

KEC ORDER OF SERVICE/SERMON OUTLINE 30th May 2021 (KEC SERVICE Online)

Please take note that this Sunday's service begins at **8.30am**, not 9am.

We will not be showing any new Kids' Church Videos for the moment. Please do join one of our Sunday School groups instead! Contact Abang Trang for more info.

You can access the livestream at https://www.facebook.com/bemkec/live_videos/

Or on Youtube here: <https://youtube.com/bemkec/live>

8.30am – Livestream starts

Livestream link should be available by 8.25am latest.

1. CALL TO WORSHIP – Psalm 8

2. WORSHIP in SONG (with Daniel Langat)

SONG 1: God the Uncreated One (King Forevermore)

SONG 2: Creation awaits

3. Prayers

4. New City Catechism for Kids

Q4: How and why did God create us?

ANS: God created us male and female in his own image, to glorify him.

5. Bible reading: Genesis 1:24-28, 2:15-25; Galatians 3:26-29; 1 Thessalonians 2:7-12

²⁴ And God said, "Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: the livestock, the creatures that move along the ground, and the wild animals, each according to its kind." And it was so. ²⁵ God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good.

²⁶ Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals,^[a] and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

²⁷ So God created mankind in his own image,
in the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them.

²⁸ God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

GENESIS 2:15-25

¹⁵ The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. ¹⁶ And the LORD God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; ¹⁷ but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die.”

¹⁸ The LORD God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.”

¹⁹ Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds in the sky. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. ²⁰ So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds in the sky and all the wild animals.

But for Adam^[a] no suitable helper was found. ²¹ So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man’s ribs^[b] and then closed up the place with flesh. ²² Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib^[c] he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

²³ The man said,

“This is now bone of my bones
and flesh of my flesh;
she shall be called ‘woman,’
for she was taken out of man.”

²⁴ That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh.

²⁵ Adam and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.

GALATIANS 3:26-29

²⁶ So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, ²⁷ for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. ²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹ If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.

1 THESSALONIANS 2:7-12

⁷ Instead, we were like young children^[a] among you.

Just as a nursing mother cares for her children, ⁸ so we cared for you. Because we loved you so much, we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well. ⁹ Surely you remember, brothers and sisters, our toil and hardship; we worked night and day in order not to be a burden to anyone while we preached the gospel of God to you. ¹⁰ You are witnesses, and so is God, of how holy, righteous and blameless we were among you who believed. ¹¹ For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, ¹² encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory.

SERMON OUTLINE: MALE + FEMALE

When the world was simple

“The present is a foreign country, they do things differently now”

How should Christians respond?

4 unhelpful postures:

- The ostrich (burying our heads in the sand)
- The zooplankton (go with the flow)
- The mule (loudly dismissive)
- The scaredy-cat (panic)

The suggested posture:

- ❖ The guide-dog

Aim of today:

- Won't try to engage every cultural conversation or question
- Will try to give you the foundational building blocks/theological framework

BUILDING BLOCK #1: We live in God's embodied reality, not ours

The most foundational verse when it comes to gender: _____

Who gets to decide?

God names and defines reality (Gen 1)

God gives to us an embodied shape (Gen. 1:27; 2:7, 22)

Bodies are essential to defining gender

So what's happening today?

Gender is between your ears, not your legs – Chaz Bono

“The Bible says: Your body is your sexual identity – let your mind be conformed to it.
But our culture says: Your psychology is your sexual identity – let your body be conformed to it.” – Sam Allberry

The most counter-cultural verse

Embracing reality

BUILDING BLOCK #2: We complement one another to fulfil God’s calling

Binary (Gen 1:27)

Jesus’ affirmation in Matt. 19:4-5

Third sex?

Order & complementarity

In the fabric of creation (Gen 1)

In humanity

The *kind* of creature we are; where we fit in

“*Male and female he created them*” (Gen. 1:27c, cf. 5:3)

The task we’ve been given together (Gen 1:28)

“Suitable” = *kenegdo* (literally “like-yet-opposite”; Gen. 2:18)

Something better than mere sameness

Implication: we need each other! Interdependent! (cf. Romans 16)

BUILDING BLOCK #3: Disorder and dysfunction affect our gendered selves

Relational strife and dysfunction (Gen. 3:16)

Our bodies become disordered (Rom. 8:20)

Our minds become disordered (Eph. 4:18)

A different lens

BUILDING BLOCK #4: Jesus can restore God's masterpieces

Art restoration

“[Christianity] does not create a new cosmos but rather makes the cosmos new. It restores what was corrupted by sin. It atones the guilty and cures what is sick; the wounded it heals.”
– Herman Bavinck

No longer what we once were (1 Cor. 6:11)

Gender relativized in light of Christ (Galatians 3:26-29)

Gender not obliterated, but fulfilled

Putting off the old self & putting on the new self

Christian community (of guys and girls) is essential (1 Thess. 2:7-12; 1 Tim. 5:1-2; Titus 2:1-10)

BUILDING BLOCK #5: The fact we're create male and female point us towards our happy ending

Genesis 1-2 and Revelation 21-22 (Heaven and earth, male and female, united together)

→ One out of the two

Response: Thank you for the cross

Mini-appendix

In the sermon, I was unable to find time to expand more on whether the Bible gives us any guidance on whether there are any differences or distinctions between male and female beyond the merely physical. It seems as if the Scriptures want us to avoid two opposite errors. On the one hand, the Scriptures do not offer a wealth of detail prescribing how one might express their masculinity or femininity (contrary to some popular Christian literature). This seems to me to be intentional, as the Bible recognizes that these expressions might differ from culture to culture and context to context. As such, we have to be careful not to offer a vision of masculinity or femininity beyond what the Bible teaches, as these are often more culturally conditioned than we realise. We should not indulge in unhelpful stereotypes of what it means to be a man or woman.

On the other hand, the Scriptures also do suggest that there are distinctions we need to make. In Deuteronomy 22:5, what seems to lie behind the ban on cross-dressing is the recognition that it blurs gender in such a way that is contrary to the creation order. This concern regarding the blurring of gender also seems to lie behind some of the instructions of 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 (a notoriously difficult passage)! Furthermore, as we briefly noted in the sermon, Paul associates certain traits specifically with males (fathers in 1 Thess. 2:12), and females (mothers in 1 Thess. 2:7). He is not saying those traits are *exclusively* found only in males or females, but that generally speaking, women might naturally be more nurturing, while men might naturally be more directive and exhortatory. Both are significant – Paul wants to be both like a father *and* a mother! And yet he recognizes fathers tend in one direction and mothers in another. There appears to be some recognition of intrinsic gendered difference.

However, in the end, the Bible says godliness matters more than mere “manliness” or “womanliness”. Men and women alike are asked to display the fruit of the Spirit, to pursue holiness, to serve one another in humility and so on.

Annotated resources, if you wish to dig deeper

Gender Ideology by Sharon James. Helpful as a Christian introduction to understand the origins and teaching of contemporary gender theory. However, it is not pastorally oriented, focusing more on cultural engagement than with personal ministry to people.

Transgender by Vaughan Roberts. A great place to start if completely new to the subject. Short (only 75 pages!) and covers all the building blocks we’ve covered in a very readable and accessible way.

Embodied by Preston Sprinkle. The great strength of this new book (released 2021) is that it never allows us to lose sight that behind all these “issues” are real people, whose stories of pain and hurt are ones we need to hear. He covers a lot of ground in short space, answering most of the common questions people usually have about how to relate to transgender people.

God and the Transgender Debate by Andrew Walker. Similar in length, detail and scope to Preston Sprinkle’s book above. Available in our church library.

Mere Sexuality by Todd Wilson. This is a well-written book which sets forth the historic Christian vision of sexuality (so it goes beyond just gender) in light of contemporary challenges. Available in our church library.

'Responding to the Transgender Revolution' by Rob Smith, available at <http://www.christoncampuscci.org/responding-to-the-transgender-revolution/>. This is a longer and more academic article written by one of my Bible college lecturers, but it is actually quite readable and accessible to laypeople.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Connect cards
- Giving
- Missions Weekend (18-20 June)

Missions Sunday, 20th June

Speaker: Josh Reeve

Friday evening, 18th June, on Zoom

"From Llamas to Christ: stories from Lorenzo and Liliana"

Come meet Lorenzo & Liliana (not their real names) as they share with us their experiences of how God used their medical training to be his instruments and support local believers in a South American country for over 15 years!

We will also hear from two young adults as they share how God is calling them in different ways to participate in his kingdom beyond Malaysia.

Saturday (TBC)

We will spend some time receiving updates from our mission partners and praying for them.

- *KEC Church Administrator vacancy:*
Any interested parties are encouraged to apply and submit their CV as soon as possible, addressed to the Church Secretary (email: brian.bemkec@gmail.com or edwards@cmsb.my). Preferred qualifications are diploma/degree in business admin/management/HR, but other fields/level are also acceptable. Please see the advertisement for the position in full at <https://bemkec.my>
- Video editors still needed – can you help?
- Prayer Meeting – on (Gawai) break this week.

BENEDICTION

Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God!

How unsearchable his judgments,
and his paths beyond tracing out!

For from him and through him and for him are all things.

To him be the glory forever! Amen.

- Romans 11:33, 36