

God's Good Design: What the Bible Really Says About Men and Women (2nd Edition)

Claire Smith's second edition of *God's Good Design* (2019) unpacks key bible passages that deal with the role and identity of women within church, home and society. She tackles the major passages that have often been fraught with controversy, passages like 1 Timothy 2, 1 Corinthians 11, 1 Corinthians 14 and Ephesians 5. Her book is carefully written and explores the circumstances surrounding each text in its historical setting, before attempting to determine its intended meaning. As a modern day reader, with my personal preconceptions and multi-layered views of feminism, Smith gently challenges me to shake off the dust of my initial prejudices to look at what each Bible passage is actually saying - and what it is not saying. While many other books spend time making the case for or against the ordination of women, or what a woman can or cannot do in ministry, Smith's focus is to carefully and systematically unpack each text so that the passages speak for themselves. Her book is an attempt to allow the Scriptures to speak, and the reader to apply accordingly. In this second edition, Smith also includes a helpful discussion guide for each passage, so while it's a great book to read by oneself, it would be even better read together with someone else (or even as a women's ministry team).

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