

Connect Group notes 21 July 2025

Don continued our new series on Sunday 'One in Christ – Women and Men', speaking particularly about '*Jesus and the community of equals*'.

He encouraged us to look at hard passages of scripture through the clearer ones, see Galatians 3:28;

*'There is no longer Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male and female. For you **are all one** in Christ Jesus'.*

When we consider the role of women in society and in a faith community, it is vital to look at the example of Jesus, and how he regarded and treated women. The way he did this was contextually extraordinary, given that women were considered chattels with no rights or ability to give testimony, let alone hold spiritual authority. His inclusion of them was a 'cultural breakthrough'.

Discussion Points

Don covered three points...

1. *The evidence of the gospels is that he valued the spirituality of women*
 - See Luke 13:16, Luke 11:27 and Mark 7:24-30-
how does Jesus exalt and advocate for gender equality in this passage of scripture?
 - See Luke 10:28-42, Don explained that Jesus validated the fact Mary was sitting at the feet of her rabbi (a role not meant for women), but he also didn't denigrate Martha for doing domestic duties -
how does this show us that all roles are significant and affirmed by Jesus for women, depending on a woman's personal preference?

2. Jesus had women disciples

- See Mark 15:40-41, we know women 'followed' and 'served' Jesus and were involved in more than domestic duties. Don explained that although the 12 disciples were all men, that this was necessary in order to get his mission off the ground and to have it validated in the society he was in which was patriarchal. He also explained that the words 'followed' and 'served' do not imply a 'dogs-body' type role.
- How does Jesus exemplify what the words 'follow' and 'serve' mean?
- How do we as women and men live out our discipleship to Jesus in our 'following' and 'serving' of God?

3. Jesus moderated and even transcended patriarchy - Judaism had a double standard regarding women.

- How does Jesus' stand regarding the equality of women lift women up, not only in society, but also their standing in a faith community?
- How does this encourage women to step into the call of God on their lives?
- How does this encourage men to support women in this way?

Next week Don is going to examine some of Paul's more difficult passages of scripture on this subject.

