



Roles of Men and Women in worship

WHAT IS OUR POSITION AND PRACTICE AT GLORIA DEO?

-AND-

DOES OUR POSITION AND PRACTICE WELL-REPRESENT SCRIPTURE?

Outline

- A. What is our position on how men and women participate in the gathering of the church?
 1. Position
 2. General practices
 3. Specific practices
- B. Why is that our position/practice according to Scripture?
 1. Why do we have a public discussion time in church?
 2. Why do we restrict discussion time to men on Sunday morning?
 3. What is the purpose of men and women in the people of Christ?
 4. How does this relate to Wednesday evenings? Are we consistent?
 5. How does this relate to our missions endeavors?

Position and Practice

Our Position and Practice

► Position:

- Our church seeks to honor Christ's purpose in creating men and women and joining them together in His body the church
- and to honor the equal value and status of men and women in Christ
- through applying Scriptural commands and principles to our time of worship together

Our Position and Practice

► From the T4G Affirmations and Denials

We affirm that the Scripture reveals a pattern of complementary order between men and women, and that this order is itself a testimony to the Gospel, even as it is the gift of our Creator and Redeemer. We also affirm that all Christians are called to service within the body of Christ, and that God has given to both men and women important and strategic roles within the home, the Church, and the society. We further affirm that the teaching office of the Church is assigned only to those men who are called of God in fulfillment of the biblical teachings and that men are to lead in their homes as husbands and fathers who fear and love God.

We deny that the distinction of roles between men and women revealed in the Bible is evidence of mere cultural conditioning or a manifestation of male oppression or prejudice against women. We also deny that this biblical distinction of roles excludes women from meaningful ministry in Christ's kingdom. We further deny that any Church can confuse these issues without damaging its witness to the Gospel.

Our Position and Practice

▶ Practice:

- ▶ We encourage all who are in Christ to know Christ deeply and grow in relationship with Him
- ▶ We encourage both men and women to serve Christ through service in their family and in the church in ways that are consistent with Biblical teaching
- ▶ We honor all types of service to the body of Christ, acknowledging that there are different types of service and all are necessary and glorifying to Christ (1 Peter 4:10-11, 1 Corinthians 12:12-31, Romans 12:3-8)

Our Position and Practice

- ▶ A Couple of Specific Practices:
 - ▶ On Sunday mornings we encourage everyone to actively participate in our service through singing, prayer, and communal listening and submission to the Word of God
 - ▶ On Sunday mornings we ask men to participate in leading the church in song, in prayer, in reading Scripture, in preaching, and in communion
 - ▶ **On Sunday mornings we encourage the men to participate in teaching by bringing a word of encouragement for our benefit from the Scriptures or interacting with the sermon**
 - ▶ On Wednesday evenings we encourage everyone to participate together in singing, prayer and discussion of Scripture

Scriptural Warrant

1. Why do we have a discussion/ response time Sunday mornings?

- ▶ Scripture records the early church participating in worship together
 - ▶ There are records of elders/teachers/apostles teaching and preaching during worship (e.g. Paul preaching in Troas, Acts 20, Paul's command to Timothy, II Timothy 4) and also explicit commands to do this
 - ▶ But there are also records of everyone participating in the teaching and encouragement activities of the church

1. Why do we have a discussion/ response time Sunday mornings?

- ▶ Colossians 3:16 - Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. *(general practice)*
- ▶ I Corinthians 14:26 - What then, brothers? When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up. *(specific practice)*

1. Why do we have a discussion/ response time Sunday mornings?

- ▶ As a church and as elders we want to follow as closely as possible the pattern set out for us in Scripture
- ▶ So we have tried to incorporate both a time of preaching from (generally) the elders, but also a time of communal encouragement, building up, and teaching for the whole church to participate in that looks like I Corinthians 14
- ▶ This may be a weak attempt, but it is an honest attempt to try to match what Scripture says – not merely to base our worship off of what churches in our age do, but to base our worship together off of Scripture

2. Why do we restrict open discussion on Sunday mornings to men?

- ▶ Again, we desire to follow as closely as possible what Scripture patterns for us
- ▶ And the pattern of Scripture clearly and repeatedly calls men to lead and to teach in the church

2. Why do we restrict open discussion on Sunday mornings to men?

1 Corinthians 14:26-38 - What then, brothers? When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up. If any speak in a tongue, let there be only two or at most three, and each in turn, and let someone interpret. But if there is no one to interpret, let each of them keep silent in church and speak to himself and to God. Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others weigh what is said. If a revelation is made to another sitting there, let the first be silent. For you can all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all be encouraged, and the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets. For God is not a God of confusion but of peace. ...

2. Why do we restrict open discussion on Sunday mornings to men?

... 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? If anyone thinks that he is a prophet, or spiritual, he should acknowledge that the things I am writing to you are a command of the Lord. If anyone does not recognize this, he is not recognized.

2. Why do we restrict open discussion on Sunday mornings to men?

- ▶ As part of Paul's discussion of interaction in the church, he specifically states that men should be the speakers and not women
- ▶ He references the Law in order to support his statement, pointing at the fact that God had always differentiated the roles of men and women
- ▶ And Paul specifically states that this was a command from God and that those who refuse to acknowledge it are not recognized

2. Why do we restrict open discussion on Sunday mornings to men?

Objection: Paul is only referring to the 'weighing of prophecy'

Response:

- ▶ Paul could have said that if he wanted to and didn't – he could have used the Greek word "judge" in verse 34 like in verse 29b, but instead used the Greek word "speak"
- ▶ The Greek word "speak" in verse 34 is parallel to verses 27a and 29a not 29b, indicating Paul is referring to all of 26-33a not specifically 29b
- ▶ The Greek word "silent" in verse 34 is also parallel to verses 28 and 30
- ▶ The command in verse 34 does not follow the command to weigh prophecy in verse 29 (it is not the 'antecedent')

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Objection: Paul is only referring to the 'weighing of prophecy'

Response:

- ▶ Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others weigh (*diakrinetosan*) what is said. If a revelation is made to another sitting there, let the first be silent. For you can all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all be encouraged, and the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets. 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 (*lalein*), but should be in submission, as the Law also says.

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- ▶ If any speak (*lalei*) in a tongue... Let two or three prophets speak (*laleitOsan*) ... For they are not permitted to speak (*lalein*), but should be in submission, as the Law also says.
- ▶ But if there is no one to interpret, let each of them keep silent (*sigatO*) in church and speak to himself and to God ... If a revelation is made to another sitting there, let the first be silent (*sigatO*) ... the women should keep silent (*sigatOsan*) in the churches

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2. Why do we restrict open discussion on Sunday mornings to men?

Objection: Paul is only responding to a problem in Corinth

Response:

- ▶ This is not the only place he discusses the topic, I Timothy 2:11-15 - *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.*
- ▶ And in both places Paul references eternal truth, not cultural or local church specific practices

2. Why do we restrict open discussion on Sunday mornings to men?

Objection: I Corinthians 11 clearly says women should prophecy in church

Response:

- ▶ This is true if and only if I Corinthians 11 says “women should prophecy in the church”
- ▶ I Corinthians 11 does clearly say women should prophecy
- ▶ But I Corinthians 11 never says that it should be in the church (this is a presupposition some would bring to the text, not in the text itself)
- ▶ Also logically if this was Paul’s purpose in I Corinthians 11, why does he separate it from I Corinthians 14?

2. Why do we restrict open discussion on Sunday mornings to men?

- ▶ In our best understanding of the text of Scripture, we are obeying Scripture by welcoming the men to lead and teach in the gathered communion of the church
- ▶ In this, we are **not affirming** that there are never times and places where women have leading and teaching roles
- ▶ In this, we are **not affirming** that women are incapable of leading and/or teaching
- ▶ In this, we are **not affirming** that women are less valuable or that their contribution is less valuable in the church

3. What are we affirming then?

i.e. what is the purpose of differing roles for men and women?

1. Men and women together were created by God in His image and bear His glory in this world
 - ▶ 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.

3. What are we affirming then?

i.e. what is the purpose of differing roles for men and women?

2. Men and women were created by God differently to further display God's glory in both

- ▶ I Corinthians 11:7-12 - For a man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God, but woman is the glory of man. For man was not made from woman, but woman from man. Neither was man created for woman, but woman for man. That is why a wife ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels. Nevertheless, in the Lord woman is not independent of man nor man of woman; for as woman was made from man, so man is now born of woman. And all things are from God.

3. What are we affirming then?

i.e. what is the purpose of differing roles for men and women?

3. As part of this complementary creation, God gave men and women different roles in the world and in the church

- ▶ Titus 2:2-6 - Older men are to be sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love, and in steadfastness. Older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine. They are to teach what is good, and so train the young women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled. Likewise, urge the younger men to be self-controlled.

3. What are we affirming then?

i.e. what is the purpose of differing roles for men and women?

4. These roles serve to display a cosmic drama of the ultimate relationship between Christ and the church

- ▶ I Corinthians 11:2-3 - Now I commend you because you remember me in everything and maintain the traditions even as I delivered them to you. But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a wife is her husband, and the head of Christ is God.

3. What are we affirming then?

i.e. what is the purpose of differing roles for men and women?

4. These roles serve to display a cosmic drama of the ultimate relationship between Christ and the church

- ▶ Ephesians 5:22-27 - 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. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.

3. What are we affirming then?

i.e. what is the purpose of differing roles for men and women?

5. Therefore, differing roles are a glory to men and women
(differing roles do not devalue either men or women)

- ▶ I Peter 3:7 - Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.

3. What are we affirming then?

i.e. what is the purpose of differing roles for men and women?

5. Therefore, differing roles are a glory to men and women (differing roles do not devalue either men or women)
 - ▶ If the differences between men and women serve to highlight and display the relationship between Christ and His church, then there is great glory in playing either role, whichever you are called to by God in His creation of you
 - ▶ Redeemed men get to reflect the glory of salvation by weakly, but truly, reflecting the glory of the headship of Christ and redeemed women get to reflect the glory of salvation by reflecting the glory of the church's embrace of Christ

3. What are we affirming then?

i.e. what is the purpose of differing roles for men and women?

5. Therefore, differing roles are a glory to men and women (differing roles do not devalue either men or women)
 - ▶ And, on the flip side, refusing to play the role that God has given you is a great corruption, a great sadness – it is denying something about Christ and salvation
 - ▶ The role you are given is not about you, it is about Christ – and this means your role (as a man or as a woman) is infinitely important and infinitely glorious!

3. What are we affirming then?

i.e. what is the purpose of differing roles for men and women?

5. Therefore, differing roles are a glory to men and women
(differing roles do not devalue either men or women)

- ▶ Far from being embarrassed about such things, Paul would call us to rejoice in them and to display them to each other, to a watching world, and even to the very cosmos – the angels themselves are watching in awe

3. What are we affirming then?

i.e. what is the purpose of differing roles for men and women?

6. Therefore differing roles do not reflect differing or lesser participation in Christ or the church

- ▶ 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.

3. What are we affirming then?

i.e. what is the purpose of differing roles for men and women?

7. A significant mark of the rebellion of this world is refusal to rejoice in and live out these divinely ordained roles

- ▶ Genesis 3:16-19 - To the woman he said, "I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you." And to Adam he said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return."

4. How does this relate to Wednesday evenings?

- ▶ The question has rightly come up as to why we restrict the interaction time on Sunday while allowing it on Wednesday
 1. There are dangers on both sides of this issue – we don't want to ignore Scripture or enforce it too harshly
 2. We see a difference between our main gathering on Sundays and our casual gathering on Wednesdays
 3. We see a difference between the teaching and leading time on Sunday and the participation time on Wednesday
 4. But we'll admit that we aren't completely confident in this, we are striving to tread lightly and may not be right

5. How does this relate to missions?

- ▶ One question that has come up in relation to this topic is why we have allowed women to attend NBTC
 - ▶ Our stated goal for NBTC is to train up Nepali young men to be elders and leaders in churches in Nepal
 - ▶ Does not welcoming women to go to NBTC contradict our position?
- ▶ In one way, the answer is yes – but that needs to be qualified by:
 - ▶ Our position is not that women should not know the Bible well or that they should not serve the church
 - ▶ And our authority is in many ways limited to our own church

5. How does this relate to missions?

- ▶ Women should know the Bible well and should seek to serve in the church
 - ▶ We do believe that this needs to be done in obedience to Scripture, but nothing we have looked at would indicate that women studying and knowing the Bible well would be out of bounds
 - ▶ In fact, we rejoice to see women know Scripture well and be able to apply it in their homes and in the local church and we want to see this happen, here in our church and in Nepal
 - ▶ So, in that sense, we rejoice to see women come to NBTC to come know the Bible well and to take it back to their local churches
 - ▶ We wouldn't agree that they should be pastors or elders in the church, but that doesn't mean we don't want them to know Scripture well
 - ▶ Right now we are comfortable with what is going on at NBTC, although it is an area that we are watching

5. How does this relate to missions?

- ▶ Our authority is limited to our own church
 - ▶ The elders are called to set order in their own churches according to the command and pattern of Scripture
 - ▶ Although we do support NBTC, it isn't under our authority – we have always explicitly acknowledged that it is under Devaraj's authority and Macedonia Baptist in Nepal
 - ▶ As sponsors, we may make suggestions at times and interact with what is going on, but we aren't called to lead at NBTC in the same way we are here
 - ▶ So even if there is some level of disagreement with some things that happen at NBTC, we can allow that disagreement in Christ as long as we are convinced that we are still pursuing the gospel together and not significantly hurting the witness of the gospel



Questions/Discussion/Comments

IF WE HAVE TIME NOW AND CONTINUED NEXT WEEK

Discussion Guidelines

1. Scripture should be our final and ultimate authority

II Timothy 3:16-17 - All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.

2. Our words should be honoring to Christ

James 3:7-10 - For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by mankind, but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God. From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be so.

Discussion Guidelines

3. Our words should be loving toward each other

Ephesians 4:15 - *Rather, speaking the truth in love,*

4. Our words should be for the purpose of building up each other in Christ

Ephesians 4:15-16 - *Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.*

I Corinthians 11:2-16 ?

► Logical Argument:

1. If I Corinthians 11 and 14 are assumed to speak to the same context they appear to contradict each other
2. For I Corinthians 11 to modify our understanding of I Corinthians 14, they must be clearly referring to the same context – that is ‘in the gathered church’
3. Paul throughout I Corinthians does an excellent job of denoting when he is discussing the gathered church
 - a. When you come together (*sunerchomai*)
 - b. In the church (*en tE ekklesia*)
4. There are no statements in I Corinthians 11:2-16 indicating that the context is ‘in the gathered church’

I Corinthians 11:2-16 ?

- ▶ Example: Discussion of the Lord's Supper in I Corinthians 11:17-20 - But in the following instructions I do not commend you, because when you come together (*sunerchesthe*) it is not for the better but for the worse. For, in the first place, when you come together (*sunerchomenOn*) as a church (*en tE ekklesia*), I hear that there are divisions among you. And I believe it in part, for there must be factions among you in order that those who are genuine among you may be recognized. When you come together (*sunerchomenOn*), it is not the Lord's supper that you eat.

I Corinthians 11:2-16 ?

▶ In the church

- ▶ I Corinthians 11:18
- ▶ I Corinthians 12:28
- ▶ I Corinthians 14:19
- ▶ I Corinthians 14:28
- ▶ I Corinthians 14:33
- ▶ I Corinthians 14:34
- ▶ I Corinthians 14:35

▶ When you come together

- ▶ I Corinthians 7:5
- ▶ I Corinthians 11:17
- ▶ I Corinthians 11:18
- ▶ I Corinthians 11:20
- ▶ I Corinthians 11:33
- ▶ I Corinthians 11:34
- ▶ I Corinthians 14:23
- ▶ I Corinthians 14:26

1 Corinthians 11:2-16 ?

- ▶ 1 Corinthians 14:18-19 - I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you. Nevertheless, in church (*en ekklesia*) I would rather speak five words with my mind in order to instruct others, than ten thousand words in a tongue.

I Corinthians 11:2-16

Now I commend you because you remember me in everything and maintain the traditions even as I delivered them to you. But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a wife is her husband, and the head of Christ is God. Every man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonors his head, but every wife who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head, since it is the same as if her head were shaven. For if a wife will not cover her head, then she should cut her hair short. But since it is disgraceful for a wife to cut off her hair or shave her head, let her cover her head. For a man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God, but woman is the glory of man. For man was not made from woman, but woman from man. Neither was man created for woman, but woman for man. That is why a wife ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels. Nevertheless, in the Lord woman is not independent of man nor man of woman; for as woman was made from man, so man is now born of woman. And all things are from God. Judge for yourselves: is it proper for a wife to pray to God with her head uncovered? Does not nature itself teach you that if a man wears long hair it is a disgrace for him, but if a woman has long hair, it is her glory? For her hair is given to her for a covering. If anyone is inclined to be contentious, we have no such practice, nor do the churches of God.

I Corinthians 11:2-16

- ▶ General principle: Scripture should interpret Scripture
 - ▶ Comparing I Corinthians 11 and 14 is a correct practice, these passages need to interpret each other
- ▶ General principle: the clearer should interpret the less clear
 - ▶ I Corinthians 14 is very clear about the context and very clear in the verbiage
- ▶ At best I Corinthians 11 is unclear about the context – there is no statement in the text about the context being ‘in the church’
 - ▶ I Corinthians 14 should be used to interpret I Corinthians 11 and not the other way around

A. Why do the elders enforce this at Gloria Deo?

- ▶ The elders do not see a need to 'enforce' every command of Scripture on the members of our church
 - ▶ e.g. in I Corinthians 11, both of the elders see a command to wear head coverings (*in slightly different ways*) but we don't see any need to enforce this command on the church but rather to leave it to individual conscience
- ▶ So why do we 'enforce' this command? Because it has to do with the gathered church which the elders are called to oversee.

A. Why do the elders enforce this at Gloria Deo?

- ▶ In 1 Timothy, Paul tells Timothy to appoint elders and in 1 Timothy 3 he gives a reason
 - ▶ 1 Timothy 3:14-16 - *I hope to come to you soon, but I am writing these things to you so that, if I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth. Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of godliness*
- ▶ There are right ways and wrong ways to behave in the household of God, ways that help display the mystery of godliness and ways that distract from the mystery

A. Why do the elders enforce this at Gloria Deo?

- ▶ Elders are called to oversee and order the gathering of the church to display the mystery of godliness
 - ▶ So Paul tells Titus in Titus 1:5 - *For this reason I left you in Crete, that you would set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city as I directed you,*
 - ▶ And Peter tells the elders in 1 Peter 5:1-3 - *So I exhort the elders among you... shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock.*

A. Why do the elders enforce this at Gloria Deo?

- ▶ One way the elders strive to 'exercise oversight' without being 'domineering' is to give as much freedom as possible for personal conscience in personal matters and to limit our authority in many ways to the gathering of the church
- ▶ So, in order to promote good order and to display the mystery of godliness, we must set order to the gathering of believers

A. Why do the elders enforce this at Gloria Deo?

- ▶ I Corinthians 14 is clearly a section of scripture that deals with the gathered church and calls elders to set their churches up to match this command
 - ▶ I Corinthians 14:26 - *What then, brothers? When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up.*
 - ▶ I Corinthians 14:33b-34a - *As in all the churches of the saints, the women should keep silent in the churches.*

A. Why do the elders enforce this at Gloria Deo?

- ▶ So the elders need to give direction to the church in how we live these things out
 - ▶ That doesn't mean that everyone has to agree on these things – we can still leave understanding to personal conscience
 - ▶ But we do need to guide the church as one in how we live these things out together