



GRACE COMMUNITY CHURCH  
MALE AND FEMALE IN LEADERSHIP  
POSITION PAPER

POSITION P-6  
Created: 1/22/05  
Adopted: 2/15/08  
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Our culture continues to redefine its understanding and practice of male and female identity and roles in every sphere of life, rebelling against God's patterns. As Christians, we are called not to "conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is — his good, pleasing and perfect will." [Rom. 12:2]

In other words, we are responsible to pursue God's truth as presented in the Bible as our guide and standard for life. Since God created us as male and female, we trust in His Word to direct our understanding of relationships and roles as we wrestle with contemporary issues. We recognize the temptation to conform to culture's agenda, as well as the temptation to mistakenly identify previous generations' practices with biblical patterns.

Therefore, it is necessary to clarify the biblical truth about male/female roles. As Grace's leaders, we have adopted the following statements as our position on this issue.

#### **AFFIRMATIONS**

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

- Both Adam and Eve were created in God's image, equal before God as persons and distinct in their manhood and womanhood. (Genesis 1:26-28; 2:23; Galatians 3:28)
- 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. (Genesis 1:27)
- Adam's headship in marriage was established by God and continues to be God's pattern. (Genesis 2:18-25; 3:16; 1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 5:22-24; 1 Peter 3:1)
- The fall into sin introduced distortions into the relationships between men and women. (Genesis 3:16-19)
- 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. (Exodus 15; Judges 4-5; 2 Kings 22; Proverbs 31; Micah 6:4; Genesis 1:27; Romans 16; Galatians 3:28) Both Old and New Testaments also affirm the principle of male headship in the family and in the covenant community. (Genesis 2:18-25; 3:16; Matthew 10:2-4; Mark 3:13-19; 1 Corinthians 11:1-12; Ephesians 5:21-33; 1 Timothy 2:12; 1 Peter 3:1-7)
- Redemption in Christ aims at removing the distortions introduced by the curse. In the family, husbands should forsake harsh or selfish headship and grow in loving leadership and care for their wives as Christ does the Church. Wives should forsake resistance to their husbands' authority and grow in willing, joyful submission to their husbands' leadership. (Ephesians 5:21-33; 1 Peter 3:1-7)



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- In the church, redemption in Christ gives men and women an equal share in the blessings of salvation; nevertheless, the office of Elder within the church is restricted to men. (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9)
- In both men and women a heartfelt sense of call to ministry should be confirmed and directed by the church into biblically appropriate ministries. Biblical teaching and wise leaders are the authority for testing anyone's discernment of God's will. (Proverbs 3:5-6; Acts 6: 1-7; 1 Corinthians 14: 26-33; 2 Timothy 3:16-17)
- In all of life the Bible is the supreme authority and guide for men and women. The Bible's command to submit to authorities—parents, church, or civil—never implies a mandate to follow a human authority into sin. (Matthew 10:37-39; Mark 7:7-9; Acts 4:18-20; 5:28-29; 16:35-39; Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-25)

### **FREEDOM IN CHRIST**

By embracing God's truth and wisdom in our households and our church, we seek to demonstrate God's goodness in His created and redemptive order. God is always right and He is always good. Men and women experience God's goodness when they live according to the Creator's plan. In a culture where each individual thinks they can create their own reality and standards to live by, the church desperately needs to display the grace and truth of Jesus Christ in our male/female roles.

### **GRACE'S PRACTICE**

Men and women participate equally in the ministry and work of the church. Both men and women are crucial to the health and development of not only a family, but a local church body. At Grace, we celebrate that partnership.

Men are encouraged to lead their homes by example, servanthood, and godly confidence. Women are encouraged to support their husbands in that leadership by example, servanthood, and godly confidence. Husbands and wives partner together in carrying out God's mandate in their homes and families.

Ministry inside the local church through the use of spiritual gifts is encouraged in both men and women under the guidance and authority of the Elders. Spiritual gifts are distributed by the Holy Spirit as He chooses and are not limited in their distribution or use by gender. Men and women are both encouraged to serve in any ministry area as leaders, teachers, administrators, supervisors, and Pastoral Staff. At Grace a pastor is any man or woman, called by God, gifted for ministry and appointed by the Elders to shepherd people at our church with Spirit-led, scriptural wisdom. Scripture teaches that the office of an Elder is assigned exclusively to biblically qualified men. (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9) Elders are raised up by the Holy Spirit and recognized by the church to lead and shepherd the body.