

Royer: For centuries, people have struggled with the roles of men and women in both the home and church.

Helvig: For instance, are husbands supposed to be the head of the home and make the final decisions?

Royer: Are women supposed to be pastors and preach from the pulpit?

Helvig: Are there different spiritual gifts and callings for men than for women?

Royer: The consequences of these answers are huge. They affect every aspect of life.

Helvig: And, there is great disagreement and misunderstanding about what God's word says regarding the roles of men and women in the home and church.

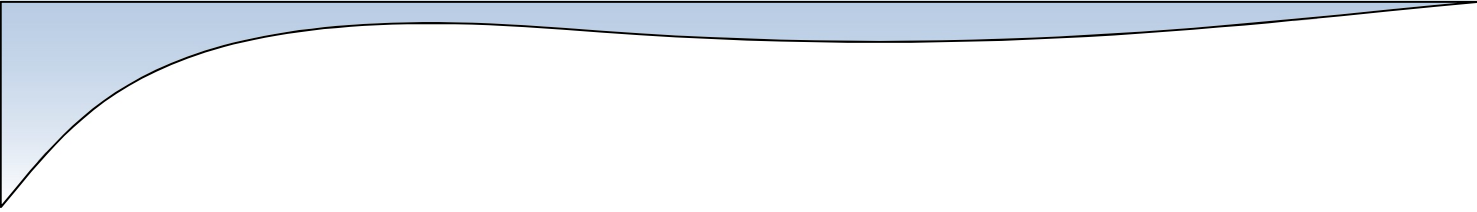
Royer: Join us as we search the Scriptures regarding biblical mutuality as all of us seek to be good and faithful servants of our Lord Jesus Christ.

What does it mean to be biblically side by side?

Payne To be biblically side by side, means man and woman are working together, side by side, shouldering the burden. We're under yolk with Christ, men and women.

I'm passionate about mutuality because I'm passionate for the truth. And I'm passionate for my love for Jesus and I want the gospel to get out there. If someone wants you to fight an important fight with a hand tied behind your back you say that's not fair! We're tying our hands behind our backs by limiting women. We need them to be encouraged.

When I was in Japan as a missionary and I was teaching in a Sunday School class some of these passages, women came to me and said "I've been asked to preach to our church and I don't know if I should do that. And, the pastor says 'We need you and I believe God is calling you to do that'." And she believed God was calling her to do that too. But she didn't know how to reconcile that and the tradition that women don't do that. And so she did it and God blessed it. But when she went back to America, she couldn't do the same thing. If we say the world needs the gospel, the harvest is rich, pray the Lord of the harvest that he will send forth laborers. He didn't say pray that he would send forth male laborers, he said laborers and we should do the same.



McKirland Let's switch it around, so let's say I believe that women shouldn't walk fully in their gifts and callings in every context. Let's say I believe I should defer to my husband in all things. If he says it, it goes. I don't question it, we just move forward in that direction. We stand before God at the final judgement. Here I am, expecting God to turn to Matt and say, give account for my life. But God looks at me and he says "Christa, why didn't you use the talents I gave you"?

It is an interesting parable with the talents. Because that master comes back. It's not the simple, "Oh well, better luck next time, you really, I understand you playing it safe. Like, I get it, the market's kind of scary, you didn't want to invest." He says "You wicked servant." That's powerful language. And that was a huge piece in this puzzle for me when I decided to go all in to live completely all out committed to walking in my gifts and passions for the sake of the kingdom. That was the vision in my head, in my mind's eye. It's like, I don't have an option, this is the direction I have to move in.

What happens when we limit our giftedness?

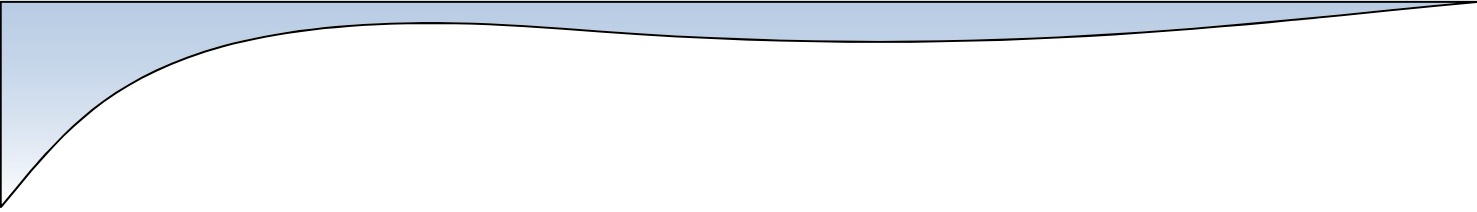
Griffith When we think of how hierarchy limits the kingdom of God I really think of one word, and that word is loss. It's such a loss for men and women all over the world when they don't hear from all believers.

And if you look at the stats right now, in the pews, 62% of the people in those pews are women. If they were to go up to the pastor and say "I could help you with this church. Why don't you let me do it?" More than likely she'll hear, "You know, I don't know if the men in this church will like this. I don't even know if the women in this church...why don't you go ahead and sit down. It's OK, we'll take care of it. Thanks so much." Huge loss.

Mingo There are some churches of course where the ceiling is there for women where you can lead but you can only lead in this context. And the context might be you can be a children's pastor, you cannot teach men, you cannot be in the pulpit. I remember my first sermon. I was asked to minister, preach at a church, but they said "you can preach, but you cannot stand in the pulpit." So, they had a podium on the side. And they said "You have to wear a robe, you cannot wear a dress. As a woman, we do not want to see anything of you that looks like a woman."

I realized something. I said, this is not the equality of Scripture here. This is demonstrating to those who are looking that yes, you can do this, but you are not equal with a man, Melinda Joy.

Stackhouse I think one of the crucial things for me in looking at the Scriptural teaching about gender is just how dysfunctional it is to not hold to the biblical view of the equality of genders. Are churches really going to be better off with an all-male leadership and not have any women in the room to kind of balance the men? If



we really want the kingdom of God to be extended, if we really want men and women, boys and girls to come to Christ, to grow up in Christ, and if we really want to do all the good we can in the world, to sort of tie an arm of the church behind its back or to say 51% of you can't do that because you happen to have a second X chromosome, it's just clearly dysfunctional. I don't think God is interested in dysfunction. I think he is interested in results.

Swanson I think when a woman faces an experience where people have shunned her gifts and maybe shunned her very presence in their midst, just because she's a woman, not because of her character, not because of her training, not because of her love of the Lord, but because she is a female, it is so damaging to the woman because she goes away thinking, would the Kingdom be better off if I weren't here?

How can God's Word change our hearts and minds?

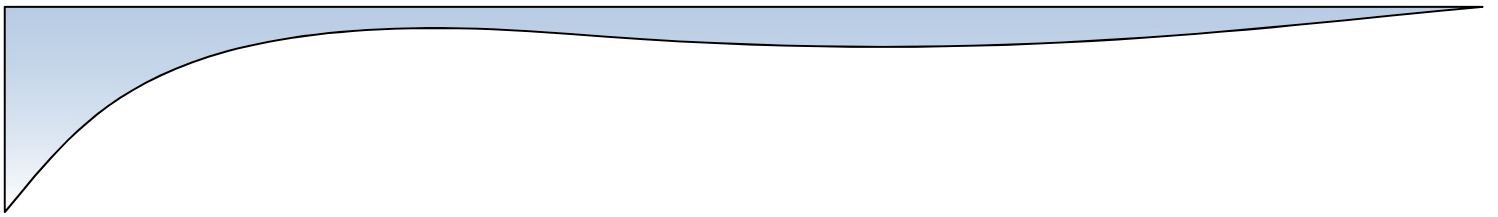
Pierce I'm a person who believes deeply in the inspiration and authority of Scripture. It has driven me in this context. As a matter of fact, I would say I'm an egalitarian because I believe in the authority of Scripture. Not because I'm swayed by culture, whether it's the old or the new culture.

I began to look at the literature that was coming out on the gender equality side. I found myself having to go back and to really soul search on this issue, to check my biases, my church biases, my cultural biases. So, I came back to the Scripture and spent about 8 years just really pouring through this issue. I knew there would be a price to pay with my complementarian community that I was teaching with.

But I found myself more and more convinced over that time that an understanding of gender equality was a better read of the key biblical texts. And so, I was drawn by Scripture and compelled by Scripture.

Thulson I'd been a pastor for a few years in a Mid-Western church and there was a wonderful member, a middle-aged woman, who was a brilliant teacher. But, her own conviction from the New Testament was that she needed to confine that to senior high students and to women. Well, every now and then we'd say "The men need to benefit from your teaching." But while very much respecting our position, she, nonetheless stayed true to her conscience.

Well it turned out she and her husband were moving out of state and I told her "We need to hear your heart before you move." And I said "How about if you take the sermon time on Sunday morning to share your heart?" and she said "Steve, I'm very honored by that, but you know how I feel about these things. I just can't in good conscience be in a kind of teaching, preaching role." And I said "I respect that. What if we called it, though, a word of witness and just share your heart?" And she thought for a moment and said "I can do that."



And so on a Sunday morning, she had a text from Scripture, she declared the good news of Christ, shared her heart, and encouraged us greatly. She was happy, the congregation was blessed and she moved.

Now she, to her credit, continued as she always had been, to be a student of Scripture. And, among other things, she kept considering and pondering the question of her own gifts and women in general. And to make a long story short, within a few years she had come to a place of a new understanding of her own gifts and the place of women in the church. She soon after became a member of our denomination's executive board and one role she had was to actually interview ordination candidates which included women. And she became a tremendous encourager of women who were stepping into those pastoral roles.

And so, the point of that is that if we'll be prayerful and patient and persistent, the Spirit of God can change people's hearts, change people's minds.

Royer: The need has been presented to address biblical mutuality and yet we have barely touched the tip of the iceberg on the topic.

Helvig: To delve deeper, we invite you to hear from biblical experts in the following 6 sessions regarding scriptures from the Old and New Testament.

Royer: For example, in session 2, Genesis 1-3 will be discussed regarding gender relationships and how they all began. In the remaining sessions, specific Scriptures regarding submission, headship, and leadership will be explored.

Helvig: This unprecedented presentation by internationally known scholars will answer your questions about God's gifting for your life.