

Role of Women in Ministry

ST 105 Sanctification and Ecclesiology
Dr. Lightner

Presented by:

Sherrie Brown

Perry Riley

David Ross

Why is the role of women in ministry an important topic to discuss?

- Culturally relevant
- Topic of debate within the evangelical church
- Women are able, willing, and competent
- God has spoken on this topic

God's View in Genesis

Genesis 1:26-2:25

- God creates man and woman in His image (v. 1:27)
- God tells man and woman to rule over living creatures (v. 1:28)
- God creates Adam (v. 2:7)
- God forbids Adam (v. 2:16-17)
- Adam's need for a suitable helper (v. 2:18)
- Adam names living creatures (v. 2:19-20)
- God creates woman from part of Adam (v. 2:21-22)
- God presents woman to Adam (v. 2:23)
- Adam names her woman (v. 2:23)
- Man joined to his wife and shall become one flesh (v. 2:24)

God's View in Genesis

Genesis 3

- Adam and woman together in Garden (v. 6)
- Crafty serpent spoke to woman (v. 1, 4)
- Woman answers serpent (v. 2-3, 5)
- Woman eats fruit, then gives to Adam to eat (v. 6)
- **Satan's order:** creature, woman, man (v. 1-5)
- **God's confronting order:** Adam, woman (v. 9-13)
- **God's punishment order:** serpent, woman, man (v. 14-19)
- **Woman will desire husband, but he'll rule over her** (v. 16)
- God judges Adam for **listening to wife** and sinning (v. 17)
- **Adam names wife a second time, Eve** (v. 20)

Old Testament View

■ Male leadership in Old Testament

- Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, 12 sons of Jacob , Moses, Aaron, Priests, Joshua, Judges (except Deborah), Kings, and Scripture Writers
- All of them were appointed to this position by God. It was not self-appointment.

■ Women play an equally important role in the Old Testament, just in different, yet pivotal, roles.

- Sarah, Rebekah, Miriam, Rahab, Deborah*, Jael, Ruth, Hannah, Abigail, Esther
- Faithful women whose role was crucial in God's sovereign plan

Deborah (Judges 4-5:31)

- Seems like authoritative leadership position
- Exercised prophetic gift in private (Judg. 4:5)
- Other judges lead Israel into battle, but Deborah receives word that Barak is to do this (Judg. 4:6-7)
- Barak unwilling without Deborah (Judg. 4:8)
- Deborah tells Barak that honor will be a woman's (Judg. 4:9)

New Testament Approach

- Jesus' attitude towards women
 - Compassion and respect demonstrated equality
 - Still did not exalt women to leadership over men
- Holy Spirit indwells men and women
- Passages emphasizing male headship and female submission roles (Eph. 5:22-32; 1 Cor. 11:3-10; 14:33-35; 1 Tim. 2:9-15)

1 Corinthians 11 & 14

- 1 Corinthians 11:3-10
 - Hierarchy of God, Christ, man, and woman, in that order
 - Attitude of passage is submission
- 1 Corinthians 14:34-35
 - Context is passing judgment on prophecies
 - Attitude of passage is submission

Ephesians 5:21-33

- Analogy of marriage to describe relationship between Christ and the church.
- Wives submit to husbands, just as Christ is head of church and church submits to Christ (v.22-24)
- Husbands love your wives, as Christ loves the church (v.25)

“In the church, God’s household, women are not to exercise authority over men, just as in a human family they are not to exercise authority over their husbands.”

1 Timothy 2:9-3:7, 14-15

- Consider this passage with entire Scripture as context
- Women should not have an authoritative teaching position over man
- Women not called to be in the position of elder/overseer
- Reference to Genesis 2 & 3

Women Who Have Served

- Early church served exclusively by men
- Trend continued through medieval and reformation
- Reformers allowed for possible deaconesses
- Late 1800's women began to preach
- Catherine Booth
- 1869 Margaret Van Cott – Methodist Episcopal – 1st woman
- 1871 Celia Burleigh – Unitarian ordained first woman
- 1919 Congregational Church recognized first woman
- 1956 United Methodist Church ordained women
- 1960's Presbyterian Church ordained women elders/ministers
- 1976 Episcopal Church ordained women
- 2006 Episcopal Church elects 1st bishop – K. Schori
- 1984 Southern Baptist Convention in Kansas

Southern Baptist Convention 1984

In a statement on women's ordination (1984) at the Southern Baptist Convention in Kansas City there was the resolution "WHEREAS, The Scriptures teach that women are not in public worship to assume a role of authority over men lest confusion reign in the local church (1 Cor. 14:33–36); and WHEREAS, While Paul commends women and men alike in other roles of ministry and service (Titus 2:1–10), he excludes women from pastoral leadership (I Tim. 2:12) to preserve a submission God requires because the man was first in creation and the woman was first in the Edenic fall (I Tim. 2:1ff);.. . ." More recently, some Southern Baptists have become even more stringent regarding women in ministry.

Women Who Have Served – cont'd

After WWII, more women entered the work force and higher education.

The number of men in ministry decreased paving the way for women to enter ministry positions.

Weatheral Johnson – Missionary to China. Began Bible Study Fellowship

Henrietta Mears – Founder of Gospel Light. Sunday School teacher whose class grew from 400 to 4000

Complementarian & Egalitarian

Dr. Sue Edwards

Dr. Joye Baker

- Since biblical times, women were traditionally considered unequal and inferior to men.
- Jesus and Paul confirmed equality and value of women
- Two views emerge: Complementarian and Egalitarian
- Each person must study the biblical evidence and decide which perspective to hold

Complementarian Viewpoint

- Men and women are both made in God's image
- Men and women are equal in value and worth
- Men and women have distinct roles
- The Council for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood states, "We are persuaded that the Bible teaches that only men should be pastors and elders. That is, men should bear primary responsibility for Christ-like leadership and teaching in the church. So it is unbiblical, we believe, and therefore detrimental, for women to assume this role."

Complementarian Viewpoint

- Adam given responsibilities before the creation of Eve (Gen 2)
- Adam held accountable first by God after the Fall (Gen 3:9)
- Naming of Eve (Gen 3:20)
- Men and women were created to complement one another (Gen 2:18).
- The husband is the head of the wife; this pattern should be reflected in the church (Eph 5:22-23)
- In 1 Cor 11:8-9 and 1 Tim 2:13, Paul refers to the Genesis passage to support his teaching on women's roles.

Complementarian Viewpoint

- 1 Tim 2:12
- Men led New Testament churches
- No women apostles
- 1 Cor 11:3-12
- Hierarchy is NOT superiority/inferiority, but rather gift/office
- References promote a normative order between men and women in the home and in the church

Complementarian Viewpoint

- The Trinity
- Jesus is in no way inferior to the Father or the Spirit; yet he subordinated himself to the Father's direction and the Spirit's leading while on earth. (Matt 4:1; Luke 4:14; Lk 5:17; 6:19; 8:46)
- 1 Corinthians 11:3-12
 - God, Christ, man, woman

Egalitarianism

- *Egalitarian View of Roles: No distinctives exist between the roles of men and women in the home, church, and society at large. Women can do everything men can do. Selection in the church should be based on spiritual giftedness, maturity, and fitness for ministry—not on gender.*
- *How egalitarians identify themselves: Christian for Biblical Equality, Galatians 3:28. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*

Egalitarianism

- Galatians 3:28
 - Women and men are equal
- Genesis 1 and 2
 - The fall is an event without universal implications

Egalitarianism

- 1 Corinthians and 1 Timothy
 - Specific to Paul's day
- 1 Corinthians 11:5, 14:34, and 1 Timothy 2:15
- Ephesians 5:21-33
 - Mutual submission

Egalitarianism

- Many model Christian marriages practice egalitarianism
- Luke 22:24-27
- Women leaders who were not reprimanded by God
- Invalid Biblical interpretation: Slaveholders to African Americans; Complementarians to women

Leadership Style Characteristics-Men

Autocratic

Hierarchal

Individuality

Hierarchy of power

Detachment

Objective

Power in order to influence

Exclusion

Independence

Solving/fixing problems

Responsibilities

Preserve Independence

Transactional-doing one thing at a time

Directive

Goal- oriented

Dictatorial

Leading form top down

Head/thinking

Designated authority

Competition

Keep power

Task-oriented

Compartmentalize

Individual Achievement

Separateness

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Leadership Style Characteristics - Women

Democratic

Participative

Shared responsibilities

Process-oriented

Collaborative

Interactive

Web of relationships

Leading from the middle

Connection

Heart/feeling

Subjective

Collegial (equal) authority

Power in order to promote change

Delegation

Inclusion

Empower others

Inter-dependence

People-oriented

Processing/discussing prob

Holistic/multi-tasking

Relationships

Relational attachment

Preserve community

Intimacy

Transformational

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Women are the Backbone of Congregations in America

Nationwide Survey Results from Barna Research Group

- Women represent nearly 60% of Christians
- 46% of women claim “born again” beliefs, compared to 36% of men
- 79% of women claim the term “spiritual” describes them, compared to 63% of men
 - 69% of these women claim “deeply spiritual” describes them, compared to 50% of these men
- 41% of women have set spiritual goals to accomplish, compared to 29% of men
- 75% of women say religious faith is very important, compared to 60% of men

Women's Participation Levels within the Church (compared to men)

- Twice as likely to take part in a discipleship process
- 57% more likely to attend adult Sunday school
- 56% more likely to hold a leadership position
- 54% more likely to be involved in a small group
- 46% more likely to disciple others
- 33% more likely to volunteer at church
- 29% more likely to attend church
- 29% more likely to share their faith with others
- 23% more likely to donate to the church
- 16% more likely to pray

Can a Woman Be a Pastor/Teacher in a Local Church?

Six Distinctions Between Spiritual Gift and Office

1. Distinction between gift and office
 - Office appears to be limited to *apostles* (Acts 1:21–25), *elders/bishops* (1 Tim 3:1–7; Titus 1:5–11), and *deacons* (Acts 6:1–6; 1 Tim 3:8–13)
 - Gifts are many and not limited based on gender (1 Cor 12:4–11, 28–30; Rom 12:6–8; Eph 4:7–12)
2. Those who hold offices are either appointed or elected based on qualifications (Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5; Acts 1:26; 6:3; 1 Tim 3:1–13)
 - Spiritual gifts are sovereignly bestowed directly by God (Eph 4:7; Rom 12:6; 1 Cor. 12:11, 18, 28)
3. Scripture indicates that every believer has at least one gift but not every believer holds an office (Eph 4:7; 1 Cor. 12:7, Rom 12:4; 1 Pet 4:10)

Can a Woman Be a Pastor/Teacher in a Local Church?

4. Men should be the husband of one wife, no such stipulation is mentioned for Spiritual gifts
5. Those holding the office of elder cannot be a recent convert (1 Tim 3:6), whereas gifts are given to each believer regardless of age or maturity
6. The office of elder must be held by men (1 Tim 3:2, 12; Titus 1:6), whereas gifts are given to either gender

Losing the Faith

Conclusion on Survey Results from Barna Group

- Women are the majority in the number of Christians, as well as their participation within the church
 - But intense involvement is causing women to burn out
 - There has been a 22% slip in church attendance since 1991
 - 21% decline in women volunteering since 1991

Losing the Faith (cont)

- Are churches providing enough opportunities for women to receive ministry and not just provide ministry?
- Result of not thoughtfully appreciating and recognizing women may lead to women continuing to leave the church
- Important to impress upon men the importance of modeling spiritual maturity and more actively participate in church
 - If men are not leading the way and modeling spiritual maturity, then we are just repeating the fall in the garden