

**Leader Tip:** For your reference, some key points from Bruxy's teaching are listed on the next page.

## HANGOUT

1. Discuss:
  - Have you spent much time thinking about women's roles in church leadership?
  - What have been your experiences with women in church leadership?
  - What have been your experiences with ways genders are treated differently (inside or outside church)?
  - Do you understand the difference between complementarianism and egalitarianism?
  - Which points in Bruxy's "Positive Case for Egalitarianism" stand out to you? Why?

## HEAR

2. Look up and read Galatians 3:28.
3. Discuss:
  - What does this passage say about how we see and treat others? How could it shape the way you interact with people who are different from you at home, at school, or in your community?
  - How does this passage shape your perspective?
4. Look up and read Romans 12:1-8.
5. Discuss: What do verses 6-8 say about gifts? Which kinds of gifts are they talking about?
6. Read aloud this quotation by Cynthia Westfall: "The Holy Spirit determines who gets what gifts; a theological system that filters and restrict the gift for a given group compromises the authority of the Holy Spirit."
7. Discuss:
  - How does this shape your view of both men and women receiving gifts from the Holy Spirit?
  - Which of these gifts do you think God may have given to you?
  - How could you use your gift? How might you encourage others to use the gifts they've been given?

## HUDDLE

8. Pray together about what the students have shared and discussed.

## TEACHING HIGHLIGHTS

**Complementarianism:** The belief that men and women are called to **complementary** and different roles within marriage and/or church life. Includes the idea that only men can hold specific positions of authority in the church and family (i.e., men are the head of the home and only men can be pastors, elders, and overseers).

**Egalitarianism:** The belief that men and women, while different in complementary ways, are invited by God into **equal** opportunity for gifted leadership and service within marriage and/or church life (i.e., marriage is an equal partnership and women can and should be pastors, elders, and overseers alongside men).

1. We are all equally made in **God's image**. (El Shaddai! The Father God with a Mother's heart.)
2. Men and women are called to be **co-rulers** equally over creation.
3. Men and women are **co-sources** of one another. (Eve out of Adam and all men out of women.)
4. Eve becomes Adam's "**helper**," not as a servant but from a position of power. (Like a patron-client relationship.)
5. The first mention of male authority over women is connected to **the curse** of the fall. Patriarchy is the worldly backdrop of the Bible and the mess God is working with, not God's ideal for humankind.
6. Jesus brings the **New Covenant**, which is a new way of being in relationship with God that recaptures the best of our relationships in the Garden of Eden and teaches against the hierarchy and power structures of the world.
7. Jesus invites, teaches, and equips **women as disciples**.
8. The New Covenant is egalitarian in our experience of the Holy Spirit and **spiritual gifts** and the sign of the covenant.
9. **In Christ**, we are not to be separated according to race, class, or gender.
10. On the surface, a handful of passages appear to teach against this biblical flow of relational equality, but a closer reading resolves the apparent contradictions and reinforces **egalitarian partnership** between men and women in Christian ministry. The Church has been slow to see this precisely because one half of the image of God has been prevented from participating fully in biblical exegesis and theology.

See: Genesis 1:26-28; 3:16; Acts 2:16-18; Galatians 3:28