



REVISITING OUR POSITION MEN & WOMEN IN CHURCH LEADERSHIP

For the past six months, our pastors and elders have been seeking God's truth and wisdom regarding this question: ***What does the Bible teach about the roles of men and women in church leadership?*** If you haven't already, please watch this 10-minute [video](#) in which Pastor Pete shares the context for why we are revisiting this question at this moment.

As we have been seeking God in prayer, studying the Scriptures, and wrestling to discern the heart, mind, and will of God, we have come to a place of unity and would like to extend an invitation to the congregation of Antioch to join us in exploring this question together.

At the outset of this journey, the elders and pastors want to clearly state our commitment to the inspiration, truth, and authority of the Bible. While faithful, Jesus-loving, Bible-believing, gospel-proclaiming denominations and individual congregations may disagree on how some passages of Scripture should be interpreted, we can agree that whatever position we land on must be consistent with and in submission to the teaching of the Bible. As Jesus himself said, "The Scripture cannot be broken." (John 10.35)

Additionally, we believe that the discussion of the roles of men and women in church leadership, while important, is not an essential doctrinal issue. Essential issues deal with the core historic doctrines of the faith: Scripture, the Trinity, the nature of Christ, and the saving work of his death and resurrection. But there are other issues that are not emphatically clear and that lend themselves to robust discussion and debate. These non-essential doctrines include beliefs about the end times, spiritual gifts, modes of baptism, particulars about the Lord's Supper, and styles of worship. We see the roles of men and women in church leadership as a non-essential doctrinal issue and therefore one that can be revisited without calling into question any of the essential historic doctrines that have been passed to us through the church and creeds.

Throughout the history of the church, many have embraced this wisdom: *In essentials, unity. In non-essentials, liberty. In everything, love.* It is our hope that the congregation of Antioch will commit to engage in this process in a spirit of unity and that God will use the process itself to further form the image of Christ in us.

So, here is the process into which we would like to invite you:

1. **Personal/Group Study:** Set aside some time, either by yourself or with a small group of family or friends, and then use the attached Interpretation Guide to familiarize yourself with some key biblical passages surrounding men and women in the Bible.
2. **Family Meeting:** Join us on Monday, June 14 at 6:30 PM for a (real life and in-person!) family meeting in our building at 6+Clay. This will be a time to ask questions, share concerns, and discuss what we're learning together as a congregation.
3. **Additional Resources:** Over the coming weeks, we will be recommending to you books, videos, articles, and podcasts that will help us gain a shared vocabulary for discussion.

In the meantime, as your pastors and elders, we sincerely want to hear from you. What questions does this conversation raise for you? What are your hopes and fears regarding this conversation? Reach out to us at the emails below and we would be happy to connect further.

Yours in Christ,

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