

# The Role of Women in Leadership at Grace Community Church

*Approved by Elders: October 2019*

Since Grace Community Church began in 1987, our highest aim has been that we might demonstrate the reality of Christ through our unity together. For over 30 years, our focus has been to make disciples who live out the gospel crossing racial and economic lines. Our mission as a church is to build the Kingdom of God by calling a diverse and unified community of believers to authentic love relationships with God and each other, and by proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus and reflecting His character through relationships with the poor and the lost everywhere.

Over the years of our church existence, our Covenantors have shared a wide variety of opinions about how gender should affect our approach to living out our mission and focus through our ministries. More recently, the Elder Board was directly approached and asked to prayerfully consider women's roles in leadership at Grace. This paper was created in an effort to outline scriptural references to this issue and to explain how our interpretations guide our practices at Grace Community Church in particular.

We believe that Bible-believing, God-honoring, Christ-followers can come to different conclusions on the issue of women in leadership. We have sought to carefully listen and research all sides of this issue, to dutifully explore Scripture, and to prayerfully consider where we believe Grace Community Church stands in reference to this topic and how we live that out practically.

Before we formally address the issue, it is important to outline key assumptions that inform our conclusions.

1. **The Bible is our final authority** for all matters of faith and practice including these issues. We do not take our cue from the world around us or our own experience. As Christ-followers we seek to build our theology upon the Scriptures.
2. **We believe this is an important but non-essential issue to our saving faith.** We can have unified relationships as brothers and sisters in Christ without holding the same view on this issue.
3. **We acknowledge that among believers there are a variety of opinions on the role of women in the church.** Although it can be difficult to draw clear lines

between the two main camps of belief on this topic, typically a person will hold one of two positions. These definitions are simplified to provide clarity and a basic framework as we move forward in this paper.

- a. A **complementarian** approach believes that while men and women are created equal before God in their being and personhood, they are created to complement each other through different responsibilities in the church and family.
- b. An **egalitarian** approach believes that not only are men and women equal before God in their being and personhood, but that God has given no different responsibilities to men and women in the church and family.”

*These definitions are drawn from a variety of works, listed in the bibliography following this paper.*

People in both camps love Jesus Christ, consider the Bible to be the inspired Word of God, and use their lives and ministries to further the Kingdom of God. God has used and blessed churches with differing views on this subject. Part of the reason for the differing views is that some of the most difficult passages in the Bible deal with this issue. It is not unusual to pick up three different commentaries by three different evangelical scholars and discover that each gives a different interpretation of the same passage! We hold our views with humility. We believe we can hold different views and still maintain unity through Christ and serve alongside each other in love.

4. **We have made an effort to consider the broad spectrum of what the Bible says** in this area. We considered the passages that relate to this issue and did hermeneutical work before we applied the Scriptures (hermeneutics is the science of interpreting Scripture). We were careful and considerate as we analyzed passages relating to this issue.
5. **For the purpose of this paper, we are not speaking to the role of women in leadership in society.** This document focuses on the role of women in leadership in the church. The role of women in the family is also mentioned where it has implications for the church.

## OUR POSITION

At Grace Community Church, we place a high value on women. We believe that women and men are equal before God in their personhood and being. We have women on our ministry staff and women serving as volunteers in key ministry leadership roles across the church. We place a high value on the voices of our female Covenantors. We believe that women have freedom to learn and use their gifts in the church. We believe that Scripture teaches that God has given the responsibility of elder in the local church to men. We believe the role of elder is a servant-leadership position.

## OUTLINE OF PAPER

In this paper, we outline what Scripture says on women in leadership. We encourage you to have a Bible readily available as you read, and to read with an open and humble heart. The paper follows this general sequence, followed by a brief conclusion of how all of this informs our practice at Grace Community Church:

What Does the Bible Say?

- I. The Old Testament and Women
- II. The New Testament and Women
- III. Equal Worth and Different Roles
- IV. Elder Responsibility

At the end of the paper we have also included a comprehensive bibliography of works we have studied over this past year for those who would like to learn and study more on this topic.

## WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

### **I. The Old Testament and Women**

The creation account in Genesis establishes created order that is referenced throughout the Bible. Examples of women in the Old Testament show that women were created and treated with worth and dignity, and that men and women were given different roles in the community of God's people.

**A. Created Order.** The Book of Genesis establishes the creation of man and woman. God made Adam first, then Eve.

1. **In Genesis 1** God created humanity in *two distinct genders*, with emphasis on the *equality* of man and woman. *Both* man and woman are made in the image of God. *Both* are blessed by God and commanded to

subdue the earth. They are *equal* in their relation to God and in their responsibility to care for God's creation.

2. **Genesis 2** explains more about the relationship between Adam and Eve and emphasizes their two *distinctive roles* and also establishes Adam's male headship, or leadership. Man was created first and then God said it was not good for man to be alone. He would provide a helper suitable for man. Helper does not mean servant. It is a term of great honor often used to describe God as a helper of His people. Genesis 2 says God created woman out of man, therefore man is the source from whom woman is created. In the New Testament this is interpreted as pointing to the role of headship, saying headship belongs to men in church and family. This is explored more in the New Testament sections ahead.
3. **In Genesis 2:16** God gave instructions to Adam regarding the forbidden tree. There is no indication He later gave those instructions to Eve, yet He clearly expected her to obey them. This seems to indicate God giving Adam a responsibility for Eve in their knowing and obeying His will.

#### **B. Men and Women are Equal in Worth and Dignity**

1. God made His covenant with women as well as men. (Deut. 29:2,9-15)
2. Women ministered at the door of the Tabernacle. (Ex 38:8, 1 Sam 2:22)
3. Women offered their own sacrifices. (1 Samuel 1:24-28, Lev 12:6-8)
4. God spoke directly to women. (Genesis 3:16, Genesis 21:17-19, Genesis 25:21-23, Judges 13:2-5, 2 Chronicles 34:22-33, Jeremiah 9:17-24)
5. Women like Miriam and Deborah were prophetesses and judges. (Exodus 15:20-21, Numbers 12:1-2, 2 Chronicles 34:22-33, Judges 4-5)
6. Honor is commanded for both father and mother. (Exodus 20:12)
  7. In Proverbs, a mother's instruction is just as important as a father's. (Proverbs 1:7-9, Proverbs 6:20, Proverbs 31:26)

#### **C. Men and Women Were Given Different Roles by God**

1. God gives the command to not eat fruit from the tree of life to Adam. God also then holds Adam accountable for the sin of breaking that command, even though Eve was the one who first ate the fruit. (Genesis 2:16, 3:8-11)
2. A woman could not be a priest, while most other religions of that time had priestesses. God put men in charge of the Temple and the Tabernacle. (Numbers 18:1-7 and 1 Chronicles 9:17-34)

## II. The New Testament and Women

In Genesis 3, sin entered the world. Sin breaks everything. From that point in time to the present, Satan has targeted the sons and daughters of Eve. One of his plans is to create enmity between man and woman and to create problems in their relationship with each other. We see violence and crime against women all over this world, and we see desperate brokenness in many relationships between men and women. New Testament Scripture describes Jesus' revolutionary treatment of women and their important roles in the establishment of the church.

### A. Jesus and Women

First century Jewish culture was patriarchal. Women were vulnerable and often disrespected. Jesus' treatment of women was revolutionary in this historical context. He treated women with worth, respect, dignity and compassion.

1. He shocked his disciples and the woman herself when he carried on a lengthy conversation with the Samaritan woman. (John 4)
2. He taught women important spiritual truths. (Luke 10:38-42)
3. Jesus challenged the rabbinical view that women were a source of sexual temptation and incapable of learning. (Luke 10:38-42)
4. He challenged the stereotype that said a woman belonged in the home and with children, not the classroom. (Luke 10:38-42)
5. He called attention to the great faith of several women. (Mark 5:30-34, Mark 7:24-30, Luke 21:1-4, Matthew 26:6-13)
6. He addressed one woman as a "daughter of Abraham", a title of great honor. (Luke 13:16)
7. In His teaching, Jesus often used illustrations that involved both men and women. (Luke 15:8-10, Luke 18:1-8, Matthew 25:1-13)
8. Jesus refused to see women as unclean, and He healed a woman who had blood flow for 12 years and also stopped to raise a widow's dead son. (Luke 7:11-17, Luke 8:40-4).
9. Jesus recognized the dignity of women, especially in situations where they would have deserved punishment per the cultural expectations of the time. (Luke 7:36-50, John 8:1-11)
10. At a time when women were rarely allowed to even appear in public, Jesus had female disciples who followed Him and supported Him from their own means. (Matthew 12:46-50, Luke 8:1-3, Mark 15:41)
11. It was primarily women who were present at His crucifixion and burial. (Luke 23:26-31, 55-56, John 19:25-27, Matthew 27:55-56, Mark

15:40-41)

12. It was a woman, Mary, who was the first witness to the resurrection. At that time, women were not considered reliable witnesses in court, but Jesus instructed Mary to tell His disciples that He was alive. (Mark 16:11, John 20:11-18, Luke 24:1-12)

## **B. Women in New Testament Churches**

We see the same revolutionary pattern in the treatment of women in the New Testament churches.

1. Women played a huge part in the spread of the gospel. Women were among the first disciples in the upper room. (Acts 1:12-17)
2. The Holy Spirit fell on women at Pentecost and they spoke in tongues, just as the men did. (Acts 2:1-4, 14-21)
3. The first convert to Christianity in Europe was a businesswoman named Lydia. She was one of the founders of the church at Philippi. (Acts 16)
4. In Acts 18 we read of a couple named Priscilla and Aquila, who taught the great orator Apollos. They are mentioned many times in the New Testament, and in most instances Priscilla's name comes first. This is most unusual. It is likely that Priscilla was a more prominent teacher than her husband. (Romans 16:3, 1 Cor 16:19, 2 Timothy 4:19)
5. In Acts 21: 8-9 we read of Philip the evangelist who lived in Caesarea with his four prophesying daughters. They spoke forth the Word of God with authority.
6. In Romans 16 we find Paul greeting several people in the church at Rome, many of whom were women who had labored with him in spreading the gospel. He mentions Phoebe and calls her a "servant." The word could be translated "deacon" or "minister." It refers to a formal position of leadership which Phoebe held in the church at Cenchrea. Paul also calls her a "helper of many." That word "helper" is used in the New Testament to describe the work of church leaders as managers of God's household. Whatever this woman was doing, it clearly involved ministry. (Romans 16:1)
7. It is clear that women served in a variety of leadership roles in the early church. This is consistent with the Bible's teaching on spiritual gifts. There are three passages in the New Testament that refer to the spiritual gifts of believers, gifts like teaching, prophecy, evangelism, exhortation, helps, mercy, giving, administration, leadership, and many others. There is not even a hint of gender distinction in any of these passages. Women

can be given any of these spiritual gifts as the Holy Spirit wills, and they are commanded to use them. A woman with the gift of pastor-teacher must shepherd and teach the Scripture. Nowhere is she told to do so only with other women or young children. (Romans 12:1-8, 1 Corinthians 12:4-11, Ephesians 4:11-16)

### **C. Men and Women Were Given Different Roles by Jesus in His Ministry**

1. As radical as Jesus was, He did not choose a woman as one of His twelve apostles. Some say this was due to the culture of His day, but Jesus never catered to people's cultural sensitivities. It seems to be another indication of the biblical pattern of male headship, within which women are free to serve and minister as equals. (Mark 3:13-19, Matthew 10:1-4, Luke 6:12-16, Acts 1:13, 15-26)
2. Jesus sent these 12 men out to do ministry. (Mark 6:6-12, Luke 9:1-6)
3. Jesus' apostles go out and establish the church to lead the churches at large. (Acts 2:42-47, Acts 8:1-7, Acts 8:40, Acts 10, Acts 11:19-26)

## **III. Equal Worth and Different Roles**

Several New Testament passages demonstrate women's significance in God's kingdom. This has implications for the church, as outlined in the following sections.

### **A. Galatians 3:28**

*There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. Galatians 3:28 (NIV, 2011)*

This verse establishes men and women as equal in salvation. It is often used as a basis for the view that there are no differences in roles in the church, but it is actually in the context of being justified by faith, being one in Christ Jesus and heirs according to the promise of salvation. Men and women are equal in Christ: equally justified by faith (Gal 3:24), equally free from the bondage of legalism (Gal 3:25), equally children of God (Gal 3:26), equally clothed with Christ (Gal 3:27), equally belong to Christ (Gal 3:29), and equally heirs of the promise of Abraham (Gal 3:29).

We believe this passage in Galatians gives us the clearest basis for having no divisions between brothers and sisters in the faith, no second-class children in the kingdom. We don't see any indication it was meant to do away with different roles for men and women in the church or the family.

## B. 1 Peter 3:1-7

*Wives, in the same way submit yourselves to your own husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives, 2 when they see the purity and reverence of your lives. 3 Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as elaborate hairstyles and the wearing of gold jewelry or fine clothes. 4 Rather, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight. 5 For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to adorn themselves. They submitted themselves to their own husbands, 6 like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her lord. You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear. 7 Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers. (1 Peter 3: 1-7, NIV 2011)*

These verses show that men and women can have equality, as well as different and complementary roles.

## C. Ephesians 5:21-33

*21 Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. 22 Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. 24 Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. 25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her 26 to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, 27 and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. 28 In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. 29 After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church— 30 for we are members of his body. 31 "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." 32 This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church. 33 However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband. (Ephesians 5:21-33, NIV 2011)*

This passage describes male headship responsibility as a life of servant leadership. Headship does not mean sole decision-making responsibility or wielding unlimited power. It means self-sacrifice, not self-assertion. It means love, not pride. It results in the affirmation and liberation of women, not their tearing down or enslavement.



#### D. Colossians 3:18-19

*18 Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.*

*19 Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them. (Colossians 3:18-19, NIV2011)*

This is another passage describing equal but complementary roles.

#### E. 1 Corinthians 11:2-16

*2 I praise you for remembering me in everything and for holding to the traditions just as I passed them on to you. 3 But I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God. 4 Every man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonors his head. 5 But every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head—it is the same as having her head shaved. 6 For if a woman does not cover her head, she might as well have her hair cut off; but if it is a disgrace for a woman to have her hair cut off or her head shaved, then she should cover her head. 7 A man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man. 8 For man did not come from woman, but woman from man; 9 neither was man created for woman, but woman for man. 10 It is for this reason that a woman ought to have authority over her own head, because of the angels. 11 Nevertheless, in the Lord woman is not independent of man, nor is man independent of woman. 12 For as woman came from man, so also man is born of woman. But everything comes from God. 13 Judge for yourselves: Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered? 14 Does not the very nature of things teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a disgrace to him, 15 but that if a woman has long hair, it is her glory? For long hair is given to her as a covering. 16 If anyone wants to be contentious about this, we have no other practice—nor do the churches of God. (1 Corinthians 11:2-16 NIV, 2011)*

This is a most difficult passage but one that still can shed light. First, this passage does affirm the ministry and equality of women. Paul points out women both prophesying and praying out loud in church, which are both important functions. Secondly, this passage affirms that women and men are inter-dependent by God's design (vs. 11-12). Lastly, this passage also shows the responsibility of male authority. Paul references creation (vs. 8-9) to establish male headship. He then references head coverings. Thomas Schreiner writes: "In the first century, failure to wear a head covering sent a signal to the congregation that a woman was rejecting the authority of male leadership. Paul was concerned about head coverings only because of the

message they sent to people in that culture.” (Head Coverings, Prophecies and the Trinity. Thomas R. Schreiner. p. 129) “Thus, Paul does not forbid women to participate in public worship, yet he does insist that in their participation they should evidence a demeanor that is humble and submissive to male leadership.” (Head Coverings, Prophecies and the Trinity. Thomas R. Schreiner. p. 124)

#### F. **1 Timothy 2:11-12**

*A woman should learn in quietness and full submission. I do not permit a woman to teach or to assume authority over a man; she must be quiet. (1 Timothy 2:11-12, NIV 2011)*

First, a woman is given the right and privilege of learning or receiving instruction. That is not an issue to us, but in the first century that was unheard of. This passage affirms the fundamental right of women to be educated and to participate in worship. Second, women are also prohibited from doing certain things. They are told to be quiet and submissive. What does that mean? This passage is similar to the one in 1 Corinthians 14, where women are told to remain silent in the church. Here is where we use Scripture to interpret Scripture. We know Paul is not saying that women can never speak in church, because he wrote in 1 Corinthians 11 that women were free to pray and prophesy. Most scholars agree that Paul is prohibiting them from speaking in an inappropriate manner. Notice also that Paul tells the Corinthians that a woman is not allowed to “teach or assume authority.” These words, which are to be taken together, describe the role of an elder. This is not saying that a woman can never teach. We know from other Scriptures that women did teach in both the home and the church.

#### G. **Romans 5 & Genesis 3**

*Therefore, just as **sin entered the world through one man**, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned. (Romans 5:12)*

This is a significant passage regarding God’s view of men in leadership. Paul seems to have Genesis 3 in mind and holds Adam solely responsible for sin entering the world.

*Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man, “Where are you?”*

*He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid."*

*And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?" (Genesis 3:8-11)*

Reading Genesis 3 would not lead one to naturally conclude that sin entered the world through one man. Surely one could say through one woman and one man, or perhaps through one woman, first, then through one man. Instead, God clearly holds Adam responsible. Adam was given the prohibition and his fault here seems to be his passively allowing the serpent to mislead his wife and then to participate in eating the forbidden fruit. We take from this that man has a unique role and responsibility to protect woman and to answer for what happens in his family and in the church.

#### **IV. Elder Responsibility**

##### **1 Timothy 3:1-7**

*Here is a trustworthy saying: Whoever aspires to be an overseer desires a noble task. 2 Now the overseer is to be above reproach, faithful to his wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, 3 not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. 4 He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him, and he must do so in a manner worthy of full respect. 5 (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) 6 He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. 7 He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap. (1 Timothy 3: 1-7, NIV 2011)*

##### **Titus 1: 5-9**

*5 The reason I left you in Crete was that you might put in order what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you. 6 An elder must be blameless, faithful to his wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient. 7 Since an overseer manages God's household, he must be blameless—not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. 8 Rather, he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined. 9 He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it. (Titus 1: 5-9, NIV 2011).*

The New Testament gives no examples of a woman serving in the official capacity of an elder. In 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1, where the qualifications for an elder are set out, it is taught that these elders will be men. Women serve as deacons, and deacons lead in their own right, but not in an overall governing or headship sense like elders.

- A. **Original language.** Without getting too involved in the original languages for the word “elder”, here are a few key words to note. (Grace Fellowship Position Paper: The Biblical Role of Elders <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/b645/6712dc509b964c9989e4cf67fdbc040c843f.pdf>)

a. **Zaqen**

In the Old Testament a number of words were used for elder. The most frequently used is Zaqen. Israel had elders, along with Egypt and Moab. In ancient Israel they were a group of men who gathered in each village to form a council. They were usually heads of families likely selected based on age, wisdom, ability and respect and were instructed to keep the first Passover. Later, 70 were chosen to help Moses judge the people in the wilderness and were given part of the Spirit that rested on Moses. They served as judges in disputes, dispensed justice as they sat at the gates of a city. They served as military leaders and were later involved in the selection of a king. Even in the post-exilic period they gave orders to gather the people to deal with foreign marriages.

b. **Presbuteros and Episcopoi**

In the New Testament there are two words used for elder: presbuteros and episcopoi. Presbuteros has Jewish roots and means aged or gray-haired, and refers to mature age. The word was used to refer to three groups in the New Testament including older people, the religious-political leaders of the Jews, and the early leaders of the church. Episcopoi is often translated as overseer or bishop and means one responsible for, one who cares for, guardian, or keeper. The Romans often used this word to describe a superintendent or leader of a colony. In the New Testament, the word is used to refer to leaders in the church. These two words are used interchangeably to refer to the same office in the New Testament.

c. **Poimen**

Poimen literally means “shepherd.” This is the word most often used of Jesus as shepherd of his flock (John 10:11; Hebrews 13:20; 1 Peter 5:4).

When we think of the local church it is the word we often associate with “pastor.” Surprisingly, it is used in its noun form only once in the New Testament to refer to a leader in the church:

*So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, **the pastors** and teachers. (Ephesians 4:11, NIV 2011)*

Paul uses the term *poimen* in this verse tying pastor and teacher together making it clear that one of the main functions of a pastor is to teach (feed) the flock under his care.

Many people today assume pastor-teachers are synonymous with elders. The main reason for this is that elders are indeed commanded to shepherd the flock under their care (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:2). It is clear that one of the functions of an elder is to shepherd, it is not clear that is what Paul is referring to in Eph. 4:11. It is probably a mistake to equate the gift of pastor-teacher with the office of elder. Although the verb *poimaino* (“to shepherd”) is used in relation to elders, the noun *poimen* (“pastor”) is never used to describe them. In other words, elders are never specifically called “pastors”.

Additionally, Paul in Ephesians 4 is talking about spiritual gifts, which are given by the Spirit to individual believers for the building up of the body of Christ. These are equipping gifts and should never be equated with offices within the church. The qualifications for the office of elder, which are listed in 1 Timothy and Titus, are almost exclusively character-based rather than based on spiritual gifts. The only possible exception is that elders are “able to teach.” But being able to teach doesn’t necessarily imply the gift of teaching. There can be many pastor-teachers in a local congregation who will never serve as elders or on church staff. It is also worth noting that the office of elder is reserved only for men, but spiritual gifts are never exclusive to any one gender. Women can have the gift of pastor-teacher as well as men.

## **WHAT IS THE CONCLUSION FOR GRACE COMMUNITY CHURCH?**

**We hold to the following positions on this subject:**

1. We encourage women to minister in our church according to their gifts and calling. We have women serving in a variety of ministries at Grace Community Church, including Sunday morning worship.
2. Women can hold pastoral staff positions that carry the same weight as men on our staff in terms of working with our team and voicing their opinions and views. They are encouraged to teach and lead both men and women in their ministries as an expression of their spiritual gifts and their God-given calling. Women and men on our pastoral staff are ministering under the direction of the elders.
3. We believe that God has given the responsibility of governing authority in the church to men who are qualified to be elders. These men are called to submit to the Scripture and the leading of the Holy Spirit. God has given these men the responsibility to be servant- leaders as they give direction to the entire church. Elders should recognize the unique perspective and insights of women and seek them out in fulfilling this role.
4. At Grace Community Church, we view the pulpit as an expression of the elders' teaching authority. Since we believe the role of elder is the responsibility of men, the Teaching Elder position is a male staff person. In conjunction with the Elder Board, this person is responsible for maintaining sound doctrine and overseeing the teaching assignments for the pulpit. In this framework, women can preach and teach from the pulpit under the authority of the Elder Board.

Our hope is that this paper provides a clear view of our understanding of women in leadership and how Scripture informs our practices at Grace Community Church. We place a high value on women and believe that their voice, presence, and leadership in our church is essential. We believe God gave men the responsibility to lead and govern the church through the office of elder. This responsibility was not given to men for any inherent goodness on their part, but as a servant leadership role uniquely designed by God for them to fulfill. This is a responsibility, not a privilege. It is an opportunity to serve, not to dominate others. Complementary roles in the church are given not to limit women but to bless and protect them. Whether man or woman, the issue is not seeking your significance in a role, but rather in relationships that are defined by love, humility, and unity. We pray this is what would mark the church today.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

### **Complementarian Approach:**

Akin, Danny; De Young, Kevin, and Williamson, Darryl. What's (Not) Essential to Complementarianism. *The Gospel Coalition*, 2019.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uU6MYVMqLhc>

Allberry, Sam, Butterfield, Rosaria and Hill Perry, Jackie. "How do we depict the beauty of complementarity to someone who only envisions its ugliness?". Gospel Coalition Roundtable Video. <https://youtu.be/15IS87Ad3HE>

Anyabwile, Thabiti. "I'm a Complementarian, but Women Must be Taught and They Must Teach. The Gospel Coalition. January 6th,

2011. "<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/thabiti-anyabwile/im-a-complementarian-but-women-must-be-taught-and-they-must-teach/>

Challies, Tim. *Why I am not Egalitarian*. June 30, 2016. [www.challies.com/articles/why-i-am-not-egalitarian/](http://www.challies.com/articles/why-i-am-not-egalitarian/)

The Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood [www.cbmw.org](http://www.cbmw.org) See: The Danvers Statement and Nashville Statement.

DeYoung, Kevin. "The Beauty of Biblically Broad Complementarianism." *The Gospel Coalition*. 2019. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SUbn4h7yYm8>

Gibbs, Tom. The Role of Women in Ministry at Redeemer Presbyterian Church. August 10, 2009.

[https://manvrouwkerk.files.wordpress.com/2015/08/redeemer\\_presbyterian\\_church.pdf](https://manvrouwkerk.files.wordpress.com/2015/08/redeemer_presbyterian_church.pdf)

Grace Fellowship Position Paper: The Biblical Role of Elders

<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/b645/6712dc509b964c9989e4cf67fdbco40c843f.pdf>

Grudem, Wayne. "Does Kephale (Head) Mean "Source" or "Authority Over" in Greek Literature? A Survey of 2,336 Examples." *Trinity Journal* ns 6.1 Spring 1985, p. 38-59.

<http://www.waynegrudem.com/does-kephale-head-mean-source-or-authority-over-in-greek-literature-a-survey-of-2336-examples/>

Grudem, Wayne & Piper, John. "An Overview of Central Concerns: Questions and Answers." *Recovering Biblical Manhood & Womanhood Chapter 2*. Edited by John Piper and Wayne Grudem. 1991, 2012.

Harris, Steven. The Egalitarian Impulse of the Black Church. *gMarks*. March 12, 2015. <https://www.gmarks.org/article/the-egalitarian-impulse-in-the-black-church/>

Miller, Don. Healthy Church Sermon Series on 1 Timothy. "It's a Whole Lot Better than It Sounds." 2019. <https://www.westoverchurch.com/media/series/i-timothy-healthy-church/its-a-whole-lot-better-than-it-sounds/?media=audio>

Moo, Douglas. "What Does It Mean Not To Teach Or Have Authority Over Men? *Recovering Biblical Manhood & Womanhood Chapter 9*. Edited by John Piper and Wayne Grudem. 1991, 2012.

Schreiner, Thomas R. "Head Coverings, Prophecies, and the Trinity. 1 Corinthians 11:2-16." *Recovering Biblical Manhood & Womanhood Chapter 5*. Edited by John Piper and Wayne Grudem. 1991, 2012.

Newbell, Trilla. *Complementarians in the Black Experience*. April 27, 2016. <https://thefrontporch.org/2016/04/complementarians-in-the-black-experience/>

The Village Church. *The Role of Women at The Village Church*. 2017 <https://thevillagechurch.net/Content/ExternalSite/Documents/Beliefs/Institute%20-%202017%20-%20The%20Role%20of%20Women%20at%20The%20Village%20Church%20-%20Condensed%20Version.pdf>

Wilkin, Jen. Counsel for a Complementarian Pastor. March 2, 2015. <https://www.gmarks.org/article/pastoring-women-in-complementarian-contexts/>

Wright, NT. NT Wright Explains 1 Timothy 2: 11-15. August 3, 2016. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sEruMrLiizs>



## Egalitarian Approach:

Boyd, Greg. "The Case for Women in Ministry." *ReKnew*. December 29, 2007. <https://reknew.org/2007/12/women-in-ministry/>

Christians for Biblical Equality. <https://www.cbeinternational.org/>

Gundry, Stanley. "From Bobbed Hair, Bossy Wives, and Women Preachers to Woman Be Free: My Story." Chapter 7 from *How I Changed my Mind about Women in Leadership*. Zondervan, 2010.

Hamilton, David. "The Question of Headship." Chapter 12 of *Why Not Women* by Loren Cunningham and David Hamilton. 2000.

Hubner, James. "Revisiting the Clarity of Scripture in 1 Timothy 2:12." *Priscilla Papers*, Vol 30, No 3, Summer 2016. [https://www.academia.edu/24894019/Revisiting\\_the\\_Clarity\\_of\\_Scripture\\_in\\_1\\_Timothy\\_2\\_12](https://www.academia.edu/24894019/Revisiting_the_Clarity_of_Scripture_in_1_Timothy_2_12)

The Junia Project. <https://juniaproject.com/>

Taylor-Agnew, Christine. "Women in 1 Timothy 2:9-14 A Comparison of Complementarian and Egalitarian Views through Evangelical and Missional Hermeneutics." Carey Baptist College, NZ. 2016. <http://www.lifelonglearning.nz/images/Hot-Topics/Women/Christine-Taylor-Agnew-essay-Women-in-1-Timothy-2-9-14.pdf>

The Wesleyan Church's Position on Women in Ministry. <https://www.wesleyan.org/a-wesleyan-view-of-women-in-ministry>

"Women and Men Leading Together Part 1: Our Stories" The Gravity Leadership Podcast, Episode 25. <https://gravityleadership.com/podcast/025-women-men-1-stories/>

"Women and Men Leading Together Part 2: Scripture." The Gravity Leadership Podcast, Episode 26. <https://gravityleadership.com/podcast/026-women-men-2-scripture/>

"Women on the Elder Board at Blackhawk Church: A recommendation." Blackhawk Church, May 2018. <http://www.blackhawkchurch.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/A-Recommendation-for-Women-on-the-Elder-Board.pdf>