

Connect Group notes 12 July 2025

Matt Perry kicked off our new sermon series on Sunday –
'One in Christ – *Women and Men*'.

This sermons series is designed to showcase the equality of women and men in Christ, and to speak to some of the misunderstood scriptures and beliefs about women's and men's roles in the body of Christ.

We are created in the image of God. As his church, we are meant to reflect his image and personhood through both women and men.

Gateway's statement on this matter is as follows;

"At Gateway we believe that men and women are equally called to leadership, service, and spiritual authority and while being created with distinct natures, equal in value, dignity and purpose before God". (See Galatians 3:26-28)

Discussion Points

1. Matt reminded us that scripture has been written *for us*, not to us. It is therefore integral that we read scripture from the correct cultural context of the time. Read Genesis 1:26-27
 - How does this scripture demonstrate the equality between men and women?
 - What are some beliefs that we have grown up with that are different to the teaching about women and men we heard on Sunday?
2. Read Genesis 2:18 - God said it wasn't good for man to be alone, and he made a helper (ezer) for him. Matt described how Eve was taken out of Adam's side, and that this illustrates **partnership** not subordination.
 - What kind of dynamics spring to mind in any form of partnership that we engage in (not just husband and wife)?

- The word 'ezer' (helper) is a word also used by God to describe himself. How can we interpret this word in a way that doesn't mean playing second fiddle?
 - What does this say about God's intention that we exist in interdependent community?
 - What are some of the blessings that being in partnership with someone brings?
 - How do we reflect the image of the Godhead when we work side by side?
3. Read 1 Timothy 2:11-13. We need to read scripture in its historical context. Paul was writing to Timothy about the church in Ephesus. Ephesus was a city full of female pagan cults. Some of these women were infiltrating the church and confusing the truth of the gospel with other aspects of paganism, so this is why Paul instructed they should not be allowed to speak.
- How does understanding the cultural context of scripture help us understand and apply it to our own contexts.
 - How can misunderstanding scripture inadvertently oppress certain groups within society?

PRAY and Apply

- Ask the Lord to reveal to us in a new way what it actually means and looks like, to complement our spouse or friends of the opposite gender, in different aspects of our lives.
- Ask the Lord to show us if we hold deep, perhaps unconscious, negative attitudes about the roles of men and women. Ask him to renew our minds in this area.

