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God made us complimentary – different AND complimentary



At the very beginning of the Bible, in the book of Genesis at chapters 1 and 2 God creates both a man and a woman.

In Genesis chapter 2 God creates man from the dust in the ground (chapter 2 verse 7). In the same chapter at verse 18 God makes a partner for the man – God makes a woman. So God created both a man and a woman to be together. God created them male and female.

Now God created man from dust and God created woman from the man and so they are actually created from exactly the same creation and from the same dust: They are equal.

We are equal AND complimentary to each other, we are created by God to be partners.

Being equal doesn't mean we are all the same. Being partners doesn't mean in any way that we can simply do without each other. Being made from the same dust is an expression that we all come from the same source and doesn't mean either is superior or even independent of the other!

The Bible makes clear we are all very different and each of us have different gifts.

St Paul writes in 1 Corinthians at chapter 12 in the section beginning at verse 12:

¹² For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³ For in one Spirit we were all baptised into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.



¹⁴ For the body does not consist of one member but of many. ¹⁵ If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁶ And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁷ If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? ¹⁸ But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. ¹⁹ If all were a single member, where would the body be? ²⁰ As it is, there are many parts, yet one body.

²¹ The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." ²² On the contrary, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, ²³ and on those parts of the body that we think less honourable we bestow the greater honour, and our unpresentable parts are treated with greater modesty, ²⁴ which our more presentable parts do not require. But God has so composed the body, giving greater honour to the part that lacked it, ²⁵ that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. ²⁶ If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together.

²⁷ Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

St Paul makes this point about different capabilities and gifts, of which all are equally important in almost all his letters in the New Testament of the Bible. For St Paul it is a fundamental Christian reality.

So, yes we are equal, because our different gifts are all equally important. The gifts are different for each of us but the body functions as a whole and needs all of the different gifted people together. If we separate ourselves then society simply doesn't work as well as it could. One is not more important than any other. This is real complementarity. All of us matter and all our different gifts are needed.

So NONE of us are the same.

Right at the very beginning of the Bible in Genesis chapter 1 at verse 27 we are told:

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

That fundamental concept, that we are all created in God's image, is then used throughout the Bible. So, for example, Jesus Christ tells us (Matthew's gospel chapter 5, verse 48):

"Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."

This means we are all equal. We are equally valuable to, and in the sight of, God. We are all of equal worth and all of us carry in us a part of the image of God. Together we know more about God because we can piece together all the different parts of the images we have encountered.

We are not independent, we are all of equal worth and we are complimentary.

God made Adam and Eve out of the same dust, the same source. So a man and a woman belong together but, at the same time, are different with different gifts.

The strange idea that women belong in one sphere and men in another sphere is not complimentary at all but false pigeon-holing. Men are not actually from Mars and women are not actually from Venus! The Christian faith doesn't say anything of the sort and never did.

Yes, we are complimentary, and yes, we are also different, with different gifts. Men are certainly not all the same, and women are equally certainly not all the same, yet men and women are complimentary. Men are not superior to women and women are not superior to men. In both cases we need each other and we cannot live without each other.

God made man and woman out of the same dust, the same source and made them for each other to be partners. We were made to be together and we need each other – That is “complimentary”.

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