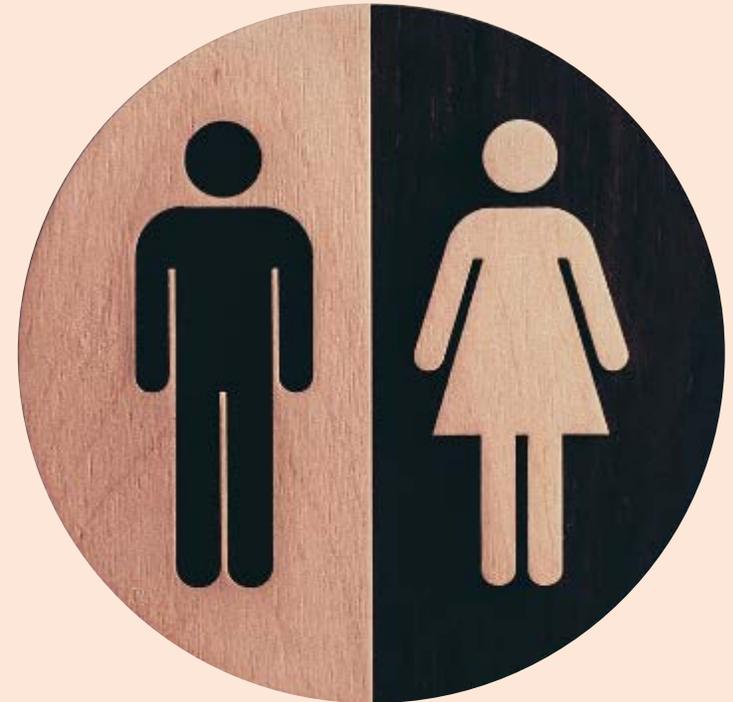
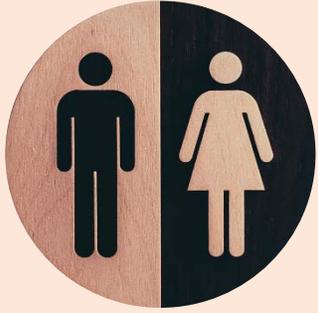


Jesus, Gender & Sexuality

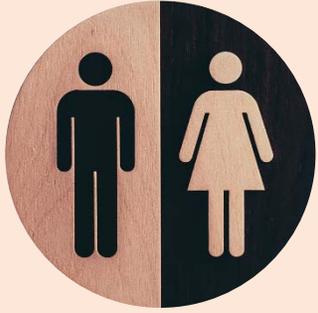
Week 3: Jesus
and Gender





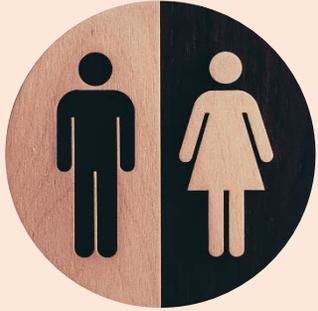
Jesus, Gender and Sexuality

- Question time after the service each week:
 - You can put your hand up ...
 - ... or ask a question at [slido.com](https://www.slido.com), #872255
 - Grab a coffee and come along – we will aim to start 5-10 minutes after the service ends.
- Aggressive questions will not be tolerated; arrogant questions will receive short shrift!
- Feedback, in person (preferably) or by email will be welcomed.



Week 3: Jesus and Gender

- Getting our bearings:
 - Week 1: Questions: ask them all, humbly, of Jesus in Scripture.
 - Week 2: Jesus says to repentant sinners: “your sins are forgiven, your faith has saved you, go in peace”.
- Today, Jesus and gender.
 - Starting and staying with grace and truth
 - Grace: the gospel and a gender “outsider”
 - Truth: “God made them male and female.”



Starting and staying with grace and truth

- Jesus, “full of grace and truth” (John 1.14)
 - “walking in truth, living in love”
 - “Love” alone is not love: affirmation without repentance leads to hell.
 - “Truth” alone is not truth: judgement without mercy gets there quicker!
- God is asking searching questions of us:
 - Will the excluded and broken be welcomed here as they are by Christ?
 - Will we bear courageous and costly witness to God’s purposes in making us male and female in a world that will condemn us?
 - Will we pursue our own calling to be godly men and women?



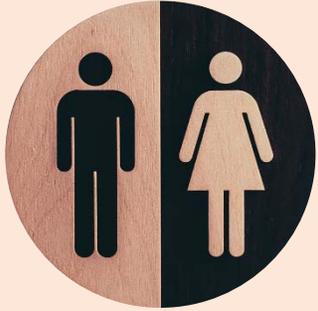
Grace and truth at the well: John 4

- Grace ...
 - “... whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.” (v14)
- ... and truth:
 - “You are right when you say you have no husband. The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband.” (v17-18)



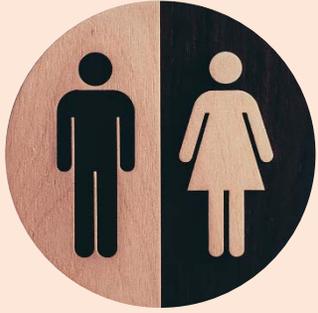
Grace and truth at the well: John 4

- Leads to true worship ...
 - “Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshippers the Father seeks.” (v23)
- ... and good news to share.
 - “We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Saviour of the world.” (v42)



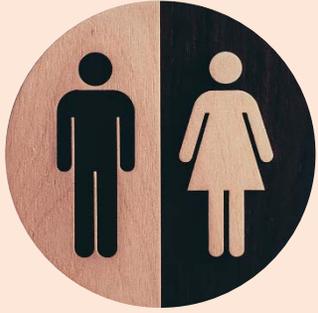
Grace: the gospel and a gender “outsider”

- “an Ethiopian eunuch” (Acts 8.26-40)
 - An Ethiopian: “my witnesses ... to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1.8)
 - A Jew or proselyte? “This man had gone to Jerusalem to worship.” (8.27)
 - But as a eunuch, he was excluded from worship:
 - “No-one who has been emasculated ... may enter the assembly of the LORD.” (Deuteronomy 23.1)
 - In the Messianic age: “Let no foreigner who has bound himself to the LORD say, ‘The LORD will surely exclude me from his people.’ And let not any eunuch complain, ‘I am only a dry tree.’” (Isaiah 56.3)



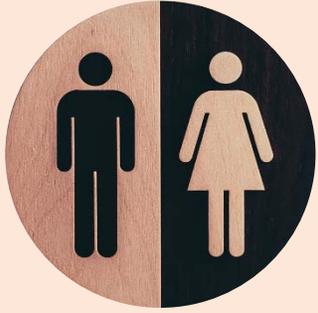
Grace: the gospel and a gender “outsider”

- He is converted ...
 - God’s word: “... reading the book of Isaiah the prophet” (v28)
 - God’s Spirit: “Go to that chariot and stay near it.” (v29)
 - God’s teacher: “Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus.” (v35)
- ... to Christ ...
 - “He was led like a sheep to the slaughter ... his life was taken from the earth.” (v32-33; Isaiah 53.7-8)



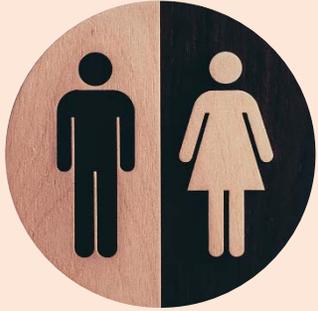
Grace: the gospel and a gender “outsider”

- “that very passage of Scripture”:
 - “³ He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. ⁴ Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. ⁵ But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.” (Isaiah 53.3-5)
- “Philip baptised him; the eunuch ... went on his way rejoicing.” (v38-9)



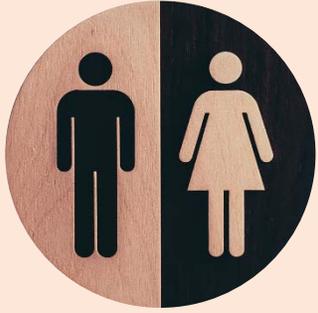
Truth: “God made them male and female.”

- Mark 10: Jesus is tested
 - Jesus is asked a *question* about divorce and provided with an *assertion* of its legitimacy by the Pharisees.
 - He *answers* by expounding the Creator’s purpose in marriage.
 - We will return to marriage in coming weeks, but follow the principle here.
 - Our culture is teeming with numerous *questions* and bold *assertions* about gender.
 - Jesus points us back to the Creator’s purpose in making us “male and female”, quoting Genesis 1-2.



Truth: “God made them male and female.”

- Jesus quotes Genesis 1.27 and 2.24:
 - “⁶ But at the beginning of creation God ‘made them male and female’. ⁷ ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, ⁸ and the two will become one flesh.’ So they are no longer two, but one. ⁹ Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate.”
- Our focus today is on his quotation of Genesis 1.27:
 - “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.”



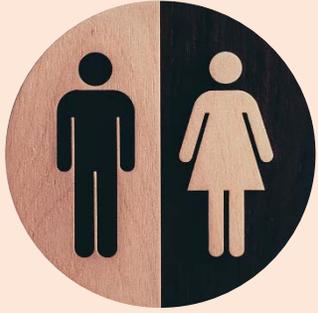
Truth: “God made them male and female.”

- The implications are profound:
 - We are created as a sexually dimorphic species:
 - There is no third sex or alternative gender. Modern biology has (again!) revealed the truthfulness of God’s word where many ancient philosophies failed.
 - We alone in creation reflect our Creator:
 - This is the basis for the unique worth and dignity of every human being.
 - We image God *as* “male and female”:
 - neither man nor woman fully images God alone – we only do so together.
 - Our “maleness” and “femaleness” is created by God:
 - It is neither fluid nor “assigned” or chosen by us. Our sex as a created given.



Truth: “God made them male and female.”

- This used not to be controversial!
 - I’ve noticed the last part of Genesis 1:27 “male and female he created them” is increasingly dropped in official church pronouncements.
- In a recent employment tribunal:
 - “... belief in Genesis 1:27, lack of belief in transgenderism and conscientious objection to transgenderism in our judgment are incompatible with human dignity and conflict with the fundamental rights of others, specifically here, transgender individuals.”



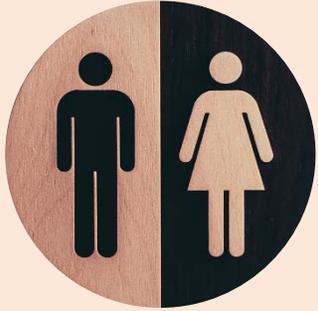
Truth: “God made them male and female.”

- What about the fall?
 - We all carry the brokenness of sin in our bodies.
 - “²⁰ the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope ²¹ that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God.” (Romans 8)
 - That “frustration” extends to our created identity as men and women ...
 - ... but it does not obliterate the distinction:
 - “¹ When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God. ² He created them male and female and blessed them. And when they were created, he called them ‘man’.” (Genesis 5)



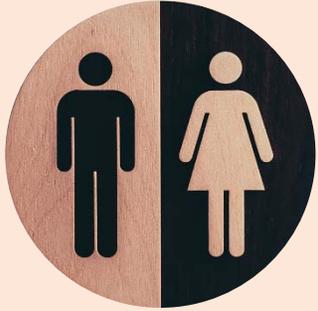
Truth: “God made them male and female.”

- Jesus makes the same point in Matthew 19:
 - “... at the beginning the Creator ‘made them male and female’” (v4)
- But now, in a fallen world filled with us hard-hearted sinners:
 - “For some are eunuchs because they were born that way; others were made that way by men ...” (v12)
 - “Born that way”: the tragic effects of the fall (“eunuchs of the sun”)
 - “made that way by men”: the wicked action of people (“eunuchs of man”)
- How we need the Saviour – remember the Ethiopian eunuch!



How should we then live?

- Accept your body as a gift ...
 - “¹³ For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb. ¹⁴ I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.” (Psalm 139)
- ... and long for your deliverance from its brokenness:
 - “²⁵ Who will rescue me from this body of death? ²⁵ Thanks be to God – through Jesus Christ our Lord!” (Romans 7)
- And in the meantime, know this:
 - “¹⁹ You are not your own; ²⁰ you were bought at a price. **Therefore honour God with your body.**” (1 Corinthians 6)



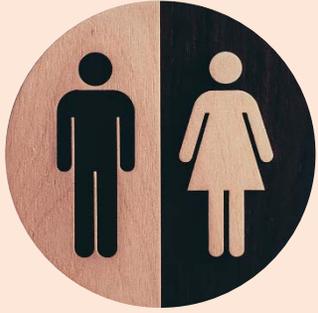
How should we then live?

- Honouring God with your gendered body:
 - Negatively:
 - “A woman must not wear men’s clothing, nor a man wear women’s clothing, for the LORD your God detests anyone who does this.” (Deuteronomy 22.5)
 - Positively:
 - “In the Lord ... woman is not independent of man, nor is man independent of woman.” (1 Corinthians 11.11)
 - In the church, we worship as sisters and brothers, each bringing our unique contribution – as redeemed *men* and *women*, reflecting again both the equality and order of the creation. Question time!



How do we bear witness?

- Understand the times:
 - Until the mid-20th century, “gender” didn’t exist!
 - In the 2020s, the culture that is seeking dominance asserts that gender identity (my sovereign choice) is more important than sex (still largely regarded as a biological given).
 - “Gender is between your ears and not between your legs” (Chaz Bono, trans man)
 - How do we help someone with gender dysphoria?
 - If sex is key: this is a psychological problem – the mind must conform to the body.
 - If gender is key: this is a physical problem – the body must conform to the mind.



How do we bear witness?

- In times of confusion and suffering ...
 - We are caught in a cultural conflict
 - Amazon, the BBC ...
 - All around us, people are suffering – especially the young
 - We cannot avoid these issues – and our children certainly can't.
 - For example, in the standard advice now offered to schools:
 - a trans-boy wants to compete in the 100m: remove any girls who object
 - a trans-boy wants to change in the girls' changing rooms: remove any girls who object
- ... we have a gospel of clarity (truth) and compassion (love)!