



B REVEALING WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS

Gender and restoring relationships



Why use this Bible study?

In reading the Bible, we see that men and women are created equal. This study helps us to reflect on how men and women should relate to each other in a positive, interdependent and mutually supportive way.



Read Genesis 1:26-28

This Bible passage looks at the relationship between men and women in Genesis. It shows an equal partnership between men and women, while Genesis 2 discusses their roles. Paul draws on this second account in 1 Corinthians 11:7–9.

Many societies today are characterised by divisions between people, especially between men and women. These divisions have led to poor relationships between men and women. Over the centuries, throughout the world, women and girls have been discriminated against in many different ways. In most cultures, this discrimination is reflected in value systems where sons are valued more highly than daughters. The consequences of these divisions include oppression and violence against women, as well as the tendency for men to treat women and children as possessions. This is not what God intended. Men and women together need to work to restore relationships.



Key points

- God created human beings in his own image and likeness (Genesis 1:27). Women and men are different but both are created in God's image and are equal.
- From Genesis 1:26-28, we can see that the power to subdue and dominate is to be used in stewarding the earth and acting with care and justice, rather than trying to control other people.



Questions for discussion

- What are some of the roles for male and female? What does God empower human beings to do (v26 and 28)?
- What does this passage reveal about the importance of men and women working together in relationships of equality?
- What does this tell us about the relationship between men and women in a marriage?

Awareness-raising

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Climate & environment

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Reflection

Pray for courage for both men and women to challenge unhelpful stereotypes about male and female roles and to encourage biblical reflection on the subject of gender. Pray that the gifts of women will be fully released to benefit our churches. Pray for wisdom and leadership in responding to issues around oppression of women.

Related tools:

- A1 – Revealing violence against women and girls: information for facilitators [A1: Gender & sexual violence-1]
- A2 – Understanding how men and women use their time [A2: Gender & sexual violence-1]
- A2 – Exploring men and women’s control over resources [A2: Gender & sexual violence-2]
- A2 – Why address violence against women and girls [A2: Gender & sexual violence-3]
- A2 – What are the root causes of violence against women and girls? [A2: Gender & sexual violence-4]
- A2 – Exploring gender roles and power [A2: Gender & sexual violence-5]
- A2 – Men and women: listening to one another [A2: Gender & sexual violence-6]
- A2 – Self-discovery tool (Violence against women and girls) [A2: Gender & sexual violence-7]
- B – God’s view of women (Bible study) [B: Gender & sexual violence-3]
- B – God’s view of men (Bible study) [B: Gender & sexual violence-4]
- B – Men, women and God [B: Gender & sexual violence-5]
- B – Protecting those vulnerable to sexual violence (Bible study) [B: Gender & sexual violence-7]
- B – Sexual violence in the Bible - the story of Tamar (Bible study) [B: Gender & sexual violence-8]

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