</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Older women teach younger women</li> <li>Love their husbands</li> <li>Submit to husbands</li> <li>Build the home</li> </ul>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Know sound doctrine</li> </ul>                      |

Other things both do...

- Co-workers in the gospel (Euodia and Syntyche Phil 4:3; Lydia Acts 16)
- Private teaching (Priscilla and Aquila Acts 18:2,18,26; Rom 16:3; 1 Cor 16:19, 2 Tim 4:19)
- Servants/deacons? (Phoebe Rom 16:1)
- Sing, admonish and teach one another (Col 3:15; Eph 5:19-20)

*“Women can minister to the sick, the dying, the mentally impaired and the physically handicapped. They can share their faith, share their resources, open their home to strangers. They can write, counsel, mentor, organise, administrate, design, plan and come alongside others. They can pray. They can serve on committees of the church. They can come alongside elders and deacons in difficult situations involving women or those needing a women’s perspective. They can minister to single mums, new mums, breast cancer survivors, and abuse victims.... (Kevin De Young, Men and Women in the Church)*

## IN THE WORLD

- Lots that is the same: e.g. Fruits of the Spirit, 10 Commandments, general commands of Scripture, work.
- Grow where you are planted (1 Cor 7:8-12; 17)
- Pilot, Protect and Provide and Life-giver, nurturer, glorifier – both physically and spiritually

## THE ABC OF BEING MEN AND WOMEN

**APPEARANCE:** “A woman must not wear men’s clothing, nor a man wear women’s clothing, for the Lord your God detests anyone who does this.” (Deut 22:5; 1 Corinthians 11:6)

- Men should look like men and women should look like women. What that looks like might depend on the culture we live in.

**BODY:** “For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb.” (Psalm 139:13)

- Our bodies determine our gender. And our bodies are a gift from God.

### CALLING – (Eph 5, 1 Tim 2, 1 Tim 3, Titus 2)

- Men called to Pilot, Protect and Provide in the church and in the home.
- Women called to be Life-givers, nurturers and glorifiers in the church and in the home.

**DEMEANOUR–** “But we were gentle among you, like a **nursing mother** taking care of her own children. So, being affectionately desirous of you, we were ready to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you had become very dear to us.” (1 Thes 2:7-8)

“For you know how, like a **father** with his children, <sup>12</sup>we exhorted each one of you and encouraged you and charged you to walk in a manner worthy of God,” (1 Thes 2:11-12)

- A female demeanour/posture – nursing, affection, care, kindness, gentleness (1 Peter 3:3-4)
- A male demeanour/posture – exhort, encourage, lead, strength (1 Pet 3:7; 1 Cor 16:13-14)

*“What do we say when our children ask us: Mum, dad – what does it mean to be a man or woman? Tell them they are made in the image of God and for union with Christ. And then tell your daughters that they should strive for beauty in the way God wants them to be beautiful. And tell your sons to strive to be strong in all the ways God wants them to be strong.” (Kevin DeYoung, Men and Women)*

## SOME QUESTIONS

### 1. What does it look like to be a man or a woman when single?

There is much overlap between the commands of scripture towards men and women outside of the church and home. Growing in godliness is an imperative for us all. But... there might be some differences...

- i) Masculinity is the **Glad Assumption of Sacrificial Responsibility**. If a single man, you can aim to gladly take on sacrificial responsibility. Step up. Take initiative. Ask: How can I make things better? How can I take responsibility for those around me? In church, but elsewhere as well. Not saying to women “sit down” but saying to men “stand up.”
- ii) Peter reminds us that the woman is the weaker vessel (1 Pet 3:7). And the man’s response? Honour her. Her weakness is a precious God-given thing that should be honoured not only in the home, but in the world. Treat women differently to how treat men. Deference. War?
- iii) Nurturing and life-giving and glorifying are spiritual ideas, not just physical ideas. How can you nurture the house-hold faith and strengthen the sense of family? How can you bring life to those in need?

### 2. Should the mother stay home and not go out to work?

Lots of reasons why mothers might. Cannot categorically say the mother should stay home. Different arrangements. But...

- a. The early years are hugely important
- b. Not demeaning. CEO of a company or shape, teach, spend time with an eternal soul?
- c. Going with the grain

### 3. Hasn’t the “metoo” movement shown us how dangerous it is to talk of men as having headship?

Biblical teaching on male and female roles doesn’t encourage or condone abuse. It speaks to the opposite – men use their strength to protect and provide sacrificially.

## NOTES ON TRICKY PASSAGES

### 1 CORINTHIANS 11:2-16

SAME:

- Both speak/pray in gathering; Women from man, man from woman; Both under authority

DIFFERENCE 1: Authority and Submission

- When husband speaks/prays, he shows he is under authority of Christ by keeping his head uncovered. (v4)
- When wife speaks/prays, she shows she is under authority of Christ by keeping her head covered. (v5)
- Positively – head covering for wife shows she is married. Negatively – wife with an uncovered head shows she is ‘available’, not under her husband. Today maybe it’s a wedding ring, taking the husband’s name that show she is married and under the headship of her husband.

DIFFERENCE 2: Men should look like men and women should like women.

- If the wife doesn’t cover her head, she should shave her hair off. But v13 – nature teaches it is un-womanly to have a shaved head.
- Nature says men should look like men; women should like women.

### 1 TIMOTHY 2:8-15

- V11-12 give the commands, and 13-15 the reasons.
- Verses 11 and 12 are in parallel. Women are to learn quietly and submissively in verse 11.
- Then in verse 12 the ‘quietness’ is explained by the ‘not teaching’ and ‘submission’ as ‘not have authority’.
- Hence verse 12 then ends again with ‘she is to remain quiet’.
- This isn’t *total* silence – we read in 1 Cor. 11 for example about praying, plus we all sing etc
- Two prohibitions: Women not to teach AND women not to have authority over man. We know from elsewhere that women are able to teach in some contexts (Titus 2) and have authority in some contexts (Eph 6:1-4 – mothers to be honoured by children). So not a blanket statement about teaching and authority.
- The teaching and authority in 1 Tim 2 is in the context of the gathered church and church governance (1 Tim 3). Teaching is the primary way elders lead the church (1 Tim 3:2; 2 Tim 2:2; 2 Tim 4:2). Elders teach and have authority – sometimes qualified non-elder men teach as well. Going with the grain.
- Paul then gives two reasons for these two prohibitions...
  - I) Adam was formed first. This doesn’t make him better, but there is a priority, and ordering. He from the beginning was made to teach Eve, not the other way round. Just as Christ teaches the church, not us him.
  - II) Eve was deceived not Adam. This is harder. It may mean that women are more easily deceived by Satan. That’s certainly how most people took it for most of church history. And before we dismiss that - it’s clear that men and women have different weaknesses/patterns of sin. Hence men and women are addressed differently all over the Bible.
  - III) But could also be making a subtler point. Adam wasn’t deceived: he rebelled openly. He was the one who was given God’s word directly. She was tricked. He was openly rebellious. So in saying ‘Remember, Adam wasn’t deceived’ he could be saying, ‘Remember, Adam was the one God gave his word directly to. He was always meant to be the teacher. That’s why he gets in so much trouble and is blamed. Remember the pattern of Genesis.’
- To round off: verse 15! Tricky: could be a) ‘The child-bearing’ as in Mary giving birth to Jesus. Or, more likely, he means when we live our lives in accordance with who God has made us (men or women), then we are saved. Obviously Jesus saves us. It’s about living out our salvation appropriately (Philippians 2:12-13). It’s not saying no single women or childless women can be saved. But rather live out your gender’s calling, in humble submission to the will of God.