

**11. Describe the biblical understanding of manhood and womanhood from both an egalitarian and complementarian perspective. Explain which view you embrace and outline why you believe it to be the most biblical.**

**I. Breakdown the Question**

- A. Define and explain the egalitarian view of manhood and womanhood.
- B. Define and explain the complementarian view of manhood and womanhood.
- C. Explain which view you hold to and outline why you believe it to be the most biblical.

1. *Counseling Implications for Gender*

**II. Define and explain the egalitarian view of manhood and womanhood.**

A. The egalitarian view of gender holds that all people are equal in all ways, especially before God. This equality is also applied to all offices and roles available, whether in the world or the church.

- 1. Grudem “The view that all functions and roles in the church are open to men and women alike.”<sup>1</sup>
- 2. Merriam-Webster defines egalitarianism as, “a belief in human equality especially with respect to social, political, and economic affairs” or as, “a social philosophy advocating the removal of inequalities among people.”<sup>2</sup>
- 3. Lambert “Christians who deny that human gender roles are not identical are called egalitarians, arguing that there is no difference between the sexes in the roles they are to carry out.”<sup>3</sup>

B. Scriptural references used to support egalitarian views of gender.

- 1. **Galatians 3:25-29** *But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian, for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 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. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.*
- 2. **Acts 2:16-17** *But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel: “And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams;”*
- 3. **Acts 18:24-26** *Now a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was an eloquent man, competent in the Scriptures. He had been instructed in the way of the Lord. And being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things concerning Jesus, though he knew only the baptism of John. He began to speak boldly in the synagogue, but when*

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<sup>1</sup> Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 1240.

<sup>2</sup> Merriam-Webster Dictionary, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/egalitarianism>.

<sup>3</sup> Heath Lambert, *A Theology of Biblical Counseling*, 204 (footnote).

## ACBC Theology - Question 11

*Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately.*

4. **Romans 16:7** *Greet Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners. They are well known to the apostles, and they were in Christ before me.*
  - a. Pastor Cubby includes a thorough review of this section in his notes reviewing this verse.<sup>4</sup> The consensus is that Andronicus and Junia were not apostles, but were, as the verse specifies, “. . . well known to the apostles . . .”

### III. Define and explain the complementarian view of manhood and womanhood.

- A. The complementarian view of gender asserts that, although men and women are equal before God, we have been created with distinct complementary qualities, and that certain offices and roles are also designed for specific genders.
  1. Lambert “The human race is composed of two genders, but the individual gender roles are not identical. They are complementary.”<sup>5</sup>
    - a. With regard to Gal 3:28, used by most egalitarian view-holders as Scriptural support for their view, Heath Lambert says, “The apostle Paul wants to make the point that there are no racial, economic, or gender barriers when it comes to calling upon the name of Jesus. Jesus saves all who come to him in repentant faith. Because Jesus equally redeems men and women, we must be committed to an equivalent embrace of both genders. There is no room in Christ’s church for prizing one gender over another.”<sup>6</sup>
  2. Grudem “The view that men and woman are equal in value before God but that some governing and teaching roles in the church are reserved for men.”<sup>7</sup>
  3. Lambert “Men and women are equivalent in creation and redemption, but that does not mean there are no differences between them. The biological differences range from the obvious physical indicators of manhood and womanhood to the hormonal differences underlying those indicators. The distinctions the Bible emphasizes have to do with differences in the context of the home and in the context of life in the local church.”<sup>8</sup>
  4. Offices in Marriage / Home
    - a. Lambert “in the home, men are called to the role of servant leadership and are given charge over the operations of the home. Women are called to respond to this leadership with submission.”<sup>9</sup> (Col 3:18-19)
  5. Church Offices

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<sup>4</sup> Pastor Cubby Westerberg’s Notes are available in the Google Classroom for this course.

<sup>5</sup> Heath Lambert, *A Theology of Biblical Counseling*, 204.

<sup>6</sup> Heath Lambert, *A Theology of Biblical Counseling*, 205.

<sup>7</sup> Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 1238.

<sup>8</sup> Heath Lambert, *A Theology of Biblical Counseling*, 205-206.

<sup>9</sup> Heath Lambert, *A Theology of Biblical Counseling*, 206.

## ACBC Theology - Question 11

- a. Lambert “Men and women are called to fulfill different functions in the Christian community. Men are called to a position of spiritual leadership in the church, and women are called to respond to this leadership. This distinction in church roles is located most obviously in the pastoral office of teaching.”<sup>10</sup> (1 Tim 2:11-13)

### B. Scriptural references used to support complementarian views of gender.

1. **1 Timothy 2:8-15** *I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling; likewise also that women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire, but with what is proper for women who profess godliness—with good works. Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness. I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet. For Adam was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. Yet she will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith and love and holiness, with self-control.*
2. **1 Corinthians 14:33-36** *For God is not a God of confusion but of peace. As in all the churches of the saints, the women should keep silent in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak, but should be in submission, as the Law also says. If there is anything they desire to learn, let them ask their husbands at home. For it is shameful for a woman to speak in church. Or was it from you that the word of God came? Or are you the only ones it has reached?*
  - a. “In this section Paul cannot be prohibiting all public speech by women in the church, for he clearly allows them to pray and prophesy in the church in 1 Corinthians 11:5. Therefore, it is best to understand this passage as referring to speech that is in the category being discussed in the immediate context, namely, the spoken evaluation and judging of prophecies in the congregation (see v. 29: ‘Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others weigh what is said’). While Paul allows women to speak and give prophecies in the church meeting, he does not allow them to speak up and give evaluations or critiques of the prophecies that have been given, for this would be a ruling or governing function with respect to the whole church.”<sup>11</sup>
3. **1 Timothy 3:1-7** *The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God’s church? He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.*

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<sup>10</sup> Heath Lambert, *A Theology of Biblical Counseling*, 206.

<sup>11</sup> Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 939.

## ACBC Theology - Question 11

4. **Titus 1:5-9** *This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you— if anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife, and his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination. For an overseer, as God’s steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.*
- a. “Both 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 assume that elders are going to be men. An elder (or bishop/overseer) must be the ‘husband of one wife’ (1 Tim. 3:2; also Titus 1:6), and ‘must manage his own household well, keeping his children submissive and respectful in every way’ (1 Tim. 3:4).”<sup>12</sup>

### C. Should women be allowed to serve a church as a pastor or elder?

1. Grudem “Yet the question remains, should women be pastors or elders in churches? (Or should they fill roles equivalent to that of an elder in churches that have alternative forms of government?) My own conclusion on this issue is that the Bible does not permit women to function in the role of pastor or elder within a church. This has also been the conclusion of the vast majority of churches in various societies throughout history. The reasons that seem to me to be most persuasive in answering this question are the following:”<sup>13</sup>

## IV. Counseling Implications for Gender

- A. Why is this an important topic for biblical counselors to study?

## V. Further Resources

### A. ACBC Approved Reading

1. **Heath Lambert, A Theology of Biblical Counseling: The Doctrinal Foundations of Counseling Ministry (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2016), 204-213.**
2. **Jay E. Adams, A Theology of Christian Counseling: More Than Redemption, The Jay Adams Library (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979), 94-138.**
3. **John M. Frame, Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Christian Belief (Phillipsburg: P&R Publishing, 2013), 792-796.**
4. John MacArthur, ed., *Biblical Doctrine: A Systematic Summary of Bible Truth* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2017), 426-429.
5. Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 3rd ed (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013), 498-501.
6. Paul P. Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1989), 155-159.
7. Andreas J. Köstenberger and David W. Jones, *God, Marriage, and Family: Rebuilding the Biblical Foundation*, 2nd ed (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010).

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<sup>12</sup> Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 940.

<sup>13</sup> Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 937.

## ACBC Theology - Question 11

The Danvers Statement<sup>14</sup> summarizes the need for the Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood (CBMW) and serves as an overview of our core beliefs. This statement was prepared by several evangelical leaders at a CBMW meeting in Danvers, Massachusetts, in December of 1987. It was first published in final form by the CBMW in Wheaton, Illinois in November of 1988.

### Rationale

We have been moved in our purpose by the following contemporary developments which we observe with deep concern:

1. The widespread uncertainty and confusion in our culture regarding the complementary differences between masculinity and femininity;
2. the tragic effects of this confusion in unraveling the fabric of marriage woven by God out of the beautiful and diverse strands of manhood and womanhood;
3. the increasing promotion given to feminist egalitarianism with accompanying distortions or neglect of the glad harmony portrayed in Scripture between the loving, humble leadership of redeemed husbands and the intelligent, willing support of that leadership by redeemed wives;
4. the widespread ambivalence regarding the values of motherhood, vocational homemaking, and the many ministries historically performed by women;
5. the growing claims of legitimacy for sexual relationships which have Biblically and historically been considered illicit or perverse, and the increase in pornographic portrayal of human sexuality;
6. the upsurge of physical and emotional abuse in the family;
7. the emergence of roles for men and women in church leadership that do not conform to Biblical teaching but backfire in the crippling of Biblically faithful witness;
8. the increasing prevalence and acceptance of hermeneutical oddities devised to reinterpret apparently plain meanings of Biblical texts;
9. the consequent threat to Biblical authority as the clarity of Scripture is jeopardized and the accessibility of its meaning to ordinary people is withdrawn into the restricted realm of technical ingenuity;
10. and behind all this the apparent accommodation of some within the church to the spirit of the age at the expense of winsome, radical Biblical authenticity which in the power of the Holy Spirit may reform rather than reflect our ailing culture.

### Purposes

Recognizing our own abiding sinfulness and fallibility, and acknowledging the genuine evangelical standing of many who do not agree with all of our convictions, nevertheless, moved by the preceding observations and by the hope that the noble Biblical vision of sexual complementarity may yet win the mind and heart of Christ's church, we engage to pursue the following purposes:

1. To study and set forth the Biblical view of the relationship between men and women, especially in the home and in the church.
2. To promote the publication of scholarly and popular materials representing this view.

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<sup>14</sup> <https://cbmw.org/about/danvers-statement/>

## ACBC Theology - Question 11

3. To encourage the confidence of lay people to study and understand for themselves the teaching of Scripture, especially on the issue of relationships between men and women.
4. To encourage the considered and sensitive application of this Biblical view in the appropriate spheres of life.
5. And thereby
  - to bring healing to persons and relationships injured by an inadequate grasp of God’s will concerning manhood and womanhood,
  - to help both men and women realize their full ministry potential through a true understanding and practice of their God-given roles,
  - and to promote the spread of the gospel among all peoples by fostering a Biblical wholeness in relationships that will attract a fractured world.

### Affirmations

Based on our understanding of Biblical teachings, we affirm the following:

1. Both Adam and Eve were created in God’s image, equal before God as persons and distinct in their manhood and womanhood (Gen 1:26-27, 2:18).
2. Distinctions in masculine and feminine roles are ordained by God as part of the created order, and should find an echo in every human heart (Gen 2:18, 21-24; 1 Cor 11:7-9; 1 Tim 2:12-14).
3. Adam’s headship in marriage was established by God before the Fall, and was not a result of sin (Gen 2:16-18, 21-24, 3:1-13; 1 Cor 11:7-9).
4. The Fall introduced distortions into the relationships between men and women (Gen 3:1-7, 12, 16).
  1. In the home, the husband’s loving, humble headship tends to be replaced by domination or passivity; the wife’s intelligent, willing submission tends to be replaced by usurpation or servility.
  2. In the church, sin inclines men toward a worldly love of power or an abdication of spiritual responsibility, and inclines women to resist limitations on their roles or to neglect the use of their gifts in appropriate ministries.
5. The Old Testament, as well as the New Testament, manifests the equally high value and dignity which God attached to the roles of both men and women (Gen 1:26-27, 2:18; Gal 3:28). Both Old and New Testaments also affirm the principle of male headship in the family and in the covenant community (Gen 2:18; Eph 5:21-33; Col 3:18-19; 1 Tim 2:11-15).
6. Redemption in Christ aims at removing the distortions introduced by the curse.
  1. In the family, husbands should forsake harsh or selfish leadership and grow in love and care for their wives; wives should forsake resistance to their husbands’ authority and grow in willing, joyful submission to their husbands’ leadership (Eph 5:21-33; Col 3:18-19; Tit 2:3-5; 1 Pet 3:1-7).
  2. In the church, redemption in Christ gives men and women an equal share in the blessings of salvation; nevertheless, some governing and teaching roles within the church are restricted to men (Gal 3:28; 1 Cor 11:2-16; 1 Tim 2:11-15).

### ACBC Theology - Question 11

7. In all of life Christ is the supreme authority and guide for men and women, so that no earthly submission-domestic, religious, or civil-ever implies a mandate to follow a human authority into sin (Dan 3:10-18; Acts 4:19-20, 5:27-29; 1 Pet 3:1-2).
8. In both men and women a heartfelt sense of call to ministry should never be used to set aside Biblical criteria for particular ministries (1 Tim 2:11-15, 3:1-13; Tit 1:5-9). Rather, Biblical teaching should remain the authority for testing our subjective discernment of God's will.
9. With half the world's population outside the reach of indigenous evangelism; with countless other lost people in those societies that have heard the gospel; with the stresses and miseries of sickness, malnutrition, homelessness, illiteracy, ignorance, aging, addiction, crime, incarceration, neuroses, and loneliness, no man or woman who feels a passion from God to make His grace known in word and deed need ever live without a fulfilling ministry for the glory of Christ and the good of this fallen world (1 Cor 12:7-21).
10. We are convinced that a denial or neglect of these principles will lead to increasingly destructive consequences in our families, our churches, and the culture at large.