

Gender Segregation?

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Preacher: Alastair Roberts

[0 : 0 0] Welcome back. Today I'm responding to a question from the previous video which is in relation to your Paul Maxwell on masculinity video I definitely have observed the beneficial impact that working together seems to have on men.

However you suggest that keeping men and women working separately as much as possible is the best way to allow men to have a good sense of their own masculinity. What exactly would that look like in a modern context and other areas where you think that separation would become problematic? Prudence Allen's work on philosophical concepts of women indicates that the treatments of the university as male-only spaces did have some very negative results and she argues for a complementarity view of the sexes that emphasizes the way positive interaction between the sexes can create more fruitful results, intellectual and otherwise, than if the sexes are kept separate. Are there spaces where you think gender exclusion should not take place?

First of all the books being referenced are Prudence Allen's books on the concept of women which explores the history of this concept in Western thought. It's a very dense series of books well worth reading. It particularly explores the influence of Aristotelian notions and the way that that influenced the rise of the university as a realm that embodied and reinforced that notion of men being more intelligent or more apt for rational thought than women and produced a situation where that just ended up being the case because women did not have support for intellectual and academic culture. Whereas in the previous context of the monastic communities they often had a lot more than they did after the rise of the university.

It's a very worthwhile series of books so I highly recommend that. I'll leave the links for that in the notes below. On this question more generally there are important distinctions to be made between communities that are gender neutralizing which are many of the communities that we find ourselves in today like the modern university where men and women are designed to be interchangeable and to be treated indiscriminately within the structure of the university.

So that's the gender neutralized context is one. Then there's the context of male or female exclusivity. So the context that is exclusive to male or female. The university that is one that rules out the presence of women.

[2 : 3 5] And that's a different sort of context. But the context that I would argue for is one which is more complementary. That there is this bringing together of men and women in their differences.

But in a way that gives both of them space to be different. Has male only spaces and has female only spaces. But then brings them together in fruitful interaction so that they inform each other and learn from each other.

But in a way that does not collapse them into each other. Many of the problems that we have within contemporary society are a result of the collapsing of male and space female spaces into each other.

Many men and many women will spend far more time every week working closely with a colleague of the other sex than they will actually spend with their own spouse.

That is a very strange position. That is not something that is common in human societies. This is something that is quite unusual to our society which has so ordered itself around utilitarianism and achieving maximal production that it has broken down the more natural organic forms of human sociality that you find in just about any other pre-industrial and pre-modern society.

[3 : 52] And this is something that causes a lot of problems. So I was reading some survey recently that said that 70% of business people had a work spouse at some point.

A work spouse being a member of the other sex with whom you have a deep affectionate and supportive relationship. And within these relationships it was pointing out that there are often quasi-marital dynamics.

That's why it's called the work spouse. And within these dynamics often it's the man that's helping and serving as an ally and supporter for the woman and advancing her and her career. Whereas the woman is providing emotional support and more traditionally female things in response.

This is one of the areas where the Pence and the Graham rules really hit the road. That they're about institutions that have men in positions of power and influence.

And women that want to enter those institutions and rise within those institutions can't really participate in the male groups, the male sociality that can often be very powerful within them.

[5 : 01] And so they need access to people. And if they can't have direct access to some of these people who have power and influence, they have a problem. They can't rise within these institutions. And so that relationship between the sexes is one where influence and power and aid and support are tend to flow in one direction.

But they are needed by women if they are in order to advance. But then the question is, is that going to develop into a quasi-marital relationship? The sort of secretary boss relationship that would associate with something like Mad Men and that sort of world of the sixties and seventies.

Where often there's a very overt gendered dynamic, quasi-marital dynamic that exists between the male and the female within the workplace.

But these things are very common and it leads to a sort of emotional weakening of the bond of marriage. A distraction from it. And the fact that these are the sorts of bonds that would be formed by men and women working together in the past.

And now they've migrated elsewhere and they're no longer being a relationship that is making marriages stronger. Rather it's detracting from their power. And marriage becomes something weaker and less powerful.

[6 : 25] Something that's less ordered out into the world. Less ordered out into a common good and common labor. Because you're doing that elsewhere with some other colleagues of the other sex.

And that is a very serious thing that we don't think about enough. Because we don't want to think about it. Because we know that just about so much of the modern society that we live in depends upon...

It depends upon having men and women working interchangeably. Birth control. Abortion. And a very extensive state system. Welfare and all these sorts of things.

That enable women's liberation as we understand it. But these are deep problems and they lead to dysfunctions. Our society is an unusual one in that it is ordered around primarily utility and maximization of product and the attainment of wealth.

Wealth in a very abstract money focused way. Rather than upon the development of human communities and relationships. And the bonds of the family and these sorts of things.

- [7 : 32] The extended life of the family. And that leads to all sorts of problems. It also leads to a problem of dysfunctional sexual culture. With all sorts of hookups.
- The blurring of the lines between friendship and sex. Which we see a lot within our current context. Friends with benefits relationships and that sort of thing.
- We see it also in the way that there is a context that just makes things right for sexual abuse and exploitation. It's one of the things that makes it difficult in the current context when we're talking about people like Brett Kavanaugh and others.
- And the context in which they grew up in is a dysfunctional sexual context. One where parents and the university acting in loco parentis have been removed from the scene.
- And increasingly you have contexts where a feral masculinity that is collapsed into gender neutralized space where men and women are changing and interacting freely.
- [8 : 39] It leads to all sorts of sexual abuse. And not all of it is the fault of the individuals involved in it. A lot of it is the fault of a culture that makes things right for that.
- That creates the conditions where that is likely to happen. Where people who do not observe the lines well, who do not know the lines well, will end up hurting people.
- That is a huge problem. But we formed a society by our collapsing of the sexes into each other where that is quite likely to happen. And now that we are becoming more clamping down on these sorts of things and dealing with the dysfunctions of that context of sexual liberation and the integration of the sexes into these spaces.
- And we're starting to deal and tackle that feral masculinity that develops within those contexts, the context of frat culture and things like that. But we're not forming a healthy masculinity in its place.
- Rather we're leaving this force with increasingly penalized and punished, but we're not actually directing it in a healthy way.
- [9 : 53] We're not channeling it. And this leads to all the different sorts of issues that we're facing within the current context. Where there's distrust and antagonism between the sexes.
- And we need a healthier culture. We need a healthier culture where men and women have far more distinction in their sociality and are brought together far more carefully and under far greater supervision and in terms of norms and things like that.
- Now that sort of context can be a highly charged one. It's one of the reasons why we enjoy watching films and reading books about a society that has a very pronounced sense of the distinction between men and women and the etiquette of bringing them together.
- Because there is a sexual charge to that. It creates a very fruitful realm for romance. But when we lose that distinction it kind of collapses things into each other.
- And we end up with something very different entirely. A deformed form of masculinity. A deformed form of femininity. Often that masculinity for instance can go feral and it can be destructive and abusive.
- [11 : 07] Or it can just be emasculated and not have much manliness or virility to it or strength to it. It loses its backbone. And the ideal man is someone who's harmless and nice and highly sensitive.
- And those sorts of things are not bad things when they are expressions of a man's self-control. His ability to control his strength. But if it's just about a man's weakness and the man not being able to actually exert any strength.
- Never being able to stand up and offend someone when it needs to happen. And it's not a virtue at all. It's just a sign of weakness. And often that's what we're producing.

Because we lack these contexts that would really develop us in our distinct strengths. We're seeing the damage and the tensions in other areas. On the internet you see this a lot.

As male and female spaces of discourse collapse into each other. There is just conflict so much of the time. I read a piece a while back that compared the current context of culture.

[12 : 15] As one where you constantly see these interactions between the bad boys and the mean girls. The bad boys that are this sort of feral group operating from margins. In shadowy ways often using anonymous.

They're anonymous. They're people who are using pseudonyms and things like that. And they're causing mayhem, confusion, things like that. And challenging and very aggressive and agonistic in their tendencies.

And then a more feminine form of sociality. Where people are trying to manufacture consensus. Freezing out other people. Freezing out challenge. Demonizing opponents.

And appealing to third parties to act against them. All these sorts of things. And so you have these conflicts between these two very gender tendencies.

And we're seeing that an awful lot. We're seeing it in the university as well. As people like Jonathan Haidt and others have noted. And Jordan Peterson and people like that. These differences that we're seeing around issues of free speech.

[13 : 21] And the context of challenge within the university. Are highly gendered. It's not accidental that the greatest challenge to these things. Comes from the context of female dominated disciplines.

And when that occurs. It's just two contexts that odds with each other. You see it for instance in something like the movement from so many people.

From the new atheist movement. To an anti-social justice warrior movement. Why is that? The new atheist movement attracted a certain type of men. Young men.

Young men who liked debate and agonism. Young men who were more science oriented. Young men who appreciated the example and the image of the older men.

Young men who really led that movement. People who were pugnacious debaters. Who were unflinching. Who sort of facts don't care about your feelings types. People like Richard Dawkins.

[14 : 21] People like Sam Harris. People like Chris Hitchens. Daniel Dennett. These people were. Tend to be raised or come from. An Oxbridge male context.

Predominantly. They're. Brought up in. In an academic context. Which is very much about. Rigorous debate and challenge. And pushing against each other.

Testing ideas. And arriving at objective truth. Through the. That honing process. Whereas the social justice movement. Is very much about the subjectivity.

Of my truth. About restoring subjectivities. Pushing back against anything that challenges that. Objective science. And. All these arguments. And. Seeks to.

Close people out. Close people out. By demonizing them. By appealing to third parties. To intervene against them. All these sorts of things. And so. One attracts a very male dominated group.

[15 : 19] And the other tracks a very female dominated group. Both of these are dysfunctional tendencies. By the way. Because they're not very corrected. By the other. But. What. We have. Is this.

Polarization. In this conflict. Where we've tried to gender neutralize things. But these gender tendencies. Are coming to the surface anyway. In ways that just cause mayhem. And.

Lead to people being suppressed. Or stifled. And. It's not good. For anyone. To be honest. So what do we do about it? What we need to do. I think. Is recognize the importance of male and female spaces.

And what they serve. They do different things. And they have different strengths. If all your spaces were. Spaces of agonism. You would not actually develop the.

Strengths of cooperative. And exploratory work. And there's something very good about that. Now. Not all male spaces are agonistic. By any means.

[16:16] But there's a particular. Male tendency. And strength there. And that male tendency. And strength. Is one that is very good. For testing. And stress testing ideas. For leading. To. An emphasis upon.

Strong ideas. Over weak ideas. And. Weeding out. Weaker ideas. Even if that means. Excluding certain people. From the conversation. And pushing certain people forward. Whereas a context.

That's very much. Focused upon inclusion. Brings certain things. Into the conversation. That would not be otherwise seen. And both of those are needed.

The university needs to be a place. Where ideas are challenged. And tested. And honed. Where people defend truth. Where people attack error. Where there is a backbone. For these things.

For these contexts. It's the same for the church. Where we collapse. Male and female training. Into each other. We lack the ability. To develop. A healthy.

[17:10] Intellectual virility. The strength of men. Who can fight for things. Who have. Who prove themselves. Using mastery. Strength. Courage.

And honor. And the traditional context. Of the university. Really prized those traits. And really developed. An intellectual virility. And what we have today. Is a breaking down. Of that context. With the.

Rapid influx of women. And we've not really got. Something good to replace it. And so. In that former context. What you have. Is the expectation of. First of all. Being removed. The old honor culture. Where men.

And men would fight. Jewels. If they. If their arguments. Got too heated. And we develop. Certain institutions. To serve. To guard against. Going to that extreme. So institutions.

That are not. That are not. That are not. That are not. That are not. That are not. That are not. That are not. So institutions. That. You can appeal.

[18:05] To the law. To settle. Your dispute. And that enables. People to deal. With things. In a way. That they would not. Otherwise. And prevents. Things from blowing out.

Of proportion. And that's very important. But that leads. To a certain. Sort of. Male. Intellectual culture. Where. Male. Virtues. And male.

Tendencies. The bedrock. Of that ethos. So you have. To put forward. Strong arguments. Forcefully. And. You must assert yourself. In the conversation. You must push yourself.

Forward. Don't expect. Just to be invited. You must have. Mastery. You must prove. That you know. The things. In every single detail. And you can defend it. At each point.

And that's important. You must master yourself. And. You must be able. To present your case. Forcefully. But without losing. Your temper. You must be able.

[19:00] To show courage. To put your positions. On the line. To put them out there. Where they could be challenged. And. And refuted. And you must face. Your opponents directly.

There's honor to it. That you recognize yourself. And. You. Recognize. Worthy adversaries. And. Worthy companions. In the struggle.

To test ideas. To hone ideas. And to become sharper. In your thinking. And that context. Of agonism. Is one that produces. Very strong. Cultures of thought.

For many issues. It's only part of a culture. Of thought though. If that's all you have. You will be missing out. A lot of other things. And often what you find. With female groups.

Is they accentuate. Other strengths. Of discourse. The ability of people. To cooperate. In more exploratory. Forms of discourse. Where they bring together. Insights.

[19 : 56] The bringing. Into the conversation. Of subjective. Perspectives. And vantage points. Those things. That are excluded. By a highly objective. Driven. Form of discourse. Which is typical.

Of men. Men are far. Male groups. Are far more objective. Task. And thing. Oriented. Whereas female groups. Are far more person. Oriented. There's a tendency.

For women in general. As individuals. But in male and female groups. It's far more. Accentuated. Because you're playing. To the strongest. Tendency. Of the group. And what happens. In these different groups.

Is on the one hand. The male group. Can be. Hyper objective. In a way. That blinds itself. To its own. The things that. It is bringing. To us. The conversation.

The things that it is. Rationalizing. Inadvertently. And the forms of power. And other things like that. On the other hand. The female context. Can be. Dulled. To.

[20 : 51] The. Broader context. The objective. Realities. That correct. And challenge. And unsettle. Certain subjective. Perspectives. And. That is something.

That. Male and female groups. Interacting together. They need. That interaction. Basically. As human beings. We need. To have the interaction. With the other sex. To become rounded.

Human beings. If you're only. Interacting. With your own sex. And only able. To interact. With your own sex. Well. There's something. Deeply. Dysfunctional.

There's something. That's been lost. And. Part of that. But also. It's an understanding. Of your own character. And a development. Of your own character. So your strengths. Are not just.

Things that run away. With you. And your tendencies. Are not just things. That you're at the mercy of. Rather. Your tendencies. Are developed. And strengthened. And harnessed.

[21 : 46] So that they can relate. In other contexts. So you can be a man. Who can have really strong arguments. But you can quietly listen. To a woman. And learn from her. That both of those.

Are needed. And in the same way. A woman. Can be someone. Who can. Be. In. A typical. Female environment. And operate. Very well.

In that. And yet. Also. Can be someone. Who can have a good argument. Without making it personal. And these are. Big. Challenges. That we have. Within our current context.

Where we're pushed. Towards our extremes. And our tendencies. So what do we. How are some of the ways. That we can develop these. Are. We think. We need. That are exclusive.

To men and women. We also need. Spaces. Where men and women. Are. Have. Male and female groups. That are hospitable. To the other sex.

[22 : 41] That invite the other sex. To play. By those tendencies. And then we need. Spaces. Where the two sexes. Get together. As distinct groups. And then other spaces. Where they're more integrated.

And that is. A challenge. But it's the way. That good speech operates. Good speech. For instance. In the law court. Requires. A lot of different.

Forms of speech. That are distinguished. From each other. That exclude. Other forms of speech. But are nonetheless. Integrated. Deliberated. So you need. The speech.

That occurs. Between. The client. And the advocate. And you need. The speech. That occurs. Between. As people. Are arguing. Out the case.

The speech. Of the judge. To the jury. And to the various advocates. And the court. You need. Of the jury. Among itself. As it deliberates. You need.

[23 : 36] The speech. Of the court. Reporters. The people. The court. And their involvement. That needs to be done. A wider context. Of witnesses. And all of this.

Is required. In order to arrive. At justice. The choreography. Of all these different. Forms of speech. So that they're not. Just stepping on each other's toes. But they are serving. A common good.

And there are certain. Forms of speech. That need to be excluded. From certain contexts. So. If you want to. Have your case. Defended well. Generally.

You need to get. Someone else. For you. But you need. To talk with them. You need to. Have that conversation. With them. And when that is lacking. The process of justice.

Doesn't operate. Very well. Likewise. Within human societies. We need. These distinctions. We need. Separate spaces. For men and women. And to bring them together. Carefully.

[24 : 31] In ways. That are more choreographed. Than our current ways. Where we actually learn. From each other. And rather than just. Butting heads. Which is so often. What is happening. Now.

This form of culture. I believe. Would help us. To recognize. The strengths. Of men and women. And the necessity. Of the insights. And the strengths.

That they bring. To the conversation. One of the problems. That we have. Within our current context. Is just this. Runaway notion. Of inclusion. But an indiscriminate.

And. Imprudent. Form of inclusion. Where you're just. Collapsing men and women. Into the same space. And then. Dealing with that conflict. Often by stifling men. And.

Presenting a situation. Where women feel. In. They can't express. Themselves fully either. You need to recognize. The differences.

[25 : 26] And bring them. Into relationship. In a way. That allows both. To find their true voice. And enables. People to be formed. In intergenerational. Relationships. So you don't have.

This dysfunctional. Collapsing of male. And female spaces. Into each other. But nor do you have. Their dysfunctional. Just division. And divergence. Now within the church.

This is very. Significance. Because. Significant. As I mentioned yesterday. When you collapse. Male and female spaces. Of discourse. Into each other. The strength. Of the.

Bond. Among men. The bond. Between father and son. Fathers and sons. And the bonds. Between brothers. And the broader. Bonds. That those represent. Within the community.

That provide. The backbone. And the strength. Of a community. And. Many of the. Dysfunctions. Within the church. Today. Is inability. To stand firm.

[26 : 23] On certain issues. Are a result. Of that dysfunction. The weakness. That results. When you. Lose. A male. Only space. On the other hand. Many of the other.

Weaknesses. That we're seeing. The weaknesses. Of abuse. And other things. Are when. Either you. Collapse. Spaces. Into each other. In ways.

That do not. Give men. And women. Space. Where they're. Primarily. Working. In distinction. From each other. And they have. Their own space.

And they're not. Actually. In. A space. Where power dynamics. And other things. Can lead to. Abuse of each other. And then you also. Have a. Situation.

Where there is. Have. Strong. And influential. Women. Within the community. Older women. Who are able. To speak. For the younger. Women.

[27 : 18] Who are able. To provide. A context. That is secure. And safe. For them. In a way. That is. Not just. Collapsed. Into a male.

Context. And trying. To fight. Out a corner. Within there. But where they have. Their own space. Now this is. A lot of wisdom. It. Will often.

Require. A lot. Of. Adjustments. Other times. It won't. So much. Of an adjustment. I have found. That there are.

Certain things. That. I will learn. In primarily. Female. Context. That could never. Learn from. Male. Context. In your.

Understanding. That. You do not. Have a male. Context. You can. It's. Very. That men. Read. That men.

[28 : 13] Spend. Time. Take. Note. Of. What. They say. On the other hand. So many. Of my. Primary.

Theological. Context. Are predominantly. And. Frankly. They have been. Just a. Lifesaver. For me. They have been. Context.

Within. Which. I can actually. Express. Myself. Without. Things. Being. Constantly. Collapsing. Into.

Conflicts. Over. Personality. In. Conflicts. Over. Effective. At. Stress. Without. Personal.

And. They really. Allow. A common. End. They allow. For. A certain. Sort. Of. Academic.

[29 : 08] Virility. To be. Developed. And. I talk. To so many. Men. The. Loss. Of. In.

Mixed. Context. It's. One. Of. The. Men. And. Women. About. The.

Women. About. Universities. Free speech. Discourse. As. As. A. Real. Issue. That.

This. The. That. Prevent. The. That. Primarily. The. The. The. The.

The. The. The. Women. Who. Are. Working. With. A. More. A.

[30 : 03] More. Typical. Feminine. And. A. Sociality. That. Of. Female. Competition. Everyone.

Have. An. Equal. Voice. Where. People. Who. Are. There. Is. An.

Appeal. To. Opponents. Where. There's. A. Reputations. Where. There's. A.

Manufacturing. Of. People. Out. A. Use. Of. Social. Power. To. Close.

People. Down. These. Are. The. Dynamics. That. We're. Seeing. On. University.

[30 : 58] Campuses. Now. In. Many. Context. Of. Disfunctional. It. Is. Just. Dysfunctional.

Because. It. Has. An. Argumentative. And. Agonistic. Tendency. That. To. To.

To. To. To. To. To. To. To. To. To. To.

To. To. To. To. To. To. It also provides for a lot more of a context for certain sorts of collaboration.

Now, male groups can be very good for collaboration, struggling together, working things out. But there's a different sort of collaboration that can happen within female groups. And often a certain type of male society can prevent exploratory thought, collaborative thought, cooperative thought.

[32 : 06] It can make it very difficult for that to take place. Whereas within female groups, that can often be easier to occur. Now, how to bring those together requires a lot of choreography, just like the law court requires a lot of choreography.

A recognition of these different forms of speech that are component parts of a larger reality that's ordered towards the common good.

That does not privilege one of those forms of speech over all of the others. But recognises that each one of them is indispensable to the whole. And likewise, it should be the case with male and female contexts.

That we recognise the need for each other in the need to learn from each other. The need to have conversations between conversations. But also the need to have distinct spaces.

And that is difficult online. Online, so much of our spaces have been collapsed into each other. We're all speaking at the same time and over each other and in conflict with each other.

[33 : 10] And some people feel hurt by the insensitivity of it. And others feel stifled by the hypersensitivity of it. But if you give people a bit more space, aerate things a bit and distinguish between conversations and then bring those conversations into conversation, you can actually get somewhere.

But this requires thinking about speech in a far more careful way than we tend to. We tend to think about speech just as something, you just set it loose.

You set it free and it just happens in an effective way. Or you just put voices forward to the front of the conversation. You don't actually think about the character of that conversation.

The ways that things need to be ordered together in a way that brings out the best in everyone. And tempers their weaknesses. That actually helps them to get over some of the dysfunctional tendencies, which we all have.

And so this is something that we're nowhere near sorting out. We've formed a society that depends upon the collapsing of men and women and their spaces into each other.

[34 : 21] For women to have true dignity within society, we have created a situation where they have to function within predominantly male or traditionally male spaces, which leaves men without spaces where they can really develop virility and male strength.

It develops a sense of virility itself as something that is antisocial and something that's a threat because women struggle to deal with it directly. And it also breaks down those structures of training that actually lead to maturity in these traits.

Where these traits are strengths that are used for the common good, for service for others, and not just for self-advancement or for bringing other people down.

And it leads to a dysfunctionality in relations between the sexes. Where the work relationship, as men and women work alongside each other in indiscriminate ways, invites abuse, invites dysfunctional relations, distracts, detracts from the power of marriage.

And takes what used to be at the heart of marriage and moves it elsewhere. Where? So all of these problems are huge issues that we don't want to talk about because so much of our society is predicated upon this collapsing of spaces into each other.

[35 : 41] But we really need to. We need to do something about this. And it will require both men and women making significant changes. Now I think it would be better off, all of us, as a result of this.

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And Lord willing, I'll be back again tomorrow with another video. God bless.