

“The following descriptions clarify woman’s helper, life-giving ministry. The *ezer* words are strong, compassionate, relational, life-giving words:

Helper / Life-giver	Hinderer / Life-taker
Exodus 18:4 defends	attacks
Psalms 10:14 sees, cares for oppressed	indifferent, unconcerned for oppressed
Psalms 20:2 supports	weakens
Psalms 33:20 shields, protects	leaves unprotected and defenceless
Psalms 70:5 delivers from distress	causes distress
Psalms 72:12-14 rescues poor, weak, needy	ignores poor, weak, needy
Psalms 86:17 comforts	avoids, causes discomfort

Being male, being female: part 3

While waiting to begin:

1. When did the Bible last surprise you (e.g. “I thought it said *this*... but I discovered that it said *that*)?
2. Sometimes we want to resist parts of the Bible and areas of discipleship. Why do you think that is?

Recap: our purpose as men and as women

- (a) Our purpose: we were made to glorify God... with body and soul... as either a man or a woman
- (b) The “disposition” of men and women: our duty and design is to be either fathers or mothers
- (c) How men and women relate: we are “complementary”

Good books

- *God’s good design: what the Bible really says about men & women*, Claire Smith
- *Marriage Matters: extraordinary change through ordinary moments*, Winston Smith
- *Women’s Ministry in the Local Church*, J Ligon Duncan and Susan Hunt

Adult Sunday School schedule

- Next Sunday 22nd October: update from Kosovo
- Sunday 29th October: ministry in local schools
- Sunday 5th November: Men & women: together in the local church

1. Men, women and marriage

(a) Marriage: unique union of one man & one woman

- marked by love (of Christ, spouse, children and others)
- and service (of Christ, spouse, children and others)

(b) Ordered union: head and helper

- 1 Corinthians 11:3, Genesis 2:8
- Ephesians 5:22-33, 1 Peter 3:1-7
- Scripture examples: like Abraham and Sarah, Prisca and Aquila, Prov. 31

(c) The challenge of headship and submission

- an expression of love
- a challenge because of sin
- “my calling as a Christian husband is...
 - does not demand to be served (and get his own way), but serves and sacrifices for the good of others, and the glory of Christ
 - does not have to initiate every action, but does feel the responsibility to provide a general pattern of initiative
 - is patient and wise, approaching situations with graciousness and tact, seeking counsel and listening wisely and well.
 - accepts the burden of the final say in disagreements, but doesn't presume to use it in every instance
 - Is marked by repentance and humility. We need God's forgiveness through Christ (the perfect and second Adam), and the power and wisdom of His Word.
 - Fight common sins for men/husbands, that harm our relationships:
 - abdicating responsibility – Genesis 3:6
 - anger and abuse – Genesis 3:16, 1 Timothy 2:8, 1 Peter 3:7
- “my calling as a Christian wife is...
 - is willing to obey authority whenever it is wise and right to do so
 - has the best interests of others in mind
 - is patient and wise, approaching situations with graciousness and tact
 - has the courage to stand for what is right
 - is willing to share observations, knowledge and insight
 - is willing to accept the final decision of a well-meaning head, even if it is not your desired outcome
 - has faith that God has a purpose for every circumstance and works as part of the process, trusting God for the outcome
 - E.g. the wife of Proverbs chapter 31
 - Fight common sins for women/wives that harm our relationships:
 - Discontent with God's order: Genesis 3:16, “... Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you...”
 - Hinderer/Life Taker