Women in Ministry

From the beginning of the Bible we find that God, in his wisdom and providence, created two complementary sexes for his glory and our good. God intends men and women to have different, yet complementary roles and responsibilities in the church and in the home. These role distinctions do not arise from cultural definitions of masculinity and femininity, but are an integral part of God's plan for humanity, as revealed in the Bible. We recognise them as God's grace to us and, therefore, seek to practise them for his glory, our joy and for the sake of human flourishing (Gen. 2:18-25; 1 Cor. 11:2-16, 14:33-35; Eph. 5:22-33; Col. 1:6, 3:18-19; 1 Tim. 2:8-15; 1 Pet. 3:1-7).

We (EMF) desire to articulate and embody in our churches the biblical teaching of 'complementarianism', to reflect God's beautiful design. Specifically, when it comes to the consideration of women in ministry, we want to honour the Lord by obeying the Bible and by giving women opportunities to bear fruit, grow, and exercise gospel service in their roles within our churches. We are deeply committed to the spiritual and moral equality of men and women and to men as responsible servant-leaders in both home and church.

Men and women are together created in God's image and are therefore equal before God as persons, possessing the same moral dignity and value, and have equal access to God through faith in Christ. Men and women are together the recipients of spiritual gifts designed to empower them for ministry in the local church and beyond. Therefore, men and women are to be encouraged, equipped, and empowered to use their gifting in ministry, in service to the body of Christ, and through teaching in ways that are consistent with the Word of God.

The elders/pastors (terms used interchangeably in the New Testament) of each local church have been granted authority under the headship of Jesus Christ to provide oversight and to teach/preach the Word of God in the corporate assembly for the building up of the body. According to the New Testament, the office of elder/pastor is restricted to qualified men, who are to lead their congregations in accordance with the servant leadership and sacrificial love characterised by Jesus Christ.

This principle of male headship should not be confused with, or give any hint of, domineering control. Rather, it is to be the loving, tender, and nurturing care of godly men who are themselves under the kind and gentle authority of Jesus Christ.

We require our missionaries, staff and trustees to:

1. Agree with this policy statement and be consistent with it in their lives and in their work.
2. Uphold the equal worth of men and women in the church family and to work for the flourishing of all.

This is usually demonstrated by being members of churches that reserve the public preaching of God's word to the corporate assembly and the office of elders/pastors to suitably qualified men.

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All staff positions within EMF are open to men and women equally, with the exception of those roles which specify within their job description that they involve preaching in churches. In line with our policy outlined above, such roles are reserved for suitably qualified men.

Document Versioning

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