

# Being Human - Adult SS - Lesson 3: Male and Female

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[ 0 : 00 ] Welcome everyone. Well done for making it. Hope you got through the traffic okay. I've been told the boiler is broken, so church can be a little bit chilly today. So if you want to keep your jackets on, that's absolutely fine. We've got I think a lot to get through today. So I'll pray and then we'll jump straight into it.

Lord God, we praise you that you are our creator. We are dependent on you for everything and you define who we are and you have made us fearfully and wonderfully and you have made us male and female.

And so, Lord, we ask that we as we dive into your word and we seek to understand who we are, how you've made us. Lord, would you please give us wisdom, enlighten our minds, soften our hearts.

And we pray that we would learn all of this for the sake of your glory in Jesus name. Amen. So let's do a bit of a recap today. We are creatures. We are fundamentally made of dust. And so we are entirely dependent on God for life and breath and everything.

But also we've learned that we are more than just creatures, aren't we? We have a crown of creation. We're made in God's image in his likeness. We reflect and represent God. We're rational creatures. We're moral creatures, relational creatures.

[ 1 : 29 ] And we are vice regents. We're under kings. We've got dominion over this earth. God has placed us to rule over this earth. And so we are unique and special creatures with inherent dignity. We are not just a bag of cells, are we?

No, human life is infinitely valuable. And last week we saw that we are covenantal creatures. So every human exists in covenant with God. No one is not in covenant with God.

We're made of him, made to worship him, made to obey his law, love him, follow him, enjoy with him, enjoy him, dwell with him. In some way we are made to worship God, which means we are religious creatures.

Everyone deep down knows God. But in sin we suppress that knowledge. And so we redirect our worship and we start worshipping the creature or creation.

We start worshipping ourselves. And so Christ has come to call us back to worship and to call us to be truly human again.

[ 2 : 39 ] And now this week I want us to dive into the details of another specific aspect of being an image of God. So God created man in his own image. In the image of God he created him.

Male and female he created them. I want us to see today what it means to be male and female. Now a couple of things to mention before we dive in.

First of all I do realise that good man was on last Friday and we, some of the guys here, have thought about this topic. That is just a coincidence. And I hope, well there will be overlap.

I hope there will be new things as well. But when there is overlap, let's use that to kind of engage our minds even more on this topic. The second thing to say is I know that this is a hot topic.

Particularly today. And we will all be coming from different backgrounds and views on this. And we exist in a world where our culture doesn't like to hear what the Bible has to say on this.

[ 3 : 52 ] And without knowing it, we can take in what the culture thinks and respond to all this. And so what I'd like to encourage us today to do is I really want us to just hear what the Bible has to say above all.

Okay. I know it's hard to throw away the things already in our minds. But let's try to really listen to what the Bible has to say. Let God shape us through his word.



image and reflect god which means second point point b male and female are equal in worth and dignity so if both are the image of god one isn't better than the other one isn't worth more than the other one isn't superior to the other that there isn't a quality of worth and dignity between male and female so in all that we say from now on from today onwards right this must be clear male is not better than female and vice versa female is not better than male okay but both are the image of god's and so for humanity to be the image of god it requires what does it require it requires both male and female you cannot have humanity with one but not the other which means point c men and women are interdependent they depend on each other interdependent so adam is created first isn't he he's created then put in the garden and he's on his own at first isn't he but look at how god views man without woman so genesis 2 18 then the lord god said it is not good that the man should be alone i will make him a helper fit for him god has been calling his creation good every day so far hasn't he he would finish the day and it was good finish today and it was good and it was good and it was good but when it comes to man without woman what does he say he says this is not good and so he makes woman to be a helper fit for him and then the day is how does he finish the day very good but why is it not good why is it not good for man to be alone well this isn't about loneliness

because if the problem was that adam was just lonely he just needed company if that was the case then then another man or a football team could have done right or god even brings him all the animals and they don't get they're not good enough are they you know a dog a golden retriever could be great company i had a golden retriever man's best friend really good company but but it's the problems not about loneliness so why is man without woman not good well think back to what god's purpose for humanity is what did what commands did god give humanity in genesis 128 be fruitful and multiply man can't do that without woman and woman can't do this without man in our big task of filling the earth and subduing it and ruling over it and reflecting imaging gods in that filling and subduing we need each other to do that don't we and so male and female are at heart made for each other and i don't just mean marriage which of course that is the case i mean as humanity male and female all together we image god and together we make this world fruitful we need each other to be fruitful and to multiply that is why god made male and female so that we can be together and be fruitful and multiply so let's see something important here man and woman are not made in competition with each other are they we're made to complement each other and to work with each other in our own ways and it's then when we're doing that that's when we flourish that's when we start fulfilling our purpose and our design it's then that the day becomes very good for all of us men and women are fundamentally interdependent and so male and female are not identical there are fundamental by design differences and distinctions and differences and distinctions that are designed to work with each other and complement each other and it's when we look at this interdependence that's when we start to see the differences the god designed good differences and so let's look at them we're on to point two men and women are designed differently are there any really pressing questions right now i think it might be better to wait till the end but just any clarification cool we'll move on men and women are designed differently so what are these different differences what is a woman what is a man well let's look at the specific intention god has when he first makes man and then woman and when we look at that intention we see several important differences and the first is this man is a worker and keeper woman is a helper so for adam look at god's intention 215 adam's specific task is to work and keep the garden and eventually the whole world right we thought about the covenant of works expanding to the whole world adam is to bring order to the garden to bring structure to form it with design and expand the garden into the whole world he's to harness and cultivate god's creation to to take god's creation and make it even more fruitful than it is so specifically what could that be is to farm and build and design and invent and to protect it as well did you see that that that's what keep means it's this idea of guarding and protecting so if we fast forward into the old testament a bit more the priests in the old testament they were given the same command to to work and keep the temple and the keeping meant guarding but protecting it from being harmed and misused as well well that is man's task that is the design for men to work and keep this world but woman is key to this man is not good enough alone to do this and to be fruitful in the whole earth on his own he can begin to create order and work and keep but something is missing man can't fill the world with other humans on his own he can't bring life to it adam could have built a city but that city would have been empty and lifeless and so god has a specific intention in creating a woman she is man's helper to do this so woman is designed to take what man has ordered and make it even more fruitful and to fill it and nurture it and bring life to

it and to make it even better and so the word helper is not a derogatory term here i want to be clear about this that it's not a derogatory term this is a wonderful and necessary task in fact god is often called israel's helper so i've got an example here psalm 115 oh israel trust in the lord he is their help and their shield and the word help there that's the exact same word as what eve is called it's a etzer in hebrew and so absolutely it is not a derogatory term it's a wonderful term in fact and also if you want to go down the line i don't like the sound of that well actually being a helper that's actually more of a comment on adam's inability isn't it it shows how important women are that they are fundamentally necessary for humanity and our image bearing task woman has the unique task to bring life to man's work and to nurture it and this doesn't just mean giving birth it does mean giving birth that is an important aspect of it but this is wider than only childbirth and so let me make a new point to spell this out man forms woman fills man forms woman fills i want us to spot something about god how god has created so cast your mind back to genesis 1 in the beginning of creation what was the world like before god said let there be light creation was formless and void there was no form to it there's no order or system to the world yet but in days one to three

[ 22 : 21 ] we see god forms and orders creation in those first three days so day one you can draw these in your boxes if you turn the page so day one he forms light and dark he forms night and day he orders time these are time markers right he forms the light and the dark he forms time and then day two he forms and orders the above and the below right the heavens above he forms and then there's the waters below and then day three he forms the land and separates it from the sea he orders a system and domain of land and water and he forms that so days one to three are all about falling okay and then in days four to six they're kind of paired well they are pairs with the day above them can you see that so day and night in day four day and night it is filled with stars and planets and moons and then day five the waters are filled with fish and the heavens are filled with birds and then day six you've got the land and the water already formed and then the land is filled with insects and animals and so do you see the pairs and the pattern here

God God creates in pairs and he first forms and then he fills and we see this pattern in man and woman man is made first and then woman is made man is made first and so he is the one given the task to bring form to this world he's to bring order and formation and a system from the things that are chaotic and formless and he's to maintain it to keep it he's to work and keep and the woman is made to fill what man has formed to bring life and to bring substance and vibrancy and colour and to nurture what has been formed man forms and woman fills and this does not only mean fill with children it also means so much more it's filling with all manner of life form and order on its own is stale isn't it but women bring colour and vibrancy and people and community and richness to what man has formed as the the IPC

Louisa's studies title is very good it's a very good name for this it's life givers right women are life givers and that isn't just childbearing that is all life to this world it's nurturing it filling it someone once helpfully summed this up with this phrase men build bridges women make them worth crossing do you see that that's forming and filling and you can see this in all areas of life first of all this might be a silly example but it's a clear example university picture a boy's student house you can all picture that can't you now picture a girl's student house which house is worth living in more no question right bit of a silly example but more of a serious one here think about communities and relationships women are so good at filling this world with community in general and I do mean in general here I know there are always exceptions and all that we're saying today there's not a clear cut thing without exceptions but in general it's the women who naturally meet up don't they it's the women who network and are great at getting phone numbers and looking out for each other and talking to each other and I find it fascinating to see just women women are so gifted and naturally good at so think about healing women fill this place with community we can see this in the people in the church they nurture this place with life and that's because God has naturally designed women to fill this world with life and you can even see this where Adam and Eve were created where they were created so where was Adam created 2.15 and the Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of

Eden to work it and keep it so flip this where was Adam created he wasn't created in the garden was he he was first created out and then he was first created out in the dust out here God formed him out of the garden and then God places him in the garden to work it and keep it and so so his task is go into the garden advance into that and order and protect and work and keep this garden his domain of life his posture his domain is to advance forward and form the world God but where is

Eve created well God made her already in the garden Adam was already when Adam was in the garden

[ 29 : 03 ] God took the rib from Adam from his sides and then formed the woman in the garden and so her domain is the area that man has already formed and ordered and so she is to fill that domain with life so where is Eve created right here and so she's to fill that domain her domain with life that's why she's so needed and so from her comes all this life all this colour and vibrancy and community so let's draw some there so what do we see here men build bridges women make them worth crossing and so both rule can you see this both were given the task to rule humanity them let them rule let them have dominion so both rule but but they rule in different ways don't they each with different strengths and domains and callings but there's another difference to see as well point c man is protector woman is protected so man is to keep all that is in the garden including the woman so look so look how woman is made genesis 2 21 so the lord god caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh and the rib that the lord god had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man and the man said this at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh she shall be called woman because she was taken out of man what we are made out of tells us about what it means to be a man or a woman so man is made from dust and so he will be a worker and protector of the dust of earth that is where he will flourish and woman is made from man from his side and so she is designed to work with him and be protected by him and that is where she will flourish

Matthew Henry he's famous for his commentary of the whole bible he wrote this about Eve's creation I've got it there for you Eve was not taken out of Adam's head to top him neither out of his feet to be trampled on by him but out of his side to be equal with him under his arm to be protected by him and near his heart to be loved by him this is the dynamic between men and women man is protector woman is protected and this of course goes for marriage this is most clearly seen in marriage husbands are to physically and spiritually protect their wives so when a burglar comes into the home the husband is to get the bat when the devil comes into the home the husband is to get the bible so of course it's in marriage but we see this beyond marriage so think about our society our laws and our outrage against the abuse of women that shows our design at work our attitude of women and children first that is our design at work our gut reactions especially men when we hear of what's happened to women in news stories that gut reaction it all shows we know women must be protected and all this all that's happening in society when that happens that is the image of God playing out at a societal scale that is not just cultural baggage although some things are nurtured and cultural in some ways but it's not just cultural baggage we naturally do this because it is our design coming through you could even relate some of this to the sense of divinity that we saw last week this is our design pulsing beating out of us and just for a moment let's just think about our bodies our bodies are related to all of this!

our bodies are tied to who we are as men and women and our bodies indicate they signal they correspond to this design for men and women it is not random that man that man is called to work and keep and he's also generally physically stronger it's not random that woman is called to nurture and give life and her body is designed exactly for that men and it's not random or even culturally conditioned that men and women generally tend to want to do jobs related to this design of forming and filling ordering and nurturing so let me just apply some of this and then we'll stop for questions in a moment I'm sure we are aware that there is a higher percentage of men in the STEM field isn't there there's always that statistic floating around science technology engineering and maths there's often a higher percentage of men in those fields men often gravitate to engineering manufacturing construction computing and then when we think about the percentage of women in other fields there's a high percentage of women in care work for example so child care or nursing or elderly care and also the arts as well this is generally the case the statistics show this and there's often upset about this and people may say well this difference it's inequality right or they say no this shouldn't be the case we shouldn't have a difference at all and so how can we explain these differences

I'm not saying any shoulds or shouldn'ts here I'm just saying how can we explain these differences well these jobs kind of fall into forming and filling don't they stem generally is to do with forming and ordering and going into the garden and working it and jobs involving care and children and the arts that is in general that's filling this world with colour and life and nurturing and making it a worthwhile place to live now this does not mean women cannot go into stem and men cannot go into care work

I'm not saying that at all both are good professions to go in and there's a lot of overlap of forming and filling in life life is messy there's wisdom about this and I'm not saying any shoulds or shouldn'ts at this point I'm not saying any shoulds or shouldn'ts all

I'm trying to do here is saying that we can explain these differences because of our design these statistics are the image of God coming through on a societal scale our design and calling naturally inclines us toward these things now not always of course there are exceptions and there's always a mixture of nature and nurture but the general trend it does have an explanation we are naturally inclined to form and fill and so let me just say if you are a female here today and you find in yourself the desire to care and nurture and you just really enjoy the idea of that or your dream job is to be a mum but you find society telling you no don't do that or you find society saying you know fight against that desire that's been wrongfully ingrained in you don't be one of those statistics what can [ 37 : 55 ] I just say if actually you have no need to feel ashamed about desiring something like that that is a perfectly good thing to do it's a wonderful aspect of your image bearing you're giving us a reason to cross the bridge likewise for guys if you want to build and form and order you don't need to think that you're a stereotype doing that that that is part of your design that is something to embrace and let me finish just by saying this all of this the working and helping the forming and filling the protecting and the flourishing all of this combined is what it means to be a man and a woman it's not it's not just a single thing that makes a man or a woman it's the whole design and you can sum it up with this word calling okay being a man or woman it's about what you are called to in

God's design for you and so it isn't a checklist as if you have that trait and you like these things and you kind of look this way well then you're a you don't have those traits and you do these generally those type of things well then you're a woman no that's too simplistic it's something far deeper that it's not necessarily about what you have but what you're called to you're called to a life of either forming or filling and being a man or woman!

It's about embracing that calling and when men and women follow this calling this is when we flourish this is when we become fruitful and we will have a world full of bridges and a world full of reasons to cross them and so let me finish just answering these two controversial questions what is a man?

well let's just try and define it by summing up what we've learned a man is a human being made in the image of God who is called to rule form and to protect women and to make this world fruitful with them and his body corresponds to his calling what is a woman a woman is a human being made in the image of God who is called to help men rule this world by filling this world with life to make it even more fruitful in all domains and her body corresponds to her calling so next week we're going to look at marriage and headship and the transgender issue so if you've got questions related to that we'll try and cover it next week but let me open up to questions I can't promise that I'll answer everything