

Women

What should their role be in Christianity? Does the Bible teach that women should not be preachers or teachers? What do you do with gifted women speakers?

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Historical Context

In this section a selection of stories from scripture are examined to understand the role of women throughout Biblical history.

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Culture

All Cultures are inherently predisposed to change and, at the same time, to resist change. There are dynamic processes operating that encourage the acceptance of new ideas and things while there are others that encourage changeless stability.

-Dr. Dennis O'Neil, Palomar College

A person does not need to look far to see the shift that has occurred in the culture of the United States in the last one hundred years. Scholars teach us today that culture continues to change fairly significantly and much more rapidly than it has in previous generations.¹ In fact, several cultural issues that had very little support thirty years ago have seen a jump of double digit support.²

One of the most obvious ways that culture has shifted in the United States is in the role of women. There was a time in this country when a woman was not allowed a voice in the direction of the U.S. because she was not allowed to vote.



An example of a cultural shift in the United States. A woman holding an office desk job would have been unheard of in the past.

Today not only can women vote, but they also hold a variety of political offices from Mayors of cities, to seats in both the House and Senate, and every other political office in-between. We have yet to have a woman President or Vice President.

Not only do women hold political offices and power, but they also have significant influence in the economical realm as well. Women now hold positions throughout companies in which they make decisions that are multimillion dollar decisions.

Women also hold positions as CEO's of major companies. In these situations, women obviously hold authority over a variety of men and really only answer to men in the sense of a board (which may not even be the case in many instances.)

Finally, women serve in the military, in which the women are able to advance in rank and hold positions of authority over men as well.

The question that arises is that with this cultural shift in the role of women should the evangelical church shift as well? Many churches have decided that they should change with the times. The reasons that are often cited is that there are other things in scripture that are not followed any longer because they were deemed cultural of that time (i.e. slavery, dietary laws, etc.)

Therefore, it is argued that the church should also understand that the ancient church structure of the role of women should also change to better suit our current culture.

The question must be asked, why are other churches not changing? Who is right? Is the role of women spoken in scripture a cultural thing for that time alone or should the church still follow those texts?

HISTORICALLY

In order to properly understand the role of women in the church we must first examine the role of women throughout history and culture. This will later help determine if the scriptures were speaking only culturally or if this role of women in the church transcends culture and applies to all cultures.

A basic exegesis of some various texts in scripture will help us determine the truth to be found in the scriptures and how to apply it today.

An exegesis is a critical explanation or interpretation of a text. In this process, the text is examined in the context of its culture and surrounding scripture to determine the true meaning of the text.

In each scripture that is examined the following questions will be asked: To whom was this text written? What was happening in history during this time period? What was the culture of this people group during this time? What is the truth found in this text that transcends culture and can be applied today?

In The Beginning...

Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." Now out of the ground the Lord God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. -Genesis 2:18-22



In the beginning, God created Adam to rule/govern the Garden of Eden. God appointed Adam over

all the beasts of the field, which He brings to Adam to name,³ a duty which shows his authority over them. This is similar to the way that God gives names to the sun, moon, and stars. To bring it to modern day the naming of a child shows that a parent has authority over their child.

God sees that, "It is not good that the man should be alone," so He creates a "helper" for him.⁴ The word that is used for "helper" is the word *azar* which means "one who provides aid or relief."⁵ Since it was not right for Adam to be alone God created someone to help him by putting Adam into a deep sleep and removed a rib from the man and created woman.

God then brings the woman to the man to name and Adam names her Woman which means literally "taken out of man."⁶ It is important to note that all of this story occurs before the fall and it appears that man is given authority over woman evidenced by the fact that he was allowed to name her, and that the text explains that she was created to help him.

At the same time one cannot overlook the truth that despite their different roles, Adam and Eve are ontologically equal, because they are both created in the image of God.⁷



Old Testament

Now Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lappidoth, was judging Israel at that time. -Judges 4:4

In the history of the people of Israel, this is the one example of a woman in leadership over the entire nation. (There were a few female prophetesses, but not to this official capacity.) The scripture also points out that this woman is married, yet it is not her husband that is leading the nation, but Deborah. Further evidence of her authority is shown when the text tells the reader that she

summons Barak, the leader of the military. In addition to the summons, the scripture also includes the song that was sung after the victory over the enemies of Israel. In the song Deborah is both praised as a leader and is mentioned more than Barak.⁸

At the same time it cannot be overlooked that the entire book of Judges was written to show how far Israel had fallen from her purpose. The Judges mentioned in the text are given as a further testament of the depravity of Israel. It is interesting that Deborah does appear to be one of the most (if not the most) stable judges during this tumultuous time.

It must also be noted that throughout the text Deborah appears to continually be attempting to give Barak the leadership. In fact, she explains that because he would not take leadership that the entire victory would be given to a woman. This is spoken as if it is a negative thing, the way that it was not intended.

New Testament

So the woman left her water jar and went away into town and said to the people, 29 "Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?" 30 They went out of the town and were coming to him.... 39 Many Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony. -John 4:28-30,39

During this time of history, men did not talk to women in this culture. Also Jews did not talk to the half breed Samaritans. Jesus goes against both aspects of this culture by simply speaking to the woman. Jesus blows the reader away by also revealing to this outcast woman that He is indeed the Messiah that both Jews and Samaritans have been looking forward to for years.



It is important to note that this is the first recording in scripture of the first evangelist. God could have used any person in the world to be the first to testify of who Jesus is, yet, He chose a woman and a Samaritan. The scripture explains that because of this woman many people in the town believed.

In addition to this, it was the women who went to the tomb and told the disciples about the resurrection. It was also a woman that Jesus first appeared to after his resurrection.⁹

While Jesus did go against culture in many aspects by talking to women, and befriending them, one cannot forget that Jesus did not take on a single disciple that was a woman. There is also no evidence of Jesus supporting the idea of women as teachers.

Three Views of the Role of Women

and the scriptures used in each of the roles...

Hierarchical Subordinationism



In this view the woman is under the complete authority of the man. The woman is not seen as being equal in any way to the man. The scripture that is often used in this position is Genesis 3:16, *"To the woman he said, 'I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children and he shall rule over you.'"* The Hebrew word used here is: arche. This is the same word that Adam is given in regards to his naming of the animals.

The tension in this view is found by pointing out the fact that this portion of scripture occurred after the fall and was punishment for Eve's role in the fall of mankind. It has been argued that when Jesus came to the earth, died, and began the redemption process that the curse is no longer in effect for womankind.

Another scripture that is used from the New Testament is 1 Timothy 2:12, *"I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet."* Those who hold to the Hierarchical view use this scripture to show that the authoritative rule has continued throughout the New Testament.

Further questions must be asked in regards to this scripture as well. Was this simply for Timothy's church alone? Was this Paul's view for all women everywhere? Is this scripture still applicable in this way to today's culture?

Egalitarian



In this view the woman is completely equal with the man in every way. The scripture that is often given is Genesis 1:26-27, *"Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.' So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them."*

This text shows that both the man and the woman were given rule over all of creation. There is nothing in this particular passage that points to man having more rulership over creation than woman.

Another scripture that is used from the New Testament is Galatians 3:28, *"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."*

This view sees that because of Jesus there truly is no difference in Him. Because God gifts to all and does not see gender, race, etc.; man and woman can each fill the various roles in the church.

The questions that must be asked of this view and the above verse in particular is, "How far do we take this verse?" For those that wish to participate in homosexual relations, this verse can be used because there are no male and female...gender and roles do not matter.

Complementarian



In this view woman is equal in essence with man, but not in role. One scripture that is used is Genesis 2:18, *"Then the Lord said, 'It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.'"*

This text shows that there is the distinct purpose for woman's creation, to be a help for man. This view continually affirms the value of women, yet holds fast to the distinct role that they are to play in humanity.

Paul affirms the different roles as he explains the household positions. Ephesians 5:22, *"Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands."*

This text along with others asserts that man is the head of the species and because of that is the one who is held responsible. When Adam and Eve sinned in the garden, it is the man who is held responsible. In Romans, it is man that is blamed for the fall. Advocates of this view also point out the equality of the Trinity, and yet the distinct roles that each play in the world.

The questions that are asked of this view are: What does the church do with women found to have the gift of proclamation? What does the church do with gifted women teachers?

Summary of Positions

Subordinationism

1. Overview

- a. Man and Woman not Equal: God created male and female different and therefore, not equal. Woman is put underneath man in value.
- b. Fall Causes Disorder: Many things were effected during the fall. The earth is not how it should be, yet, the position of man and woman were not changed.
- c. Restoration of Individual Through Christ: Through Jesus the individual is saved from sin, regardless of gender. There is no social implication in regards to value or role.

2. Scripture Passages Supporting

- a. Genesis 3:6-Man will rule over
- b. 2 Timothy 2:12-Woman no authority
- c. I Corinthians 14:34-Woman not to speak
- d. I Peter 3:7-Woman weaker vessel

3. Biblical Examples

- a. Old Testament-Old Testament Kings, Judges (except Deborah)
- b. New Testament-Peter, Early Church, Teachings of Paul

4. Objections to This View

- a. Ignores the value given by God
- b. Ignores Biblical examples of female leaders
- c. Equality in Christ
- d. Misunderstands correct structure and role

Egalitarian

1. Overview

- a. Man and Woman Created Equal: God created male and female equal in every way. Both are given ruling responsibilities over creation.
- b. Fall Causes Subordination: When the fall occurs, woman receives a curse that now puts her in subordination to man, though this was not God's original intent. Equality was always intended for woman.
- c. Restoration of Equality Through Christ: In the moment that Jesus was killed on the cross the curse of mankind was broken. Because the curse is not in effect any longer, woman is no longer subject to man.

2. Scripture Passages Supporting

- a. Genesis 1:26-27- Woman given same job
- b. Genesis 2:21-Taken from man's side
- c. Galatians 3:28-No distinction in Christ
- d. 1 Corinthians 12-Gifts not gender specific

3. Biblical Examples

- a. Old Testament- Miriam, Huldah, Deborah, (unofficial roles: Esther, Ruth, and Naomi)
- b. New Testament-Samaritan Woman, Priscilla, Pheobe

4. Objections to This View

- a. History showing male leadership
- b. Jesus not having female disciples
- c. Paul's instruction on submission
- d. Paul's instruction on roles in church

Complementarian

1. Overview

- a. Man and Woman Created Equal in Essence: God created male and female equal in essence, but not in role. Each is uniquely different for a specific purpose.
- b. Fall Disrupts God's Design: When the fall occurs the role of man and woman is distorted. Man can now abuse his role that was given. Woman now desires a different role as well.
- c. Restoration of Role Through Christ: Through Christ's reconciliation man and woman can return to their original roles in a healthy way. As men and women lay down their lives for one another the roles function correctly.

2. Scripture Passages Supporting

- a. Genesis 2-Man's distinct role explained
- b. Genesis 3-Man is held responsible
- c. 1 Corinthians 11:1-16-Position of women
- d. Ephesians 5:22-Role in homes

3. Biblical Examples

- a. Old Testament-Adam, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, Prophets, etc.
- b. New Testament-12 Disciples, Paul, Husbands

4. Objections to This View

- a. Misunderstands Genesis 2
- b. Ignores Biblical examples of women leaders
- c. Spiritual gifts given to all
- d. Equality in Christ

Most Churches today are either Egalitarian or Complimentarian.¹⁰ Because of this we will look at the objections to both of these views and the response given by each view to the objections.

Egalitarian View¹¹

Women are equal to men in every way

Response to the Objections

Objection 1: This View ignores that Israel's political and religious structures were almost exclusively male leadership. The fact that these were the structure of that time, does not mean that they should be the structures of today. The leadership structure for Israel mentioned in the Bible was prescriptive of that time and culture, but not descriptive to our own culture. The argument can be shown that there are also Biblical examples of slavery which was the cultural norm of that time, but that should not be expected in today's society and culture.

This understanding also explains why Egalitarians do not put authority into the text found in 1 Timothy 2:11 where a woman is instructed to be silent and in full submission. That was written only to one church who was having difficulties and who lacked strong female leadership. Should there have been wise, understanding, and great female leaders, the text would not have needed to be written.

Objection 2: This view fails to notice that Jesus did not take on any females as disciples. While Jesus did not take on any female disciples, He did begin to change the cultural norm by speaking with women. He was close friends with both Mary and Martha and several conversations between them are recorded in scripture. In addition to this, it was the Samaritan woman who was the first recorded evangelist. Also, it was to the women that the announcement was made about His resurrection and the women brought the news to the disciples. Therefore, it cannot be said that Jesus did not value women in leadership roles.

Objection 3: The structure of the home outlined in Ephesians 5 is not taken into account. The egalitarian argues that when Paul wrote to the church in Ephesus he was not instructing wives to submit to their husbands. Instead he was simply giving an example of what submission should be for the believer. The believers in Jesus must submit to one another, so in this way the wife submits to the husband, but the husband should also submit to the wife. This is evidenced by what he writes in verse 21, "and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ."

In addition to this, the egalitarian explains that the structure of the home and the structure of the church are two distinctly different things. The fact that women are included in the spiritual gifts in I Corinthians should be further evidence that those gifts are to be used inside the church since the Holy Spirit does not pay attention to gender in regards to gifting.

Objection 4: This view misses that the scripture clearly states the man as "head." The reality is that there is a misunderstanding of the word "head." In greek the word that is used for head is κεφαλή (kephale)¹² and can also be translated as "source" (although this word κεφαλή is never translated as "source" in scripture), but in other documents outside the New Testament it is translated as "source."¹³ Therefore, when Paul is using the word κεφαλή in I Corinthians or Ephesians,¹⁴ he is referring to the fact that man is the source of woman. Because Eve was formed from Adam's rib, he is the "source" or "head" of her. He was her beginning of existence, but in no way is this referring to leadership.



Complementarian View¹⁴

Women are equal in essence, but have a different role.

Response to the Objections

Objection 1: The role of women in this view makes women less valuable than men. The complementarian sees a distinct difference between role and essence. In no way does this person view women as less valuable, but simply different. In fact, the Bible teaches that our value should never come from what we do, but always from God and God alone. Each individual person is valued simply because God made them and loves them. Jesus himself shows us the difference of role and essence. Dr. Durst at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary explains it this way, “If role defines value, then Jesus could never have washed the disciples feet.” Jesus was in His very essence, God, yet submitted Himself to the role of a servant.

In this view, it is understood that God is a God of systems and roles. God created the earth with many different systems, functions, and roles. (Ex: solar system, seasons, immune system, family structures, etc.) Within each of these systems creation has its various roles. The different roles are in place to keep the earth functioning the way that it was intended to function. In the same way God gave humanity different roles. Specifically, He gave different gifts, abilities, and functions to man and to woman in order for the earth to function properly. There are experiences and roles that women have that man will never know. (Man will never know what it is like to have life inside of him, to be intimately connected to the child.) While the role is uniquely different between man and woman, it in no way lessens the ontological value that each being possesses.

Objection 2: This view fails to see the way that women are leaders throughout the scripture. As seen in the summary on page four, there are very few examples of female leadership in the Old and New Testament and none are given the highest level of leadership. There are no women kings, no women priests, and no women elders in all of scripture. The example most frequently used of Deborah must be seen in the context of Judges, a book given to show Israel how far they had fallen and how “everyone did what was right in their own eyes.”¹⁵

Objection 3: This view leaves no room for women to exercise their spiritual gifts. This objection truly shows the heart of the person making the objection and re-affirms Genesis 3:16. Nowhere in the text is the woman told that she cannot use her gifts given by the Holy Spirit. She is simply directed on how to use them correctly. For some reason it is very important for women to be able to teach men, rather than use that ability to build up the women in Christ. The “why” this is comes from Genesis 3:16 when the Bible teaches that a woman’s desire will now be for her husband. If this was a healthy desire why is it included in the curse section of scripture? Instead it is an unhealthy desire to usurp his position of leadership.

Objection 4: This view ignores that in Christ there are no male or female...we are all equal. The complementarian would affirm this equality. Someone can be equal and yet have vastly different roles. The text to which the objection is referring reminds the reader that the love of Christ is not conditional upon who a person is or what a person does. A slave has as much value to God as does the free man. A woman has as much value to God as a man. In the next section, it will be shown how God Himself has the same essence in the Trinity and yet vastly different roles.

An Understanding of the Trinity

And what it means to the function of men and women

Water can be found in different forms yet at its core it always has the same molecular structure of H₂O. There are different ways that water appears based upon the conditions and the need.

The best way to understand the equality and value of women in relation to men is to look at the Trinity. The God of the universe is distinct in His three different parts which are equal and yet have vastly different roles. Two parts of the Godhead are in a submissive role: the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

The scriptures show us how these two portions of the Godhead are submissive to the Father. The first evidence that we have can be found in Jesus pleading with the Father in the garden for another way to redeem humanity besides the cross. Yet he

states, “not my will, but your will be done.”¹⁶

taking the form of a servant...”¹⁷ This text reminds us that Jesus was Himself God and yet did not consider equality

Spirit’s submission is by the very fact that Jesus teaches His disciples that He will send the Holy Spirit.¹⁸ Also in Romans the Holy Spirit pleads to the Father on behalf of the saints.

In each of these examples, the role of the being does not lessen the value of the being at all. At their core each part of the Godhead is...God. Nothing can take that away. Yet, functionally They are/He is distinctly different to fulfill the ultimate purpose that God intends.

In the same way, though man and woman are distinctly different with various roles to fulfill it does not lessen equality or value. Yet, at the same time functionally the woman practices the submissive role in order to fulfill the great purpose that God intends through marriage and His church.



The Triune God is equal in essence, yet functionally different depending upon the being.

Further evidence for the Son’s submission can be found in Philippians chapter 2 where Paul explains that “who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by

with the Father (in function) something to be grasped. He lived His role in complete submission to the Father.

The same submission can also be found in the Holy Spirit. The first example that can be found of the



Spiritual Gifts

The Text

I Corinthians 12:4-6, 11-24: Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills. 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. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.

For the body does not consist of one member but of many. 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. 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. 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? But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts,^[e] yet one body.

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.” On the contrary, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and on those parts of the body that we think less honorable we bestow the greater honor, and our unpresentable parts are treated with greater modesty, which our more presentable parts do not require. But God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it, that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another.



What The Text Is Saying

This text teaches us that the Holy Spirit gives different spiritual gifts to different people for the common good. The end goal of the body of Christ is to simply be Christ on this earth to people. Because the church is a body of believers that need to engage a variety of people in a variety of ways there are a variety of gifts. Within each of these gifts there are also levels of giftedness (see verse 11) therefore one individual may have more of a gift of teaching than another individual based upon the desire of the Spirit. The reason for these varieties and levels of giftedness is based upon that individual's role within the grand body of Christ. The Lord knows what an individual needs based upon the role that they are living out that God has designed for them.

Our Tendency

As people we desire significance. The nature of spiritual gifts and levels of giftedness is that there are some gifts that are far more visible. Because of the visibility of certain gifts people who have those gifts tend to be elevated in perceived significance. This is why Paul continues in the second half of the text reminding people that all of the spiritual gifts are needed or else something very important is lacking in the body. The writer reminds his readers not to overlook the perceived lesser gifts, but instead to realize that they are “indispensable.” There should be no division because of gifts or roles within the church, but each person should serve and care for one another.

Women and Giftedness

An individual at this point must remember that the giftedness is for the body as a whole, not the individual. The body of Christ is designed to function in a specific way with men being the responsible ones that God designed them to be. For a man to not accept that responsibility over his family and his church is to not function the way that God intended and it hurts the body. For a woman to desire to use her gifts to teach men (which is contrary to the role that God gave her) is also to go against the way that God intended and also hurts the body. The woman can use her gifts to teach other women and children and the Lord will bless her efforts. All giftedness can be misused; we need to ask “does it bring glory to God and build up the body or does it glorify the individual?”

What all this means....

With all views examined, this section is to explain why we at SRBC are Complimentarian in our view of women in leadership. As was explained earlier, the original intent before the fall was for man to accept leadership of the couple. This has been evidenced through several things: the explanation of the need for a woman, the naming of Eve, and the responsibility in the fall. Since the first two have already been covered earlier (see page 2), we will focus our attention on the responsibility in the fall. It would be very hard for a person to prove that Eve did not eat of the fruit first. In fact, I have never heard that disputed in Christian circles.

However, when the time for punishment and responsibility happens it is the man that God blames for the fall.¹⁹ Man's responsibility is later re-affirmed in the book of Romans as well.²⁰ Why? It was Eve that ate first and told Adam to eat the fruit. I would submit that the reason why the man was held responsible is because he held the God given position of leadership over his family. Therefore, when the family messes up...the man as the head of the household is responsible. It is not possible to say that this is a cultural thing that existed in the beginning only because Paul re-affirms the roles in the books of Timothy, Ephesians, and Corinthians. Therefore, there are thousands of years in which the role was never changed, the man is the one who is responsible and because of this he is the one who has the authority in teaching and leading.

It is during this time that it is important to make the distinction of what leadership and authority are in reality. In any position of leadership, it is the one who is leading that is responsible. Take the military for example (both today and in the Biblical history) the person who is in leadership is the one who receives punishment for an operation gone bad. The people below the leader were simply following orders. Should they disobey orders the leader is no longer responsible and they lose that umbrella of protection, now they rise and fall on their own actions. This responsibility is the reason why the position of leadership is not to be taken lightly. In fact, the Bible reminds us that when a person decides to teach, they are taking on this spiritual leadership. It is why James warns, "Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness."²¹ It is the same reason why Paul warns not to be quick to lay hands on a person.²² The responsibility falls on the man to be the leader because it is the role that God has designed for him. It could even be argued that the whole reason for the fall is because Adam was not a good leader of his wife which is what led to the fall. The Bible shows us that Adam was standing right with Eve as she spoke to the serpent and yet he did nothing!

What needs to be clearly stated is that this does not mean that women cannot teach or lead. As explained in the previous section the Lord does gift to each person gifts and abilities to be used in correct context for the glory of God and the edifying of the body of Christ. A woman can teach other women, in fact, the scripture says that the older women are to teach the younger women. There are also women with the gift of leadership who should lead other women in doing what the scripture commands. These ladies can organize and lead great events for women. By following the scriptures these ladies will be blessed in the using of their gifts for the glory of God.

To the Ladies....Should you be a woman reading through this packet, you may need to ask yourself, "Why is it so important for me to be able to teach and lead men? Do I find my significance in the teaching?" It is so important for you to understand that role has nothing to do with value. All parts of the body are significant and needed. Your role as a help-mate is so extremely important, I truly believe that there will be two ladies sitting next to Jesus in eternity because of their faithfulness to their role and that God will exalt them at the proper time.

To the Men...Should you be a man reading through this packet, you may need to ask yourself, "Am I fulfilling the role that God has called me to? Am I shirking my responsibility because I don't really want that kind of accountability?" It is important for you to realize that the state of many churches today is because men are not living out what God has called them to be which is the spiritual leader in the home and in the church. We must make sure to get this right for the sake of the Kingdom and the gospel. Perhaps you are reading this and you view women as less than yourself, this too is a grand mistake. As the text from I Corinthians remind us, the weaker appearing vessels actually are the ones who receive more honor. In Christ, all people have equal value. God has gifted women for a reason and a significant purpose as well and they must be praised, heeded, and loved.

But God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it, that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another.

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