DEFINING TERMS

Some cultures view women as fragile and in need of constant shielding from the elements, while others see them as the burden bearers who must shoulder every weight. Men may be viewed as worthy of all deference simply because they are male, or in other contexts, as incidental participants in the reproduction process. If you are from a culture that views the gender roles one way, it is not uncommon to view an alternative as morally repugnant. But is the Bible silent on the topic of gender?

First, some definitions will help facilitate this conversation. At a biological level, most people are born either male or female—we may refer to this as someone’s biological sex. The binary designation of biological sex coheres with the creation account in Genesis 1:27 and will be referenced in this lesson. Then comes the concept of gender, which is related to biological sex. A part of the challenge when speaking of gender is the conflation of gender roles (with its attendant gender attributes) and gender identity.

Gender roles refer to the way a society defines the behaviors associated with each biological sex. What is referred to as gender identity has to do with the way an individual views themselves as aligning with society’s definition of their gender role.

In this lesson, we shall focus our attention on the gender roles and attributes that accompany the binary biological sex designations created by God. In the Bible, God presents the archetypes of male and female first to reveal His own character as well as to provide principles to guide the citizens of His kingdom.
Write out Genesis 1:26–28 from the Bible translation of your choice. You may also rewrite the passage in your own words, or outline or mind-map the chapter.
Go back to your scribed text and study the passage.

Circle repeated words/ phrases/ideas

Underline words/phrases that are important and have meaning to you

Draw Arrows to connect words/ phrases to other associated or related words/phrases

What special insights do your marks seem overall to point to?

Memorize your favorite verse in Genesis 1:26–28. Write it out multiple times to help with memorization.

What are other passages that shed more light on biblical femininity?

What are some examples of biblical extremes in our views of femininity that we have embraced?

Read more at www.inversebible.org/sex08-3
After looking at your scribed and annotated text, what special insights do your marks seem to point to overall?

What questions emerge after studying this passage? What parts are difficult?

What other principles and conclusions do you find?

What are other passages that shed light on biblical masculinity?
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What relationship do the following verses have with the primary passage?

Proverbs 31:19–31
Isaiah 66:13; 42:14; 49:15
Psalm 103:8–14
Ephesians 5:22–28
Matthew 6:7–11; 25–30
Isaiah 40:11
1 Corinthians 16:13

What other verses come to mind in connection with gender in Scripture?

Review your memorized verse from Genesis 1:26–28.
Meditate on Genesis 1:26–28 again and look for where Jesus is.

In what areas of your life do you most struggle to harmonize with God’s ideal in the Bible?

What is He saying to you through these texts?

How do you see Jesus differently or see Him again?

Prayer: How do you respond to seeing Jesus in this way?

Read more at www.inversebible.org/sex08-6
Review the memory verse. How does it apply to your life this week?

After this week's study of the text, what are personal lessons you learned?

What are lessons you can apply to the world around you?

Read more inSight from the Spirit of Prophecy at www.inversebible.org/sex08-7
Share insights from this week’s memory verse and Bible study as well as any discoveries, observations, and questions with your Sabbath School class (or Bible study group). Consider these discussion questions with the rest of the group.

Where do you see the issues of the gender discussion today?

How have you been involved in these discussions?

Where are areas that Scripture is fully embraced in society regarding this topic?

Where are areas that Scripture is fully rejected by society regarding this topic?

How does gender impact the way you interact with God?

Where are areas that the church can improve in interacting with same sex attracted individuals?

What is at stake in the debate regarding homosexuality?

In what way does Jesus inspire you to balance standing for principle as well as embracing with compassion?