



Battle of the Sexes- Session 2
Leader's Guide
January 17 and 20

Introduction:

From your personal experience, what was the hardest puzzle or problem that you ever worked on? What made the puzzle or problem so challenging? Were you able to complete or solve it? Were there ever times that you became confused while trying to solve it? If so, what was the cause of confusion?

Today we are discussing about the Battle of the Sexes which begins with our roles as males and females. The first battle of the sexes is a battle of role and responsibilities. There has been confusion in our culture about these roles and how they are to be expressed. For example, hear this quote from Matt Chandler:

For all of human history, this issue of gender has been male or female. Now it is male, female, and other/they. "It" can also be (here's the newest one to show up on the list) gender fluid... If the church must be anything, she must be a safe place for the gender confused and the sexually broken. If she is not safe for that, then we do not believe our own message. We are all broken, all in need of salvation, all in need of grace, and to take a particular struggle and put it outside the bounds reveals we don't quite understand what it is we believe.

From hearing this quote, what are some questions that you have? What are some things that you agree with? What do you disagree with?

The statement is made in the sermon, "Where men and women don't feel equal, they try to be the same." **When we think about the equality of men and women, what do people usually think?** Some may feel that a biblical view is antiquated. Some feel that we are to be totally independent. Some can even take it to the point of abusing each other's dignity based merely upon their gender.

The point of this study for the next few weeks is for us to learn how our sexuality and role as a man or woman has been defined by God. Just as in all areas of our lives, when we become followers of Christ, we begin to live under His authority and to see the world through the lens of Scripture and not from our personal opinions. This study will help us to see how God has specifically defined these roles.

1. Design- God's Purpose

Have a volunteer to read or quote Genesis 1:1.

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

Why is this verse foundational to our understanding of Scripture? Why has the world tried to throw away this verse? What impact does it make in our lives to know that all things began and will end with God?

This is a great verse that sets the stage for our discussion and it helps us to walk through it phrase by phrase.

In the beginning: The statement marks inauguration. It sets the stage for a time when creation began. In Hebrew language, the word for “beginning” was used in relationship with the word for “ending” which means that the beginning has a purpose or future goal.

God: Because God is the Eternal Creator (Elohim). The use of “Elohim” as God’s name is an exclusive reference to God. As one writer states, “Creation extols God’s transcendence and the power of His spoken word.”

created: the word here refers to a new activity. It is further used in the passage six times in relationship to things being created by God alone. Therefore, the word is used exclusively of God’s activity alone without the presence of preexisting material.

the heavens and the earth: this phrase that indicates the totality of the universe. We would say that God created everything from the top to the bottom.

What does this verse mean to us today? As stated in the sermon; everything finds its reality in God. Therefore, we are created beings, not from the evolution of time, matter, and chance, but by God’s perfect design. And just as God created all things in the beginning with a purpose and future goal in mind, we can know that we have been given each a specific purpose for our lives.

As you read the passage, how is God’s orderly design in this account of creation? How does it make you feel to know that God created you with a specific purpose in mind? What does that say about how God views you? (He loves us, He has a plan for us) Why can there be confusion about God’s plan for us? (Have volunteers to read Proverbs 14:12; Psalm 16:11; John 10:10 to see God’s plan for His people.)

Transition: We are going to see how God’s creation had a purpose in nature, but as we bring the creation story to men and women, we can begin to see God’s plan for each one of us individually.

2. Image Bearers- God’s Picture

Have a volunteer to read Genesis 1:24-31.

- 24** *Then God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind: cattle and creeping things and beasts of the earth after their kind”; and it was so.*
- 25** *God made the beasts of the earth after their kind, and the cattle after their kind, and everything that creeps on the ground after its kind; and God saw that it was good.*
- 26** *Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and*

over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

27 *God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.*

28 *God blessed them; and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”*

29 *Then God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of all the earth, and every tree which has fruit yielding seed; it shall be food for you;*

30 *and to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the sky and to everything that moves on the earth which has life, I have given every green plant for food”; and it was so.*

31 *God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.¹*

When we speak of being image bearers, we are discussing our identity.

What are ways that we identify ourselves in our world? (Where we went to school, our favorite teams, where we live, how we talk, the clubs we join, etc.) How can these things compete for who we are to be in Christ? The competition for image bearing comes from where we search for affirmation and the desire to be rewarded for what we do in our lives.

In verse 27, we read how God made man in His own image. The fancy word for this is the “*imago Dei*” (ee-ma-go, Day-a) or the image of God that man inherently contains. **When you hear the phrase image bearer, what comes to your mind? What does it mean to be image bearers? How does it make you feel to know that you bear the image of God at all times?**

A paraphrase of the New American Commentary reads:

Although male and female hold in common the same unique God-given status as image-bearers, there is an inherent distinction within the human family by virtue of their different sexual roles, and this implies that other distinctions are present. Being human means being a sexual person. Human sexuality and sexual bonding between husband and wife are deemed “very good” (1:31) by God and are to be honored as the divine ordinance for men and women. There is no place in God’s good order for unisexuality or for any diminishing or confusion of sexual identity. Human sexuality in Genesis is a blessed function in the creative purposes of God, and it is essential for carrying out God’s mandate for humanity (cf. 9:1, 7). The proper role of the sexes therefore is crucial to God’s designs for human life and prosperity. When human sexuality is distorted through neglect or abuse, the human family suffers as the image-bearers of God. Therefore, the uniqueness of humanity is that God has unified us in that we all bear the image of God and yet has given us exclusive roles to fulfill the command to fill the earth with future image-bearers.

There are four main implications for accepting this view:

¹ [New American Standard Bible: 1995 update](#). (1995). (Ge 1:24–31). La Habra, CA: The Lockman Foundation.

- i. Because the *imago Dei* is true, this is how men must view women. Men must think biblically of women and push against the stereotypes of women as mere sexual creatures or servants put here for our pleasure and comfort.
- ii. Because of the *imago Dei*, men must think biblically of women and treasure them as sisters and co-heirs, daughters of the King, and glorious, not dismissing them intellectually or robbing them of the right to exercise their gifts within God's beautiful design.
- iii. Women, whether single or married, must think rightly about being representatives of God made in his image and fulfilling his purposes. In the same way, women must think biblically about men and push against the stereotypes of men as idiot Neanderthals.
- iv. Women, whether single or married, must think biblically and embrace that they are representatives of God made in his image and fulfilling his purpose.

Why is it important to know that we are made in the image of God today? From the discussion today, how has your understanding of being an image bearer changed? What are ways that you see the culture has rejected the image of God in their lives?

Have someone read Galatians 6:1. This verse is a reminder for us that even though our roles in our relationships may become confused or cause pain, but we are called to focus on Jesus, even at points where forgiveness and submission may seem difficult. Therefore, we have influence in our submission and respect to one another.

Has anything that has been said challenged your view of being an image bearer? How does a better understanding of being made in the image of God affect the roles of men and women? What impact does it make in our culture today?

Transition: We would like to think that Adam and Eve expressed these roles of being image bearers with all perfection, but as we see in the story of the fall after creation, they marred the image God had given them.

3. Redemption- God's Purpose

Have a volunteer to read Galatians 3:26-29.

- 26** *For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.*
27 *For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.*
28 *There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*
29 *And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's descendants, heirs according to promise.²*

One commentator stated:

Paul teaches that old divisions and wrongful attitudes of superiority and inferiority are abolished, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. He does not take away the distinction between

² [*New American Standard Bible: 1995 update*](#). (1995). (Ga 3:26–29). La Habra, CA: The Lockman Foundation.

men and women but says they are “united,” joined together in “one” body, the church. The verse teaches unity within diversity but not uniformity.

Some of the main points are:

Man and Woman are equally guilty. But the good news is that...

1. We are equally justified by the Father - verse 26
2. We are equally the children of God. verse 26
3. We are equally baptized with Christ. verse 27
4. We are equally saved through Christ. verse 28
5. We are equal co-heirs with Christ. verse 29

For believers this verse relates to our call to “put off” our former way of living and to “put on” the life of Christ. To finish read one of the following selections that demonstrates how Scripture speaks to this way of life for us as image bearers of Jesus and the purpose we have: Romans 13: 11-14; Ephesians 4:22-24; Colossians 3.

Application

What does the Bible mean for us to live according to God’s plan, picture, and purpose as men and women?

- 1. Our redemption in Christ does not abolish gender that was established by God but redeems in Christ!**
- 2. Roles and responsibilities may vary on earth, but value in heaven does not—and we should regard each other from this heavenly point of view (2 Cor. 5:16).**
- 3. Now we have the motivation and the power to be what God has made us, uniquely male and uniquely female! We are together for the gospel!**