

STATEMENT ON MEN AND WOMEN

CREATION

We believe that men and women were created

- By God¹ and
- In his image²

EQUALITY

We believe that men and women are equal

- In dignity and worth before God,³ as well as one another⁴
- In rebellion and guilt⁵ before God
- In grace and mercy⁶ from God
- In status and inheritance with Christ⁷

GIFTS

We believe that men and women in Christ are endowed by God with a range of gifts through his Spirit.⁸ These gifts are to be used in service⁹ as priests¹⁰ for ministry in and through the church.

ORDER

We believe that men and women flourish in ministry together according to God's established order as expressed in Scripture. This order was determined at creation,¹¹ and has particular application to marriage¹² and church leadership.¹³ In these contexts, God assigned corresponding roles to men and women¹⁴ that enrich their partnership in ministry¹⁵ and the gospel.¹⁶

MARRIAGE

See related document.

LEADERSHIP

Scripture reveals that all church leadership positions are open to men and women except for the office of elder.

¹ Gen. 1:27 c.f. 5:2.

² Gen. 1:26-27; 5:1; 9:6; Jas. 3:9.

³ Gen. 1:26-27.

⁴ Gen. 1:26-29; Eph. 5:21; Phil. 2:3.

⁵ Gen. 3:6-7; Rom. 3:10-12, 23 c.f. Deut. 17:2-7.

⁶ Rom. 3:24-25a; Eph. 4:7; 1 Pet. 2:10; Heb. 4:13, 16.

⁷ Rom. 8:16-17a; Gal. 3:28; Titus 3:4-7; 1 Pet. 3:7; Rev. 5:9-10.

⁸ 1 Cor. 12:4-7.

⁹ 1 Cor. 12:7, 20-26; 1 Pet. 4:10.

¹⁰ 1 Pet. 2:9; Rev. 1:6.

¹¹ Gen. 2:18, 21-24; 1 Cor. 11:7-9; 1 Tim. 2:13.

¹² 1 Pet. 3:1-9.

¹³ 1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9.

¹⁴ Gen. 2:16-18, 21-24; 1 Cor. 11:7-9; 1 Tim. 2:12-14.

¹⁵ Titus 2:3-5.

¹⁶ 1 Tim. 2:1-3:15; 1 Pet. 2:12-3:8.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR ELDERSHIP

An elder is an overseer who is qualified to serve according to the requirements contained in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. A male who meets these qualifications but is not officially serving in that office, may be entrusted to perform certain tasks (e.g. preach on Sunday morning).

TEACHING

Scripture reveals that one of the gifts with which men and women in Christ are endowed is teaching, as exemplified by the following verses:

- “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching (didaskontes) and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.” (Colossians 3:16)
- “When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson (didachēn), a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up.” (1 Corinthians 14:26)
- “...Priscilla and Aquila heard (Paul)..., took him aside and explained (exethento) to him the way of God more accurately.” (Acts 18:26)
- “For though by this time you ought to be teachers (didaskaloi), you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God.” (Hebrews 5:12)

Grace especially encourages older women to “teach what is good (kalodidaskalous), and so train the young women,” according to the ways listed in Titus 2:3-5.

Scripture further reveals that there is a type of teaching exclusively reserved for elder qualified men. This type of teaching is the authoritative and directive teaching of the apostolic deposit to men and women (cf. 1 Timothy 2:11-13; 2 Timothy 4:2, 1 Timothy 3:2; Hebrews 13:17).

- The term “authoritative” is understood to mean the expositing of Scripture by one who is “able to teach,” (1 Timothy 3:2) namely, an elder or elder qualified male.
- The term “directive” is understood to mean, possessing the tone or posture of one who has the right to obligate those to whom the message is proclaimed (e.g., “command and teach these things” 1 Timothy 4:11-16 c.f. 2 Timothy 4:2) and, as such, would incur judgment on the hearers if not obeyed, as well as the teacher if not correct.

While the application of this position may result in certain tensions and ambiguities, one is always encouraged to contact a member of the elder board. If further clarification is required, the elder is encouraged to consult with another member of the board.

Pursuing and embracing the Scripture in these aforementioned ways will lead to the further flourishing of men and women together in ministry.

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