

Word Notes Sunday 18/06/17
Clare Reed – Hot Topics: Equality

Summary (*read this bit out to remind cell members what was said on Sunday, listen to the podcast if you missed the talk <http://www.newmarketcommunitychurch.co.uk/podcasts.htm>*)

Key Texts: Genesis 1:26-28, 2:18-24 and 3:16

On Sunday we watched a short excerpt from Emma Watson's 2014 speech at the UN on gender equality, in which she challenged everyone, men as well as women to bring about change. We considered the question "What would Jesus do?".

There are specific passages in the Bible which seem to suggest women should be limited or restricted in the roles they play, but we should always consider such passages against the overview of the Bible as a whole. In the creation account in Genesis, man and woman appear to be made equal, with no distinction of their roles – woman is described as man's "Helper". This word is frequently used elsewhere in the Old Testament to describe God as Israel's helper – hardly an inferior title! However, as a consequence of the fall God says to the woman "Your desire will be for your husband and he will rule over you."

The Old Testament sees this consequence played out, as women are treated increasingly badly by their male counterparts.

Against this background, Jesus is born into Jewish patriarchal society, and he cuts rights through the gender divide...

Application (*this is the bit where cell members get to participate. Lead discussions around these points*)

1. As a group, brainstorm Bible passages you know where Jesus interacts with women. For each one, discuss how Jesus treated women and whether it fitted the cultural norm.
2. In our church we do not place restrictions on the roles played by women. However, it is a hot topic in the church worldwide, and there may even be differing views within our small groups. How can we navigate this topic sensitively whilst staying true to our beliefs about equality?
3. On Sunday we raised the question "What would Jesus do?" Jesus is our role model, and so in light of his example, what should we do in response to the challenge of equality?

If as a group you are keen to dig into those passages which seem to place restrictions on women in church, the weblink below gives a helpful (but long) discussion of the theology.

<https://prodigalthought.net/2010/07/16/the-role-of-women-1-timothy-28-15/>

Witness (*this is the bit where the cell talks, plans and prays about how to share the Good News*)

On Sunday the Engage and Engage+ youth groups went out onto the High Street to bless Dads on Father's Day with a gift of chocolate. They found a great number of people lazily walking in the town and were able to pray personally with one man for healing. With the days being so warm bringing many people onto the High Street for leisure what activities might **YOU** do to reach out with the Love of Jesus?

Feed ideas back to leaders – with a plan of how you will do it.