



Marked (Part 12) – The Complementary Roles of Men & Women

Matt Chandler – November 5, 2017

[Video]

Nikki Lawrence: My name is Nikki, and I serve as a deacon at the Flower Mound Campus. I've been at The Village for six years. Our pastors have been kind to encourage me that I have the gift of hospitality, and that has led to doing things like serving in Connection Central, welcoming people into service, giving the announcements, and leading events for women and for singles here at our church.

As our pastors and elders take seriously the topic of complementarianism, I pray the women at The Village would feel empowered and emboldened to walk out in our giftings, not only by their support but also by the Holy Spirit. I don't think there's a certain script for how that needs to look, and that's the beauty of it. As women, we can serve the church and help others flourish in their gifts if only we would step into ours.

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Good morning. How are you? Are you doing all right? All right. If you have your Bibles, go ahead and grab those. We're going to be in Genesis, chapter 1. We are in the back half of our fall series, and this back half has focused on really the distinctives of The Village Church. When we use the word *distinctives*, here's what we're talking about.

There are some things one must believe (doctrinally speaking) in head and heart that would make one a Christian. Then there are these other things Christians who believe this kind of closed-hand theology will differ on while still being brothers and sisters. Are you tracking with me? We started doing that three or four weeks ago when we started with where The Village Church lands when it comes to baptism and the Lord's Supper.

We believe in believer's baptism via immersion, which means you get baptized after you become a Christian. Then we believe in the real presence of Jesus in the Lord's Supper, which means we're not transubstantiationists. We don't believe the bread literally turns into the body, but we believe the presence of Jesus is in the presence of his people while we celebrate the Lord's Supper.

Here's what we've said. All sorts of people disagree with us on that who are brothers and sisters in Christ. Methodists disagree with us on baptism on that front, right? Anglicans. Gosh! Even our Presbyterian brothers would look at that and go, "You're wrong!" I'm here going, "No, *you're* wrong!" They're like, "No, *you're* wrong." When we get to heaven, we will accept their apology. All right? (That was uncalled for.)

That would be a space where there is disagreement, but Jesus is Lord, he is the Savior of our sins, and he is the only means of grace that makes us right before the Lord. We're just going to disagree on this, and that's okay. It's just okay. They're not heretics. I don't need to villainize them. I just think they're wrong, and they think I'm wrong. I have dear friends who would just strongly reject everything I just said, and that's fine, because I would strongly reject everything *they're* saying about those subjects.

Then week two, we talked about the electing love of God and the confidence that should ensue in the heart of a believer when they get that God's love for us isn't built on our merit but on his generosity alone. That is a stunning truth. Once again, all over the landscape of evangelicalism (although I'm really starting to hate that word, such a junk drawer, nonsense word)...

Now in the middle, there are all sorts of people who just go, "No, no. That's not the way it works. *This* is the way it works." It's fine. I think they're wrong. They think we're wrong. It's okay because I'm just responsible for shepherding you and not shepherding evangelicalism. I'm trying to love us well and line us up with the Word of God.

Then last week, I thought JT English did a masterful job of teaching on the inerrancy and sufficiency of God's Word. Our flag is in the ground. We believe the Bible, and we know what that means when we say that. We know the outside world is going to look at us like weirdos. We just know it! "You believe...what? Huh? How backwoods, bigoted are you that you would believe those things?"

We just know that's coming, and we'll endure under that as we are the people of God who submit to the Word of God as the inerrant, sufficient Word given to us by God for the formation of our hearts and the invitation into life while all the while also acknowledging the Word of God doesn't just create tension outside of the church walls but inside the church walls.

When the Bible says it corrects, rebukes, and does all that, to whom is that happening? Well, it's happening to us so even as Christians, the Bible is going to put its weight on us, and it will reveal to us just how much we've been disciplined by the world. This is one of the things the Bible does. It shows us, "Hey, you're actually not taking your cues from me; you're taking your cues from the world you've been disciplined by."

Really this is the distinctive that shapes all our other distinctives. We have two left in this series. Then we're going to roll into Advent, which is kind of blowing my mind. We have this week, which is *complementarianism* or where The Village Church lands in regard to our view of the role of women in the church and home. Then next week we'll talk about the sign gifts of the Holy Spirit. I know you'll be excited about that one. The sign gifts. The weird gifts of the Holy Spirit. We're going to talk about that next weekend. Then from there, we'll be rolling toward Advent.

When you teach on complementarianism, here's what you can expect. Many of you are going to think my last name should be Cleaver by the time we're done today, and others of you are like, "I knew he'd finally go liberal. I just knew. As soon as I saw him wearing blue jeans, I knew eventually that dude was going to be baptizing cats." I'm just confident enough to trust the Word of God and land where it lands, but I want you to understand why it's just a confusing day.

Really when we think about where Christians tend to land on this subject, there are four major categories. I want to show you a chart. I didn't come up with this chart. I got it from Guy Mason, who is the Aussie guy who preached for us a couple of months ago, a dear friend. He came up with this chart that kind of helps Christians kind of see what the different postures are in regard to this question of women, the Bible, and how this plays itself out.

I need to warn you out of the gate that this will, at the early parts of this message, be much more of a lecture as I'm just seeking for you to understand all the pieces. Then we'll talk about where we land as a church and what that looks like. Here they are (biblical Christianity): feminism, egalitarianism, complementarianism, and patriarchy.

Now depending on your background, one or more of those words could be cuss words to you. Right? Depending on your background. Here's where I'm trying to just kind of inform you. Notice half of patriarchy is cut out under the framework of biblical Christianity, and notice half of feminism is cut out around biblical Christianity.

On the patriarchy side of things, you can have misogyny and all sorts of wicked, evil things that have occurred in churches, outside of churches, around the overemphasis of male domination. Then on the far side of feminism, you have kind of the gender fluidity and, "Men don't matter, and everything men do are evil. There should be nothing masculine in the world that is not evil, oppressive, and should be snuffed out." I'm saying let's lop those two things off, and let's just get in to here.

Then just my cards on the table. Even inside these brackets, I think patriarchy has some good, true things in it, but it's an overemphasis that creates a kind of underdevelopment in the church. I think feminism is the same way (an overemphasis on the other side of things that leads to some underdevelopment where the church cannot flourish, and the beauty of God's good design can't be seen and celebrated). That's my cards on the table. Let's dive in to these categories, and we'll just see what the Lord has for us today.

The first one would be Christian feminism. Let me quote Katharine Bushnell. "Here is where the great mistake is being made on the 'woman question.'" Here's the woman question. "Is it 'prudent' to allow women to do thus and so?—men ask themselves at every step of woman's progress. The only question that should be asked is: Does justice demand this? If so, 'Let justice be done though the heavens fall'; anything short of justice is mere mischief-making."

All right. I'm going to try to as charitably as I can define Christian feminism. A Christian feminist is someone who seeks to define and defend the equal rights of women in all spheres of life, whether that's politically, economically, socially, or spiritually. That's Christian feminism.

All I want to say is I like that it's charitable because I have left out the violence by which they perceive masculinity. I've just cut that out because they view with great skepticism, fear, and anger (many of them because of experiences and backgrounds) the role of a man, and anything open to a man that wouldn't be open to a woman is hostile, that it leads to oppression. Now they root this in the Bible.

In fact, Christian feminists tend to like about three verses of the Bible and then reject the rest of it. This is me being charitable. I know I'm going to get some emails. Let's just play. I'm just really confident in what the Word of God says. It's not like I just studied *this* this week. There's a full paper on this on our website.

Behind that is a 60-page exegetical paper that's just on the texts that are around this issue. This isn't laziness coming out. This is hard, long work from our elder board that's being rolled out here today. In this, they're going to make the argument theologically based on Genesis 1:27 and 28. Let's look at that together.

"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.'"

Okay, so here's the text. Here you have God creating man and woman in his image. **"...male and female he created them."** He gives them dominion. So the argument Christian feminists make is there is no difference between the man and woman, and any role distinction is about the oppression of women and the subjugation of women under the tyranny of men. That's the argument.

Now in this space, Christian feminists tend to, because they view the Bible with great skepticism, because 85 to 90 percent of them will argue the Bible was written by men for men to protect the power of men. This is the argument Christian feminists want to make. They view the Bible with a great deal of skepticism, which is why you're going to find most Christian feminists tend to be whoever wants to get married can get married and land on the side of the pro-choice movement.

"Women can have abortions whenever they want to have abortions, and anybody who wants to get married can get married. Marriage is not given to the man and the woman in sacred union but is given and available to all." They're going to land far left on social issues. Why? Because they question the Bible. Because they're concerned about the authority of the Bible and what that means. That would be Christian feminism.

Now let's talk about patriarchy. Remember what I said about these two. Remember I said parts of what they believe are just completely out of orthodoxy, but then there is some kind of... It's truth, but it's an overemphasized truth. Where Christian feminists would just say, "Hey, listen. We've both been created in the image of God. We have dignity, value, and worth," I just heartily affirm that and say yes and amen to that. But it's an overemphasizing of woman so that there is no distinction. We believe there's a distinction, a dependence but also a distinction.

We'll talk more about that when we get to where we land. Let me read this quote. I'm being straight with you. I'm a little anxious about reading it, but I'm just going to read it. I want you to hear me. Look right at me. This is a quote. Are we good? Okay. It's Martin Luther, one of the fathers of the Protestant Reformation.

"Men have broad and large chests and small, narrow hips, and more understanding than women, who have but small and narrow breasts, and broad hips, to the end they should remain at home, sit still, keep house, and bear and bring up children." Martin Luther, ladies and gentlemen. Martin Luther, not Matt Chandler. Martin Luther, one of the fathers of the Protestant Reformation. Now you could say terrible statements like that, and that is a terrible statement.

Terrible statements like that are what really led to organizations like Vision Forum outlining 26 principles making up the tenets of Christian patriarchy. This includes a declaration that God is masculine. So patriarchs believe, "Hey, people who land in this camp go, 'God is masculine.'" Here's the deal. He is! He is *he*, and Jesus was a man. He wasn't gender-fluid. He was a man. He wasn't Jessie. He didn't come as a woman. He is a man, man, man, man. Jesus of Nazareth, the man.

A patriarch would argue the family is the foundation of society, and they're right. It is. Where the family goes, the culture goes, the country goes. This has been true throughout human history. It's true right now. In fact, I think you can track most of the issues we're having in our country back to a disintegration of the family unit, but that's another sermon for another day.

They're going to argue this is modeled in the patriarchs of the Old Testament but is also upheld in the New Testament. First Corinthians 11:3: **"But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a wife is her husband, and the head of Christ is God."** This is said to mean that all women must be under the authority of a man at all times.

Ladies, you would start under the authority of your father. Then once you got married, you would be under the authority of your husband. Then, God forbid, if your husband were to die, you would be under the authority of your son, your brother, or some male pastor. That's how they would interpret this verse in light of the Old Testament.

In addition to male authority, Christian patriarchy teaches men and women have different roles in the world. Now complementarians believe this also, but we'll talk about that, because like I said, it's an overemphasis. Phil Lancaster said this: "...the God-ordained and proper sphere of dominion for a wife is the household and that which is connected with the home..." "While unmarried women may have more flexibility...it is not the ordinary and fitting role of women to work alongside men as their functional equals in public spheres of dominion..."

Now do you see they're both doing the same thing? What's happening in Christian feminism is an overemphasis on women at the neglect of men. "Men are to be questioned. They're not to be trusted. They'll use their power to oppress and destroy." Then those on the patriarchy side of things you have, "Women can't be trusted. Women just need to stay at home and take care of the babies." I'm not in any way slandering stay-at-home moms. What a beautiful calling you've been given, but that's not the *only* calling you've been given.

Now with that said, let's talk about this. How does patriarchy view women in the church? Well, women are not permitted to be ordained. Voting rights are often deferred to the husband. Women can't lead Bible studies, and they're not allowed to lead worship or speak publicly during the Sunday gathering. In other words, "They're better seen than heard. They're better seen than heard!" That's going to take us off the edges and into the middle here.

Egalitarianism. Now egalitarians argue, "A fully authoritative Bible supports the freedom of women under Christ without male supervision to follow their God-given callings and special gifts of the Spirit, including the leadership ministries of elder and lead teacher." If you're like, "Well, that sounds a little bit like Christian feminism," there are massive differences between Christian feminists and egalitarians.

Here's the major one. Egalitarians want to argue from the Bible, whereas Christian feminists would be skeptical of the Bible. In fact, they would argue culturally and not biblically. They would argue from pain, not from truth. Egalitarians want to take us to the Book. Here's what's great about

anyone wanting to take us to the Book. We're people of the Book. Let's get to the Book. We're people of the Book. Yes and amen.

Let's get into that Word, but that's not the only difference. They also are not suspicious of male leadership as long as there are no rooms that are off-limits to women. They would rejoice in male eldership as long as there could be female eldership. They would rejoice in male Sunday morning preaching as long as there could be female Sunday morning preaching. They would argue from the Bible, and they would not be suspicious of men in leadership as long as they are held in check by women.

Most egalitarians reject the pro-choice movement and uphold the biblical definition of marriage as being between one man and one woman. Here's their theological case. They're going to argue the point of Genesis 1 and 2 is oneness. They're going to read those same verses. In fact, across the spectrum, everybody is living in Genesis 1, 2, and 3. They're going to look at Genesis 1 and 2, those same verses we just read. God made them in his image. Male and female he created them and gave them dominion.

They're going to say, "No, no. The whole point of the creative order is that the man and woman were created as one." Then they're going to fly through to Galatians 3 in the New Testament, and they're going to point out the teaching of Paul to the church at Galatia where he says, **"There is...no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."**

They're going to argue that what we see in Genesis 3:16 (let's go check that out together), this concept of male headship or the authority of man, is a result of sin entering the world and was in no part of God's original design for humankind. Let's look at this. This is the pronouncement of judgment on the man and woman for rebellion against him.

Genesis 3, starting in verse 16: **"To the woman he said, 'I will greatly multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children, yet your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you.'"** Do you hear what's happening in the back part of that text?

Egalitarians are going to go, "Okay, listen. There was no male headship until sin entered the world. When sin entered the world, then you got male headship. When Jesus Christ came and got victory over sin and death, the need for male headship is gone. There is no distinction in role between the

man and the woman. Maybe there is biologically, but there is certainly not in regard to their roles. They are the same."

They argue oneness, they argue headship, is a part of the fall. They rightly argue with biblical testimony. In the Old Testament, Esther was instrumental in protecting God's people. Deborah served as a judge, the highest office of that day sans prophet and priest. Oftentimes I think those on more of a kind of a patriarchal kind of view of things will go, "Yeah, but Deborah is a leader in a season in which it was the worst time in Israel's history. Surely we're not going to look at that as normative."

Listen. I think that argument backfires. If God is going, "This is a train wreck. Let me put a woman...," that's saying something else, right? I mean, it's just so dumb and so blinded. They're going to make an argument that actually erodes their position, not strengthens it. It's not an argument that needs to be made. Deborah was a judge. She was actually pretty good at it. You have prophets such as Miriam and Huldah.

Then in the New Testament, we see women active in the life of the church. In 1 Corinthians 11, women serve in prayer and prophesying in the public gathering. In Philippians 4, we have women evangelists. In Acts 12, women are leading house churches. In Romans 16, we read of Priscilla who was singled out by Paul as his fellow worker in Christ Jesus.

In Romans 16:7, you have Junia who, according to egalitarians, was a woman apostle. There is some debate around that, but egalitarians are going to say this is a female apostle. All of that, they argue from the Bible. They argue from the Bible! In fact, this is one of my favorite quotes by N.T. Wright. N.T. Wright is going to draw this up.

He says the first person to take the message of Jesus to others is Mary Magdalene. Now that is so counterintuitive in the ancient world. Here is the first person to tell someone else that Jesus is alive, and it's a woman. Not just any woman, it's Mary Magdalene. This is God choosing what is weak to shame the strong, and it seems to me that in the resurrection there is a radical reevaluation for the role of women.

Now egalitarians also are not afraid of difficult texts. The texts that seem to run contrary to what they're trying to teach (those texts that are clearly prohibitive and clearly teach male headship),

they can have a conversation with you about those. Let me give you two examples for time's sake. If you take 1 Corinthians 11 (which we read earlier, which speaks of husbands being the head of their wives), an egalitarian is going to make a technical argument.

They're going to say, "Well, that word *head* there doesn't mean he is *over* her but rather that she was taken *out* from him." If you remember in the creation narrative, you have Adam was created by God, and then there was a rib pulled from him and fashioned into a woman. So Eve came out of Adam. They're going to say, "Hey, *head* here doesn't mean any type of authority or covering but rather that she was taken out of him."

Really their favorite argument around any prohibitive text or any text that creates structure around a female's role in the home or the church is to blame it on cultural norms in the first century and blame it on issues that are back there that have no bearing on today. Let me give you the most common example I've come across around this.

When we look in the book of Ephesians and we see Paul is asking the wife to submit to her husband, the argument is there's something going on in Ephesus culturally, namely the Temple of Artemis and Artemis worship and those kind of things that have affected the way they see and understand the world.

What Paul is teaching belongs to them and doesn't bear weight on us. They're going to do that with the Timothy passage because Timothy is also in Ephesus. They're going to say, "These texts aren't Paul saying what he is saying. He is saying something different. He is addressing a cultural norm and not something bound up in creation or God's design." This is how egalitarians will argue from difficult texts.

Now let me stop there. I have dear, godly friends who land here. I read their books. I listen to their sermons. They're godly, ferocious men and women, and I think they're wrong. We're great friends, and we'll sit across a cup of coffee. We'll have conversations around this coffee or some other beverage given to the people by God through the grace of Jesus Christ.

We will just have a conversation about, "Okay, what do you do with *this* then? How do you make sense of *this*? Then how does *this* work itself out? Tell me then how you tease *this* text apart. What

do you do with *this*? Help me understand this. I want to understand this, brother. I want to understand this, sister."

In fact, Lauren and I will be flying with some friends up to New York in a few weeks. Because I'm a good complementarian, I asked Lauren if it would be okay for me to connect with a buddy of mine up there. As soon as she gave me permission, I called him and said, "Hey, would you like to get together?" Man, I love him. He is such a gifted, powerful preacher, such a smart, smart man! He lands here, and he is wrong!

We can see much good and much beauty in what the egalitarian is trying to do, but we feel like it falls short of the full scope and scale of the Word of God, which is why we're complementarians. Let me show you this because we have to talk about complementarianism because we have our own issues. Let me put up a new slide. Here's complementarianism. What we're saying in complementarianism is we are distinct from one another but dependent upon one another. Distinct and dependent.

What we're trying to do is we're trying to move to this place where neither is overemphasized, and both mutually respect and understand. Here's how complementarianism will play out in its practicalities, not its belief. There are a lot of people who say, "We're complementarians" but act far more like those in the patriarchy camp, or they're going to say they're complementarians but actually work far more like egalitarians.

Here's kind of what we came up with. There are careful complementarians. They are nervous about this issue. They're like, "Oh my gosh! I know that's just a gray area. So let's just err on being conservative. Yeah, I can kind of see that in the text. I kind of see your point, but if we do that, this slippery slope... I mean, it won't be long we'll be baptizing cats. Then what are we going to do once the church becomes that?"

They're just nervous. We don't want to be *careful* complementarians. We want to be *convinced*. We want to be convinced! We want to operate in the spaces God has created as we celebrate being distinct and dependent from one another. We just want to celebrate this and rejoice in this. This is God's good gift to us.

Let's talk about where The Village Church lands, and then we'll talk about what you can expect. This is Sam Storms. He is just a friend of mine and one of the smarter men I've ever been around. "Both men and women are together created in the divine image and are therefore equal before God as persons, possessing the same moral dignity and value, and have equal access to God through faith in Christ.

Men and women are together the recipients of spiritual gifts designed to equip and empower them for ministry in the local church and beyond. Therefore, women are to be encouraged, equipped, and empowered to utilize their gifting in ministry, in service to the body of Christ, and through teaching in ways that are consistent with the Word of God."

"This principle of male headship should not be confused with, nor give any hint of, domineering control. Rather, it is to be loving, tender, and nurturing care of a godly man who is himself under the kind and gentle authority of Jesus Christ.

The elders/pastors of each local church have been granted authority under the headship of Jesus Christ to provide oversight and to teach/preach the Word of God in corporate assembly for the building up of the body. The office of elder/pastor is restricted to men."

Let me make the theological case here, okay? We would agree with the egalitarians quickly that God has created us in his image. Male and female he created us. We would agree with the egalitarians because they agree with the Bible that we have been given dominion over the creative order. Then very quickly we start to disagree on some things. I want to walk you through that.

Now first of all, let me establish this, because I think it's so helpful for us to see this in light of what it is. At creation, you have the man made in the image of God. You have this kind of idyllic like old-school Marlboro commercial. The world is wild. The man is there. He may or may not be on the back of a horse with a Winchester rifle, looking out at rugged plains, maybe a dip in. Probably not. Sin hadn't entered into the world. He didn't want to get his face all eaten up with cancer. He is looking out at it.

So God looks at this most masculine of men and says, "Yeah, this ain't good." He says, "**It is not good that the man should be alone...**" Then he says... This so causes bristling, and I'll never understand

why it causes bristling. Some of you are like, "Because you're a man." No. Let me explain. He says, **"It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him."**

Then what did God do for the man? He didn't give him a Golden Retriever. It wasn't a Labradoodle. It wasn't some kind of new machine that was going to help him fulfill the plans God had for him. It was a woman, a *helpmate*. Don't bristle under that word because if you start to think about it, that is the same Hebrew word used for God helping his people. I want to try to shift maybe how you're thinking about being a helpmate to a man.

The deficiency in that moment is not the woman but the man. Brothers, this should humble us. It's not like God was looking like, "Well, this guy's got it." He is like, "Oh no. No, no, no. This isn't going to work. I know. I'm going to help him." So our wives, our sisters, the ladies given to us in life, are there so we might fulfill the call of God on our lives. Without them, God is going, "This isn't good!" So don't bristle under *helpmate*. This isn't about getting a sandwich. This is about helping God.

I'm saying that for you men to hear and for you women to be encouraged. God hasn't given me a mate; he's given me a *helpmate*, someone who is going to help me fulfill God's call on my life. For God's big plan for Matt Chandler's life, he knew I needed Lauren Chandler. I needed her gifts, her abilities, her grace, her zeal, her passion for Jesus to come up and bolster me up, encourage me, speak truth to me, and chisel off my rough edges.

If you're a guest and you're like, "Well, she has done a poor job," you should have heard me 10 years ago. You don't know what you're talking about, all right? This is much more nuanced Matt Chandler. We're going to look and say... Let me give you this quote. Again, I love this stuff. Maybe I shouldn't because I know what my inbox will look like this week. Here's Peter Kreeft. I love this. "Women really are superior to men—at being women." I love that line! "And men are really superior to women—at being men."

Here's why we think complementarianism is the space in which we all flourish. The point in complementarianism is men and women are distinct from one another but dependent upon one another. Are you with me? They're distinct but dependent. If you ever want to kind of just succinctly explain where the church lands, we are distinct but dependent. We are different but in need of one another. Are you with me?

Gosh! That's such good news. We have this helper now who has been given to us, but then also here's where we're getting. We're separating from the egalitarians and what they believe, although we respect that they love the Word of God and we trust they are serious about the Bible and serious about making Jesus known and famous. They convictionally believe this is true.

We're going to immediately start to argue yet again that even before sin was entered into the cosmos, male headship existed. Let me give you the reasons why we're going to land there as complementarians. In the story of sin entering the cosmos, you have Eve in the garden walking around with Adam. The Serpent begins to whisper to her, begins to lie to her. "I don't know what Adam is doing. You know, he is just a moron. He is just a passive moron."

Eve is being lied to. Then Eve buys the lie. She believes the lie, and she rebels against God and then hands it to her husband, who joins in the rebellion. When God shows up in the garden, for whom does he ask? Adam! Here's his question: "Adam, what is this thing you have done?" It's not, "Eve, are you serious?" It's, "Adam, what have you done?" There is accountability on Adam for the spiritual climate of his home before sin is on the radar. God holds Adam accountable.

Brothers, look at me. God has put the weight of the spiritual climate of your home on you. The flourishing of your wife, the flourishing of your children in God's good design is about you being the kind of man God has called you to be. This is why it's a scary thing to be a husband and father, because the collateral damage of our rebellion is our wives and children. You shouldn't take that weight lightly. You should never take that weight lightly. Honestly for me, it can be crushing if I'm not careful. You see this accountability.

Then even when we go to the judgment in Genesis 3... Again, we're going to differ from egalitarians because we think even in the pronouncement of the judgment, they're going to say, "What you see in Genesis 3:16 is God reordering his design because of sin. Now you have male headship because sin has entered the world." We're going to say, "No, no, no. It looks like male headship is there."

Not only that, we don't believe you see a reordering of creation in the relational roles in Genesis 3:16 (really the whole pronouncement) but the difficulty injected into the creative order as God designed it. In Genesis 3, here's what you begin to see. God says to the man, "The ground will be hard for you."

Brothers, quick question. Have you ever set your face to do the things that please the Lord, would serve the Lord, and would be to be the kind of man God has called you to and found that to be difficult? Anybody? Just "Hey, Matt. I've found that to really be. It's like the whole universe is conspiring against me." Okay, look at me. *It is*. It's sin and death, and it is.

Then for the woman, he says there's going to be difficulty between you and your children, namely at their birth. Now if you have to learn breathing techniques and soak in water and/or have someone stick a needle into your spinal cord to block feeling from your pelvis down, I'm guessing the kind of pain involved here is something that, by the grace of God, I don't get to participate in. Right?

Then you see also that there is going to be this misfire between the man and the woman. That's what we read earlier, about this kind of, "**...your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you.**" He is just saying that in that moment because of sin, we're going to miss each other. Gosh! We've experienced all of this.

Married couples, you don't have to agree with me because I know it's true. Have you ever been trying to explain yourself to your spouse, and you just think, "Hey, this is as clear as I can possibly be" and they think you're saying something completely other and actually offended by what you're saying? So then they come back, and you're like, "I didn't even say that!" Then it just keeps elevating. This is Genesis 3. Again, you don't need to nod at me. Look at me. You will prove I am right if you look over at your spouse right now. All right? You'll just go, "Pastor was right today."

Now I want to show you Genesis 3 doesn't reorder. Look at this. If you look back at Genesis 3:16 (the second half of that), "**Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you,**" now to make sense of that text, I think we have to go to Genesis, chapter 4. In Genesis, chapter 4, you find the exact two same Hebrew words there for *desire* and *rule*. In that, God is telling Cain sin is out to destroy him, and he must rule over it.

Here's the text in Genesis 4. "**...sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it.**" In other words, *desire* and *rule* are set as two competing forces. Sin desires to control Cain, and he is being instructed by God to rule and have control over that sin. "How does that help us interpret Genesis 3:16?" You're asking all the right questions at the right time.

It explains when sin has the upper hand in Eve's life, when she is far from the Lord, when she is not in step with the Spirit, when she is not submitting her life to the Lord, it becomes easy to not lovingly trust her husband but desire to control and usurp his authority. In the same way, when sin has the upper hand in Adam's life, when a husband is far from the Lord, when he is not in step with the Spirit, it becomes easier for him to not lovingly lead his wife but seek to overpower and dominate her.

Now again, here's where egalitarians and complementarians are going to separate. We believe what Christ has accomplished is not got rid of male headship but interjected into Christian marriage a reaffirming of the beauty of God's design. This is what the apostle Paul is talking about in Ephesians, chapter 5, when he tells Christian husbands to love their wives like Christ loved the church and tells wives to respect and submit to their husbands like the church does Christ.

What's happening is God is reminding us of the beauty of the picture of God's good design for his sons and his daughters. Rather than Christ coming and saying, "Chandler, you have no authority in your home," there is oneness. Nobody takes the lead except what you mutually agree on.

He is saying, "No, no, no. Chandler, you die to yourself. You lead and love your family. You create and cultivate an environment where your wife excels in her giftings, and your children excel in what they've been called to. You die to yourself to help that happen. Lauren, as he does this, you love him, encourage him, and respect him. By that, you will reveal to the world my design and my good pleasure."

This is what's happening in the home in complementarianism. What I'm going to be held accountable to by God Almighty is the environment I've cultivated in my home, which, by the way, will for all of us brothers require sacrifice. I have a little bit of time. Lauren will sing next weekend. She is just a gifted songwriter. We sing several of her songs. She is just a gifted writer, teacher.

I'll have to shift my whole week this week, because what happens is she is going to need to get up here at one o'clock or two o'clock in the afternoon and do the deal with the band so they can be ready to play at the five o'clock, which means my normal routine is gone. I'll have to be super ready to preach this thing because I'm going to have to get here late because I have three children.

I'm going to watch the kids. She is going to come up here. I'm going to have to just completely rework how my week normally works. It's not my *preference* that my week works that way. It's that my wife has a distinct gift she is giving to the church as she surrenders to Jesus Christ. God's call on my life is to get over my ideal week and help it happen.

This is the call of God on my life. It's not to go, "Well, you know, one of us has really been called. It's just evident God has gifted me in a unique way. So I love you do these things, but here's the thing. You're singing background vocals. What I'm doing is..." Right? I mean, how is that going to go? In fact, we will not podcast this service just for fear she might listen to that.

That's not my play. My play is...what? "Okay, let me reorder the week. Let me start to figure out how we can make this happen." She is headed to Berlin with my oldest daughter in December to do some work among refugees in Germany. What's my role? Not to go, "Well, it's dangerous over there. Well, I appreciate God has called you to such things, but ugh. I can't be watching babies!" No, my role is to go, "Okay, let's figure this out. Let's bless you. Let's pay for those tickets. Let me figure out, let me build, the plan."

She would joke that's what I'll do. I'll literally have a little schedule, and we'll walk through it with the kids. We'll just get into the schedule, because if not, I can't handle that chaos. Man, I'll freak out. This is what it looks like at home. Now let's talk about then what this looks like in church. I love Tim Keller on this. If you don't know who Tim Keller is, just think Yoda. Here's what he basically says:

"On the one hand, women are clearly partners with men in ministry. Women were ministry leaders. They were active in evangelism, discipleship, education, mercy ministry, leading in the house churches, as well as praying and prophesying in public worship. It appears from this that there are no ministry gifts or ministries that are forbidden to women, and yet Paul draws some limits."

Gosh, Tim! So what are those limits? Let's chat. Egalitarians are right to look to the Old Testament and highlight the ferocious women of God in the Old Testament and how they were used. One of the things I've never really heard anybody unpack is the fact that in all of that (judges, queens, prophetesses, and all of that), there is never a woman priest. There is never a woman in the Levitical order. This is a space that, according to God's design, there were no women who operated in it.

Then as we see Jesus select his disciples, he selects 12 men. Now maybe it's because Jesus was nervous about upsetting the social norms. Probably not. I mean, I'm just going to guess probably not. Maybe it was because Jesus thought women were inferior. Well, that's certainly not the case. They're all over his ministry. In fact, who is the one who had discovered he had resurrected? Who did he appear to first upon his resurrection?

What's going on? Could it be that in Jesus' selection of the 12 disciples and in there being no female priests, they were harkening back to the creative order for the flourishing of women and men in God's created design? I think so. We think so. We're going to operate like this is true. Now with that said, then on top of that, you have all these other texts that are just clearly prohibitive in regard to how we're to function in our distinct yet dependent states.

First Timothy 2:11 through 13: **"Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness. I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet. For Adam was formed first, then Eve."** I'll just stop there. Let me kind of unpack this for you, because I think this is one of those texts everybody kind of bristles at, but I want to point out the very first command in the text.

"Let a woman..." What? **"...learn..."** If you knew what temple was like, tabernacle was like, women weren't allowed in those inner circles. They weren't allowed to learn about doctrine and the Word of God. What is Paul's command? "No, no. You let them learn. You let them learn!" Then what is his argument around that office of elder and lead teacher being to men? Is it a cultural argument like the egalitarians make? It's not! He is pointing back to creation.

He didn't say, "Learn in all submissiveness. I know over at the temple of Artemis they don't do it that way, but here at ours, this is the way we're going to do it as Christians." He does that in other places. Heck, Jesus even engages at different times these cultural moments. That's not what Paul ties this to. He ties it to creation. There is a design at hand for the flourishing of men, the flourishing of women, and the foundational home being this central place of discipleship.

In the church, women learn. Men, because of God's design, you are elders who are meant to die to yourself, to lead the people of God. This is why one of the caveats, one of the commands, for an elder is he love his household well. A man who is not willing to sacrifice and die for his wife and children will rarely, if ever, do it for a body he doesn't know.

This is why, when we're interviewing elder candidates, we spend a lot of time with the wife. If that wife has concerns or objections, that's a deal killer meeting one. He had better love, serve. She had better look like a well-watered vine bearing fruit. That's what the Bible says happens when a man loves his wife like Christ loved the church.

Now what can you expect here? Well, let me read this. If I could just summarize it, here's complementarianism. Women and men are equal in dignity, value, and worth. Women have been gifted by God and called by him to play a significant role in the ministry of the church. (By the way, if I'm too fast, we have a massive paper on our resource page where you can read about all of this. Behind that is a 60-page exegetical paper. Feel free to kind of dive into this. I know I've had to move quickly.)

Now what can you expect at The Village Church? Okay. Let me walk through this quickly. When it comes to how we'll see women at The Village Church, how we see women, we're looking at *siblings*, not *subordinates*. Do you hear me? The most consistent way we are described as men and women in the Bible in relationship to one another is not husband and wife but brother and sister.

We are to love one another with a brotherly, sisterly, affection. We will be seeing one another as siblings, not subordinates. Ladies, you will not be seen as subordinates nor playing a junior varsity role here at The Village. You can expect to see women participate across the scope of The Village Church. You will see in our weekend gatherings women reading Scripture, women praying, women singing. You will see across our leadership structure women with voice, vote, and power.

We have women on our executive staff. We have women ministers around here. You will not see women step into spaces the Bible prohibits. Jen Wilkin is one of the more gifted Bible teachers I've ever been around in my life. I mean, that woman can teach the Word of God. We want to champion that, create space for that, and celebrate that. She'll never preach on the stage on a weekend gathering. She is never going to be an elder. She is on an exec team. She has the largest women's Bible study in the universe I think is what I read.

Yet the Bible would say (and she was in the last service giving me an *amen* in this) this is a spot... She does not want my job. She is not going to do it, but you're going to see women all over our

organization leading and loving in the ways God has asked them to lead and love. Let me encourage a couple of things.

Single women, let me chat with you for a second. If you're a single woman in here, here's my encouragement to you. I want you to feel freed up to grow in a knowledge of the Word of God, grow in doctrine, grow in leadership without having to wait for a man. In fact, I would just encourage you that a sure way to spray on boy repellent... Are you tracking with me? If you don't want some immature fool to kind of pursue you, flirt with you, mess around with you, just become ferociously godly and brilliant around theology, doctrine, and the Word of God.

Boys are turned off by that. *Men* see it and go, "Praise! I've been asking for that, Lord." He'll speak in a tongue, right? That's next week's sermon. Anyway, they'll see that, and they'll be like, "Yes, Lord! He has heard my prayers." They will join Adam and say, "Whoa! I mean, woman! Thank you!" Listen. Don't wait. Lead. The Spirit of God is inside of you. You've been given gifts. Lead.

Single brothers, as you grow in your own understanding and knowledge of the Word of God, of doctrine and of truth...look at me...encourage your sisters. Speak life into them. Celebrate their giftedness. Create space for them to lead and step into spaces God has designed them to lead and step into. Put to death your insecurities.

Married men, you have been given a command by God to create an environment in which your wife's gifts and abilities are unleashed on the world and on the church with your blessing, support, and celebration. If you, in your own brokenness, because of your own father wounds or because of your own way are anxious about what that means and you have knowingly or even unknowingly suppressed, belittled, subjugated, and made them feel as though they have no gifts, that you are doing is an abuse of your headship on the daughter of the King Sovereign of the universe.

You are a fool if you don't think Hebrews 12 kind of judgment isn't coming for you. You will not berate and belittle the daughters of the King without being, according to Hebrews 12, scourged as sons. I'm just speaking to you like you are a Christian. If you're not a Christian, it will be worse than scourging from God.

I know when we start to talk about this, there is a type of man, which I'm being way too liberal with that term... There is a type of *male* who would use the kinds of verses we see in the Scriptures to

keep his spouse afraid and disoriented, feeling like she is the crazy one while she is being mentally and spiritually abused.

Ladies, you need to hear me say this. We are far more concerned about your safety and you getting to a space where you feel safe and secure than we are about your husband's misapplication of texts he doesn't understand. You are not a slave, and you are not a servant. That's not what you are. You're a daughter of the King, filled with the Holy Spirit, given gifts by God. This is what complementarianism is. This is how we want to live.

You're going to see us celebrate our sisters. It should be a really beautiful picture to the world around us of the goodness and grace of God in his design, especially in such confusing, weird times. There we are. Some of you think my last name is Cleaver, and you can't believe you ever came here. Others of you knew it was only a matter of time till I went full-on liberal. Yet what I'm going to argue is I'm just really, really convinced this is the Word of God. Let's pray.

Father, thank you for these men and women. Thank you that you've made us distinct from one another. We're not the same. We're not the same biologically, we're not the same in regard to makeup, we're not the same even in regard to calling, and yet we are dependent upon one another. I thank you that we need one another. I just pray we not blow past that.

I pray all the more we might celebrate our sisters, they might celebrate us as brothers, and we might be seen as a place where men and women flourish together as they have mutual respect and as they encourage one another in their giftings. I do pray for our husbands in here. I pray for our wives in here. I pray for our single men, our single women. Bless us in this area. What an opportunity we have to be a picture for the world of your goodness and grace.

I pray for my brothers in here who are broken men, who tend to be angry, unsettled, insecure. I pray they might feel the weight of all of that and finally...maybe *finally*...seek some help. I pray for my sisters who feel overwhelmed, oppressed, and worthless. Just be merciful to them. Let them feel encouraged today, be reminded of how much you love them, gifted them, and care for them. You are kind and gracious. We love you. It's for your beautiful name, amen.