**Gender Equality**

Gender Roles – Part 1

Introduction –

1. Two modern problems make this study of utmost importance.
   1. Modern culture is quickly trying to erase or distort God’s intended roles for men and women in every realm of society.
   2. Many people study the Bible looking to defend their opinions rather than seek God’s opinion.
   3. We understand biblical principles to be valid for all ages and the purpose of Bible study is to know and follow God’s will and his alone!
2. Throughout this study, I can only give you my understanding of what the Bible teaches on this.
   1. We will deal with challenging questions about the role of men and women in the home and church.
   2. You may not agree with all of my conclusions and I don’t pretend to have all the answers. However, I believe these conclusions are biblically-based.
   3. I am always open to correction if the correction is biblically based, not opinion or tradition based.
3. Today, I believe it is important that we begin this study of Gender Roles by seeing that **gender equality**, that male and female are equally valuable to God, is taught in the Scriptures.

Body –

1. Genesis 1:26-28; 2:18-25
   1. Equality
      1. Man (Heb. *adam*) is defined as male and female (1:27; cf. 5:2).
      2. Both were created in God’s image (1:26).
      3. Both male and female are blessed by God (1:28).
      4. Both are commanded to multiply and dominate the earth (1:28).
      5. Both are composed of same bone and flesh (2:23).
      6. In marriage, they become “one flesh” (2:24).
      7. Both were naked and unashamed (2:25).
      8. Both were sinless (1:26; 2:25).
   2. Though equal, early differences indicate equality does not mean they have same role.
      1. Two genders, male and female, indicate God had different roles for each (1:27).
      2. Man was formed from dust (2:7), while woman was formed from man’s rib (2:22).
      3. Man was commanded to work and protect the garden before Eve’s creation (2:15).
      4. God gave man authority to name every living creature (2:19-20), including his wife (2:23; 3:20).
      5. The woman was brought to the man (2:22).
      6. The woman was created as a complementary helper (2:18).
         1. This word help is most often used to refer to God in the OT.
         2. So, it does not imply inferiority to man but rather an important aid to man.
2. Galatians 3:28
   1. Feminists often use this passage to say that in Christ there are no longer specific gender roles God expects men and women to fulfill. They ignore that Paul wrote so much about Gender roles in other passages and they strip this passage of its true meaning!
   2. Galatians 3:26-28 – Consider the two powerful truths Paul highlights here.
      1. Whatever barriers separate people in society, all are broken down in Christ. None are excluded from being able to be baptized into Christ!
      2. It took amazing wisdom, power, and love to unite such a diverse group of people. All are equally welcome and equally valuable.
      3. However, Paul and other NT writers use these very same truths of diversity in the church to show how their very different roles in life can be used to glorify God and accomplish his will!
3. Equality Is Not Sameness
   1. People of equal position can fill different roles (Banks have several vice presidents: VP of loans, VP of Credit, VP of Investments, VP of Compliance etc.).
   2. Differences and distinctions do not necessarily diminish value (Which VP could you drop without seriously impacting the bank’s day-to-day functions?).
   3. The Ultimate Example of Equality with Different Roles
      1. John 5:18; 10:30-33; 17:11, 20-23 – Jesus claims equality with the Father.
      2. Phil. 2:6 – The apostles recognized Jesus as equal with God.
      3. John 8:28-29; 14:28 – The Father clearly had **authority** over Jesus, who **willingly submitted** to the Father’s authority.
      4. John 5:19-23; 17:4 – They had **different** roles or functions.
      5. Clearly then, differences in roles, even when one is subordinate to another, does not diminish their equality or importance.

Conclusion –

1. Since different roles clearly do not diminish equality, any refusal on our part to accept the roles God has given both men and women is simply rebellion.
2. God sees male and female as equally valuable and important. He wants all men and women to be baptized into Christ and conform to the image of Christ.
3. Part of conforming to Christ’s image is filling the role God designed for you, even when it means submitting to another as he did!