**Preaching to women**

**Questions responses**

1. What issues (trials and temptations) do you think are experienced more by women

(Christian and non-Christian) than men in the congregation? How often have you

preached on these issues?

**Desire to fit in, avoid relational tension. Obviously, these can be strengths as well as temptations.**

2. When you think about applications of God’s Word to the congregation, do you

consider how the same point will vary between men and women, and between

different groups of women listening?

**Yes, I attempt to.**

3. When you use illustrations in your sermon how intentional are you in thinking of

scenarios related to women and how women might relate to an illustration, do you

use female examples?

**I definitely use women examples in illustration, though most could probably be called 'Jack' instead of 'Jane' and there would be little difference in what they are actually doing**

4. Have you read any books authored by women (or for women) that you would

recommend to your congregation or quote from in a sermon?

**Yes. McClaughlin, Guthrie, Byrd, would be examples of female-authored books I have read fairly recently though I don't often quote from or recommend non-biblical books in a sermon context.**

5. Do you feel uncomfortable using Bible translations that refer to ‘men’ and ‘brothers’

when the context includes women?

**A little more than I was five years ago**

6. How would your preaching change if you were speaking to a group of women with no

men present?

**More of my illustrations would involve women, and perhaps be about more 'female' scenarios, though I don't want to give the impression of rigid gender roles**

7. Does your public praying cover issues related particularly to women or that affect

women differently to men?

**Probably hasn't done nearly as much as it could. One area where it does more is in thinking about persecuted church.**

*Preaching to women*

*1. What issues (trials and temptations) do you think are experienced more by women (Christian and non-Christian) than men in the congregation? How often have you preached on these issues?*

I think issues around exercising our freedoms whilst not causing another to sin, have different applications for women than men. Both genders need to hear this challenge but the application might be different for each. I haven’t preached specifically on women-focused issues although see my comments on application in Q2 below.  Another area that my wife has become interested in as she leads women’s groups is the whole subject of the menopause. She’s been reading a book and working through some material with some of the women in our church – again, not an area that I’ve ever preached on.

*2. When you think about applications of God’s Word to the congregation, do you consider how the same point will vary between men and women, and between different groups of women listening?*

Yes, very much so. I think the wider the preacher can apply his message, the more impact it will have, so yes, I do try and intentionally think through the different groups in our congregation when giving applications. Thankfully, we have most groups represented in our congregation (young, old, male, female, students, workers, home builders, singles’ marrieds, families etc) except perhaps those that might be struggling with same-sex attraction, although I’m sure God will send us some to pastor in the coming years.

*3. When you use illustrations in your sermon how intentional are you in thinking of scenarios related to women and how women might relate to an illustration, do you use female examples?*

A bit like my answer in Q2, I do try and intentionally consider women as well as all other groups in my illustrations, although it’s an area in which I tread carefully, given that I’m not always best placed to give the killer illustration, given my male perspective! However, having my wife to bounce ideas off, before I give a talk, is extremely helpful!

*4. Have you read any books authored by women (or for women) that you would recommend to your congregation or quote from in a sermon?*

Sadly, not nearly enough. People like Emma Scrivener, to name just one author, have written some great stuff on women as they relate to mental health issues etc.

*5. Do you feel uncomfortable using Bible translations that refer to ‘men’ and ‘brothers’ when the context includes women?*

Not really… I like to use translations that are relatively close to the original text, where possible, and where these may be misunderstood by my listener, I try and clarify the ‘both gender’ scenario as I preach.

*6. How would your preaching change if you were speaking to a group of women with no men present?*

I’ve not really thought about it to be honest. I can imagine it to be challenging in terms of being constantly mindful of the tone I’m adopting. Also, to be honest and open about the areas that I don’t fully understand.

*7. Does your public praying cover issues related particularly to women or that affect women differently to men?*

I hope so, although most of my public prayers are in the context of small midweek groups etc, rather than up front during a Sunday Service.

*Preaching to women*

1. *What issues (trials and temptations) do you think are experienced more by women (Christian and non-Christian) than men in the congregation? How often have you preached on these issues?*

Escapism. Romanticism (by which I mean a romantic “film-esque” perfection – not purely relationships). Unhealthy relationship with food/body/fashion. Masking. Given that we preach expository sermons, if these matters are applicable in the text I would seek to cover them.

1. *When you think about applications of God’s Word to the congregation, do you consider how the same point will vary between men and women, and between different groups of women listening?*

Certainly the former. I have not considered “different groups of women” as much as I should have done. I guess by this you mean age and stage? I do try and make illustrations applicable to different age groups, but I am not sure I have ever thought about dividing this into subsets of the women listening.

1. *When you use illustrations in your sermon how intentional are you in thinking of scenarios related to women and how women might relate to an illustration, do you use female examples?*

I never used to, I confess. As a young preacher there were far too many sporting/football illustrations. Very predictable and naff. Now I deliberately try to use “universal” illustrations, or choose an illustration that celebrates or elevates the role of women in our churches or life more widely.

1. *Have you read any books authored by women (or for women) that you would recommend to your congregation or quote from in a sermon?*

Yes, have used commentaries written by women in preaching prep and have no problem doing so.

1. *Do you feel uncomfortable using Bible translations that refer to ‘men’ and ‘brothers’ when the context includes women?*

Yes, profoundly. To the point that it jars with me when others don’t. The translation is cultural, thus we should be using inclusive language when the passage refers to men and women.

1. *How would your preaching change if you were speaking to a group of women with no men present?*

Not sure I have ever done this, but I don’t think my preaching would change significantly. I would be more careful of the illustrations used, but I think (as above) this is a good discipline anyway when speaking to a mixed group, so not sure I would completely rework it for a group of women. As an eg. I sometimes preach my sermon to my wife to get her feedback – so I am not really thinking about the gender of the hearer when preparing, I am thinking about the whole body of Christ.

1. *Does your public praying cover issues related particularly to women or that affect women differently to men?*

I don’t get to do public praying often, so not sure how to comment wisely here. I think church leaders need some help with understanding what some of these issues are for our sisters in Christ, and how to bring them into prayer/sermons helpfully without it being tokenistic or weird. I often feel uncomfortable when a preacher zones in on what he thinks is a key male issue – and it’s not my issue. It just sounds weird to me – I can imagine that being the same for women but I guess it happens more often! I think that any “sin issue” is hard to gender and we all need help in communicating this. People know what they struggle with – giving space for people to engage with this in their own heart is probably more helpful – male or female!

*Preaching to women*

1. **What issues (trials and temptations) do you think are experienced more by women (Christian and non-Christian) than men in the congregation?** I am not sure how general you can be here. Even to put “women” in a special category like that is perhaps not helpful. I was once criticised by a woman for doing so. I was trying to show that I was trying to think how the particular passage applies to women, but it backfired on me! It is part of a pastor teacher’s role to get to know the women in the church, as well as the men, which will result in the women he pastors being in his mind as he prepares and as he prays about preaching.

Often the way I have learned is through women telling me after a sermon how it applied to them, or by asking some women in advance how the central truth the passage taught connected to them.

Having three girls also helped me to think how my preaching applied to them and the things they faced.

I have sometime painted scenarios of say three different people at the start of a sermon; a woman, a bloke, a couple and applied the truth of the passage to those scenarios in the sermon. They won’t necessarily be gender specific scenarios, but it is important that they are not all blokes or all women.

**How often have you preached on these issues?** I hope I preached in a way that served the congregation I was pastoring. I probably only specifically addressed “women” issues where Scripture specifically makes them women’s issues. I think women get a sense of whether their pastor is interested in them or not. Pastoring is not just about what you say in the pulpit, but is inextricably linked to how to seek to get to know folk, gain their trust and understand their needs.

1. **When you think about applications of God’s Word to the congregation, do you consider how the same point will vary between men and women, and between different groups of women listening?**

Yes. I even have a list to different kinds of folk in the congregation and think and pray about how it might apply to them and how to help them listen as apply the truths to themselves. I’ve tried to learn what the “red rags” might be that might cause them to stop listening or to be distracted from listening.

1. **When you use illustrations in your sermon how intentional are you in thinking of scenarios related to women and how women might relate to an illustration, do you use female examples?**

I think I am. I would sometimes ask our women’s workers how something might be heard by a woman. I also think using illustrations about women is a good thing.

1. **Have you read any books authored by women (or for women) that you would recommend to your congregation or quote from in a sermon?**

Yes. Without doubt. There are lots of excellent books by women. The quality of the book is more important that the gender of the author. Some of the most helpful books I have read and recommended have been by women.

1. **Do you feel uncomfortable using Bible translations that refer to ‘men’ and ‘brothers’ when the context includes women?**

I didn’t when using the old NIV, but the 2011 NIV doesn’t and I am happy with it.

1. **How would your preaching change if you were speaking to a group of women with no men present?**

The task of the preacher is to speak in a way that is accessible, and relevant, and connects with, those in front of him. Just as a talk to teenagers will seek to communicate the same truth but in a way they can relate to: so I would want to do so prayerfully if I was speaking at a women’s event. In this way the preacher shows love to those to whom he speaks. Love conveys truth in an accessible and appropriate way.

1. **Does your public praying cover issues related particularly to women or that affect women differently to men?**

I am not sure how much I have really thought about this. I have always been cautious about praying sounding like preaching. It has probably only come across in the way I might pray in public for named women, rather than praying for women in a general sense.

Preaching to women

1. What issues (trials and temptations) do you think are experienced more by women (Christian and non-Christian) than men in the congregation? How often have you preached on these issues?

The Bible rarely addresses men and women separately and when it does so it is usually about roles rather than sins (or, indeed, such things as personality traits or temperament). Following the Scriptures therefore suggests that both men and women are tempted by the same sins and suffer the same kind of trials.

However, the situations men and women find themselves in may lead them to different sins/temptations. For example, in 1 Tim 5:13, Paul warns that widows at home may become idle busybodies not because women are more likely to commit these sins (see 2 Thess 3:11) but because their situation of widowhood at home gives them opportunity to be tempted to sin in this way.

So, in our context, mothers at home with young children are likely to face different temptations to a father who commutes to a city office each day. But many of his temptations will be common to women who commute to offices too. It seems a person’s situation is a more influential factor than whether they are male or female.

I think attempts to categorise temptations/sins as more male or female (e.g. gossip=female, lust=male) are usually very unsuccessful and resort to stereotypes. I’m not even sure that an observation like ‘women and men experience lust differently; men lust after physical attractiveness, women lust after someone to listen to them’ is particularly helpful. I’m sure there are many instances where women lust after a man’s physical attractiveness and men long for someone to take notice of them. There is far more overlap between men and women than there is difference.

When preaching I would therefore try to apply a point into different situations that men or women or both are likely to be in. Often this will be ‘gender non-specific’, for example, “Is there someone in the office whose attention is beginning to mean too much to you?”, “Do you get frustrated when you don’t seem to have achieved anything at the end of the day?”, etc.

2. When you think about applications of God’s Word to the congregation, do you consider how the same point will vary between men and women, and between different groups of women listening?

I don’t think I can add anything to what I’ve written above.

3. When you use illustrations in your sermon how intentional are you in thinking of scenarios related to women and how women might relate to an illustration, do you use female examples?

I try to think of scenarios that relate to people in my congregation, and 50% of them are women. I deliberately try to use female examples, e.g. by saying, “Imagine a scientist. She goes into her lab…” rather than ‘he/his’.

4. Have you read any books authored by women (or for women) that you would recommend to your congregation or quote from in a sermon?

I rarely quote from books in sermons. The last two quotes I remember were from Corrie ten Boom and Rachael Denhollander, so yes I would!

5. Do you feel uncomfortable using Bible translations that refer to ‘men’ and ‘brothers’ when the context includes women?

We use the NIV 1984. I sometimes change the ‘brothers’ to ‘brothers and sisters’ on the fly as I read it, where that is appropriate.

6. How would your preaching change if you were speaking to a group of women with no men present?

In my answer to question 1 I said that I try to apply a point into different situations that men or women or both are likely to be in. If I was speaking only to women I would leave out the ‘mostly men’ applications and perhaps have time for more ‘mostly women’ situations.

7. Does your public praying cover issues related particularly to women or that affect women differently to men?

Sometimes.

*Preaching to women*

1. What issues (trials and temptations) do you think are experienced more by women (Christian and non-Christian) than men in the congregation? How often have you preached on these issues?
	1. I'm aware that women will be more vulnerable than men - in general - in terms of their opportunities in the work place and in terms of physical situations (walking home alone etc.). Women are more likely than men to be child carers and even staying at home (although not always of course) so that brings other issues.
	2. I've never preached specifically on these issues.
2. When you think about applications of God’s Word to the congregation, do you consider how the same point will vary between men and women, and between different groups of women listening?
	1. I haven't thought about this. The groups I consider are more general and cross men and women: for example those who are suffering, those who are doubting etc.
3. When you use illustrations in your sermon how intentional are you in thinking of scenarios related to women and how women might relate to an illustration, do you use female examples?
	1. Not at all but I am keen to think about this more by asking women for ideas before preaching.
4. Have you read any books authored by women (or for women) that you would recommend to your congregation or quote from in a sermon?
	1. Yes - I've enjoyed reading several of Jen Wilkin's books which are very helpful in this. I've also appreciated Jackie Hill-Perry - more on her talks and podcast than her books.
5. Do you feel uncomfortable using Bible translations that refer to ‘men’ and ‘brothers’ when the context includes women?
	1. No - I think it's quite clear than 'mankind' or 'man' relates to all of humanity, and similarly that mentions of 'brothers' isn't to exclude women. Having said that, being clear when preaching and interpreting passages with this language that men and women are included is wise and helpful.
6. How would your preaching change if you were speaking to a group of women with no men present?
	1. I've never thought about it to be honest! A lot of preaching is truth for all people so that wouldn't change. It would be application for life that might need more thought to be specific to a specific group who were listening.
7. Does your public praying cover issues related particularly to women or that affect women differently to men?
	1. Not usually - similarly to preaching, it will cover universal truths. However, there are opportunities that offer an 'excuse' to specifically pray for women and to thank God for women. For example, Mother's Day or International Women's Day.

*Preaching to women*

1. I'd say we are all wrestling with the same heart issues - the same desires for security, significance and satisfaction - though the way this comes out in different lives is very different. I think what might typically be termed issues more likely to impact men - say struggling with porn - impact women in our congregation too - and I made clear in one sermon not so long back that when I was speaking about this it wasn't just a male issue. We don't want to assume too much. I'd want preachers to consider every bible passage recognising how it might land differently with men and women - I have spoken about this recently when considering 2 Samuel 11 onwards for example - I suspect many of us men preaching this passage don't draw out sufficiently the way women are mistreated and suffer injustice.

2. Is critical to do - I think this is always playing in the back of my mind as I think about application - age/gender/life stage/education/culture/spiritual state/spiritual growth/ and on and on. So male/female is one aspect of trying to apply at a deep down level but one of many

3. I think I use male or female examples - but the big thing which I think men preaching may struggle with most - is using illustrations that have emotional freight to them. I am keen to use illustrations that not only throw light on the passage or engage the listener at an imagination level or created interest - but help listeners feel the emotional weight of a passage - bringing the emotions to where they should be if you like. I think women in the congregation generally respond better and appreciate those illustrations more than the men do. I think the women in the congregation probably appreciate me being vulnerable and getting emotional more than some of the men do as well.

4. Yes - I would be glad to do this - Jen Wilkin and Melissa Kruger were both part of my reading for particular series and I'm happy to include and quote them. I think one danger of men becoming aware there would be value in doing this more, is quoting women for the sake of quoting a woman. My wife would say that just feels patronising - and I think it can be damaging to helping people see the quality of work/writing by women. One snippet - our men's breakfast group read through one of Jen's books together - and I was really encouraged they did that without making a big thing of the fact it was a book by a woman

5. We use NIV 2011 so not so big a deal - I'm glad that is the version we use, adopted before my time. Where texts needed some explaining I would do that - been recently preaching Proverbs and explained several times it's a book from father to a son - so expect the verses to be spoken with application to a son - but they have just as much application to a daughter.

6. Certainly - but that would not be the exposition of the text - but the application and illustrations. I've had that privilege at a couple of conferences in the past - I don't remember needing to change content very much.

7. My wife would say that she really appreciates a woman leading the main prayer during a service because things are expressed in the way she would express them. So I can pray embracing the whole congregation - but I can't say things as a woman would - which is why I love to have a woman praying - and glad that hopefully soon, we'll move to women leading services too.

Overall I'd say men wanting to preach more helpfully to women need to

- if they are married, ask their wives to read over the sermons - or part of a staff team have a female staff member read

- for some sermon series ask women in the congregation questions they might have - early on in my time at X, I preached on Ruth and asked a small group of women for questions they had as they read the text - they were very different to the ones I would have seen or imagined

- preach to the heart - not just the text - in our context, I think women are less tolerant of teaching only sermons than men (in a good way) - they want a heart challenged and encouraged - they want to grow - I generally see more spiritual appetite and engagement by the women in church

- be willing to be honest, vulnerable personally - ethos of the speaker is so vital. A preacher can try and connect with the women in the church as they preach but if they don't connect well with them pastorally, there is a massive mismatch and no credibility in the pulpit.

- use illustrations that have emotional weight to them as well as clarifying a point

Preaching to women

1. What issues (trials and temptations) do you think are experienced more by women (Christian and non-Christian) than men in the congregation? How often have you preached on these issues?

Trials – PMS, Menopause, singleness, fertility. Temptations – perhaps envy, jealousy

Never specifically.

2. When you think about applications of God’s Word to the congregation, do you consider how the same point will vary between men and women, and between different groups of women listening?

Yes, I will try and consider different ages, groups and stages of life

3. When you use illustrations in your sermon how intentional are you in thinking of scenarios related to women and how women might relate to an illustration, do you use female examples?

Probably don’t use many female examples, but am intentional about thinking of illustrations that are relevant to men and women.

4. Have you read any books authored by women (or for women) that you would recommend to your congregation or quote from in a sermon?

Yes, eg Catherine Campbell God’s not finished with you yet

5. Do you feel uncomfortable using Bible translations that refer to ‘men’ and ‘brothers’ when the context includes women?

Slightly

6. How would your preaching change if you were speaking to a group of women with no men present?

I would focus the application and illustrations to those in front of me

7. Does your public praying cover issues related particularly to women or that affect women differently to men?

Probably not

Questions for Preachers

Preaching to women

1. What issues (trials and temptations) do you think are experienced more by women (Christian and non-Christian) than men in the congregation? How often have you preached on these issues?

Often being the relational ‘clutch-plate’ between children/spouses/older parents (absorbing friction / being the main go-between or go-to person in families).

Feeling ‘put upon’ by others – e.g. domestic / relational expectations (e.g. being the one who has to ‘fit in’)

Tiredness – often in employment but still being ‘the main carer’.

Preaching: TBH I don’t think I have specifically addressed those issues (tend to go with more generic applications re: busyness / patience / service etc)

2. When you think about applications of God’s Word to the congregation, do you consider how the same point will vary between men and women, and between different groups of women listening?

I’m sensitive re: the topic of children/singleness (e.g. the particular pain of those issues for women – so try to avoid crass assumptions about ‘family life’ etc).

3. When you use illustrations in your sermon how intentional are you in thinking of scenarios related to women and how women might relate to an illustration, do you use female examples?

TBH – not very intentional in this area, don’t tend to think in those terms.

4. Have you read any books authored by women (or for women) that you would recommend to your congregation or quote from in a sermon?

Have often quoted / recommended - Rebecca McLaughlin, Jen Wilkin.

5. Do you feel uncomfortable using Bible translations that refer to ‘men’ and ‘brothers’ when the context includes women?

Yes – and would want to avoid ‘men only’ language.

6. How would your preaching change if you were speaking to a group of women with no men present?

I suspect would probably try to be ‘friendlier’, more empathetic / softer in tone – and I would think harder about relevant illustrations. Which bearing in mind 50% of my usual audience is women, is quite telling!

7. Does your public praying cover issues related particularly to women or that affect women differently to men?

Not really – tend to be fairly generic.

Preaching to women

1. What issues (trials and temptations) do you think are experienced more by women (Christian and non-Christian) than men in the congregation? How often have you preached on these issues?

Lack of confidence in church life

Relational issues of all kinds

Questions about parenting (even though men should feel it equally/more)

Paid employment versus staying at home

Identity / body image

I’ve not preached on these directly but have tried to make application where appropriate from a passage (probably poorly).

2. When you think about applications of God’s Word to the congregation, do you consider how the same point will vary between men and women, and between different groups of women listening?

Ideally yes, but in reality, it varies. A key factor is probably the passage/topic/theme and how immediately I feel that there is varied application rather than common points to make.

3. When you use illustrations in your sermon how intentional are you in thinking of scenarios related to women and how women might relate to an illustration, do you use female examples?

I try to be aware of how women might relate to an illustration – more than I used to.

I have been poor at using female examples but am looking to improve.

4. Have you read any books authored by women (or for women) that you would recommend to your congregation or quote from in a sermon?

Yes, but rarely

5. Do you feel uncomfortable using Bible translations that refer to ‘men’ and ‘brothers’ when the context includes women?

Yes, very much. I feel it is a poor translation.

6. How would your preaching change if you were speaking to a group of women with no men present?

I think much of it would be the same, but I’d consider some of the areas above more deliberately (especially application).

7. Does your public praying cover issues related particularly to women or that affect women differently to men?

I think there’s reasonable coverage of issues related to both.

***Preaching to women***

1. ***What issues (trials and temptations) do you think are experienced more by women (Christian and non-Christian) than men in the congregation? How often have you preached on these issues?****Loneliness, singleness, lack of Christian spouse or thinking that finding spouse will be hard, expectations in the home (esp for working women), lack of kindness and care in marriages.*

***2. When you think about applications of God’s Word to the congregation, do you consider how the same point will vary between men and women, and between different groups of women listening?****Yes I try to, but I am aware how easy it is to conflate contexts: e.g. we have a number of single women but there is a world of difference between a widow, a long-term single, someone struggling being unmarried, someone facing same-sex attraction, someone divorced and so on.*

***3. When you use illustrations in your sermon how intentional are you in thinking of scenarios related to women and how women might relate to an illustration, do you use female examples?****Not very, but do intentionally avoid male-dominated illustrations (sport, cars, planes etc).*

***4. Have you read any books authored by women (or for women) that you would recommend to your congregation or quote from in a sermon?****Don’t quote books on principle, and we have recommended books written by women to congregation at other times.*

***5. Do you feel uncomfortable using Bible translations that refer to ‘men’ and ‘brothers’ when the context includes women?****No, in fact, I feel uncomfortable when we don’t have that.*

***6. How would your preaching change if you were speaking to a group of women with no men present?****I might cry more! I think I would change some applications; but then I always sharpen applications when the ‘audience’ is a subset of the whole, so I don’t think it particularly a men/women issue for me.*

***7. Does your public praying cover issues related particularly to women or that affect women differently to men?****Yes, I hope so. I plan my public prayers so it is easier to do this than if it were just splurged out.*

***Preaching to women***

***1. What issues (trials and temptations) do you think are experienced more by women (Christian and non-Christian) than men in the congregation? How often have you preached on these issues?***

When a pastor my focus was mainly on preaching through books, rather than addressing issues. I did however, do a series on “Redeeming Power” which sought to address a number of issues including “uncovering oppression at home”, “power abused in the church”, “encouraging women to flourish” and “the great sex rescue”. I guess that series certainly sought to touch on some issues faced and experienced more by women and needed a man to speak about them with other men present. A few men didn’t like it!!!

Now as I’m generally just at church for one or two services, I tend to preach on things which will be an encouragement to the whole congregation as a whole.

***2. When you think about applications of God’s Word to the congregation, do you consider how the same point will vary between men and women, and between different groups of women listening?***

Yes. We used do a preachers workshop each week with the staff team. Getting a woman’s input to what I was preaching was invaluable for teasing out some of these differences. Probably less now in the kind of preaching I’m doing and particularly when not sure of the congregation make up.

***3. When you use illustrations in your sermon how intentional are you in thinking of scenarios related to women and how women might relate to an illustration, do you use female examples?***

Yes I try as I am able, sometimes better than others!

***4. Have you read any books authored by women (or for women) that you would recommend to your congregation or quote from in a sermon?***

Yes. Particularly in power series. Also others.

***5. Do you feel uncomfortable using Bible translations that refer to ‘men’ and ‘brothers’ when the context includes women?***

I prefer the 2011 NIV or ESV which more inclusive.

***6. How would your preaching change if you were speaking to a group of women with no men present?***

I would want to make sure that the applications, illustrations were relevant to the audience

***7. Does your public praying cover issues related particularly to women or that affect women differently to men?***

Sometimes, when I can yes.

**Preaching to women**

**1. What issues (trials and temptations) do you think are experienced more by women (Christian and non-Christian) than men in the congregation? How often have you**

**preached on these issues?**

I’m not convinced the trial and temptations are all that different - it is more the context in which they can occur. I think the key thing is the preaching of sound biblical principles which will equip the congregation to deal with the issues of life in a God-honouring way. For example, a man might face injustice because of his ethnicity and a women because of her gender. In both of these examples, what needs to be taught is how to suffer injustice in a Christ-like way not how to suffer racism or sexism.

**2. When you think about applications of God’s Word to the congregation, do you consider how the same point will vary between men and women, and between different groups of women listening?**

Not enough and I probably need to challenge myself on this. However, see also my response to question 6.

**3. When you use illustrations in your sermon how intentional are you in thinking of scenarios related to women and how women might relate to an illustration, do you use female examples?**

I try and make my illustrations as broadly applicable as possible so I rarely use illustration that are distinctly gender-specific.

**4. Have you read any books authored by women (or for women) that you would recommend to your congregation or quote from in a sermon?**

Yes, examples would be:

Jars of clay (Haddow, 2020)

What grieving people wish you knew (Guthrie, 2016)

Parenting against the tide (Benton, 2014)

If it’s not too much trouble (Benton, 2016)

**5. Do you feel uncomfortable using Bible translations that refer to ‘men’ and ‘brothers’ when the context includes women?**

No, because historically people would understand that what was being said was equally applicable to men and women. However, this way of understanding older literature is becoming less widespread and will need to be increasingly addressed. In my view, it is better that, where necessary, this is explained in a sermon rather than compromising bible translation which would, obviously, be something of a slippery slope.

**6. How would your preaching change if you were speaking to a group of women with no men present?**

Only, possibly, in choice of illustrations. The fundamental spiritual need of human beings is the same regardless of gender i.e. first and foremost to be saved and secondly to grow in their knowledge and love of God. I fear there is a real danger in overemphasising gender when God’s word is preached. Responsibility here doesn’t rest wholly with the preacher. When we hear God’s word preached we should be, in my opinion, firstly asking ourselves, “what does this teach me about God?”, before we start asking how the message applies to us. A helpful illustration is medical treatment. We would be quite startled if we went to the GP with the same condition but were given very different medicine simply because of our gender!

**7. Does your public praying cover issues related particularly to women or that affect women differently to men?**

I’m not really sure and this question is quite challenging in that it makes me wonder whether I really should give this much more thought. My knee jerk reaction is that because some of the issues that uniquely affect women can be quite personal, it is better that these are discussed and prayed about in more intimate settings. Other aspects (e.g. gender inequality, exploitation of women), I have prayed publicly about and I think it’s right that we do if we are really concerned about social justice and protecting the vulnerable.