

Position Paper: Women in Pastoral Leadership

Verse by Verse Christian Fellowship

We believe it is the Biblical directive for men to lead their families and lead the church. By practicing a way contrary to this Biblical ideal, more is lost than what one may perceive. While it is true that many women teach men in churches across the world, it is not Biblical.

Scriptural Foundation

1 Timothy 2:12 And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence.

In approaching 1 Timothy 2, we recognize that the text is not just the opinion of an Apostle but the view communicated to the church through the Holy Spirit. A view contrary to this view denies the divine inspiration of Scripture. Any view or practice that deviates from the Scripture in effect denies the inerrancy of Scripture and/or the divine inspiration of Scripture. Such a view gradually erodes away the authority of the WORD and the ability to use it with authority. In time most organizations or churches that step away from the Scripture will continue to deviate to the point of heresy. In other words, why uphold the authority of other truths if one can be denied in practice? This is probably most evident in the Roman Catholic Church, a false church that may include sincere believers but as it stands is against the LORD Jesus in numerous areas.

1 Timothy 2:13 For Adam was formed first, then Eve.

Notable in 1 Timothy 2 is a justification for the headship of men. One, Adam was formed first. The LORD shares in 1 Corinthians 11:3 that *the head of every man is Christ and the head of every woman is man*. We see this presented in two areas of society—the home and the church. Men are to lead their families—leading in a way that they provide guidance to their families and accompanying this leadership is an accountability of their families to the LORD. Men are tasked with and held accountable for leading our families. The desire for the authority of man is referenced in the curse—*“your desire will be for your husband, and he shall rule over you.”* Our culture, in rebellion against the LORD’s purpose and in some ways in response to the abuse of the Biblical directive for men to lead properly, has sought to erase the lines of gender. We maintain that the line remains and equality with the line. There is no lesser value of a woman than a man, but there is a difference in roles that the LORD purposes—found at the beginning in the forming of man and woman.

1 Timothy 2:14 And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived fell into transgression.

The second justification for male Pastoral leadership in the church goes back to Genesis. This shows that it is not a cultural direction but one that has applied from the beginning. Paul, by the Holy Spirit, shows that what Adam did in the Garden of Eden was more wrong than we may consider upon an initial reading when He makes plain that Adam was not deceived. This means he chose to disobey the LORD’s command not to eat the fruit *for* Eve. It was idolatry. But the justification for a man in a pastoral role is that woman being deceived fell into transgression. The LORD knowing the nature of women as more deceivable imparts a directive to the church that women should not serve as a pastor over men due to this tendency. While there are a few things that contribute to a woman being more able to be deceived, chiefly insecurity and emotion are more pronounced in women. That’s why the LORD, loving His church, charges men to lead to lovingly provide security and support to the women.

So based on the authority of the WORD of God, it is not the LORD's intent for a woman to serve in a pastoral role over men—teaching men doctrine or serving in authority over a man. When a woman holds that position, it is not always the intent of the woman to secure leadership. In the book of Judges, Deborah serves as a judge or spiritual leader in Israel, contrary to the LORD's prescribed ways. It is notable that the nation was in decline during this time period: Judges 4:1 *the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the LORD*. Deborah calls upon a man, Barak, to go against Canaan's army led by Sisera. Barak tells her that he will go if she goes with him. Her response is an indictment to all men who choose to put themselves spiritually under the authority of a woman:

Judges 4: 9 I will surely go with you; nevertheless there will be no glory for you in the journey you are taking, for the LORD will sell Sisera into the hand of a woman.

It is a shameful, unbiblical practice for a woman to be in authority over a man. It shows there is not a man willing or able to provide spiritual leadership in teaching the WORD, in Biblical counseling or in exercising Biblical authority over a church. Such a situation leads to an unhealthy church—a church that perpetuates the idea that a man is likewise unable to lead with authority in the home. The LORD calls us to repentance—turning back to His way and His WORD—when we believe and practice apart from His prescribed ways.

Women and Church Leadership Article May 13, 2021
Calvary Chapel Pastor Sandy Adams, CC Stone Mountain Georgia

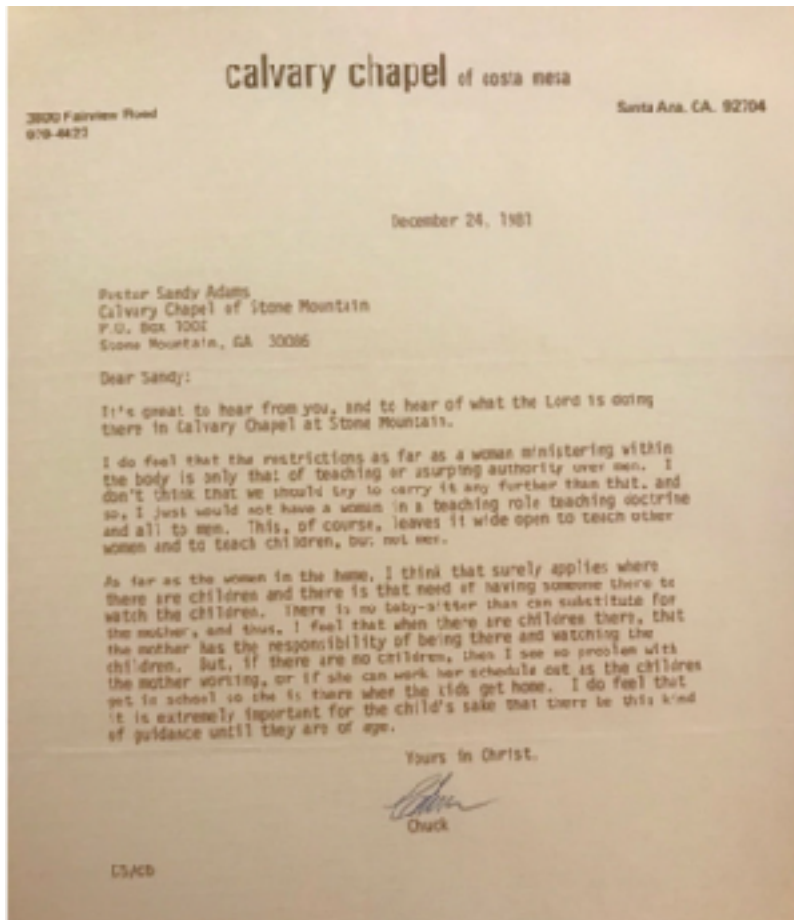
This week, Saddleback Church announced the appointment of three female pastors. This was applauded by many evangelicals. Yet I believe this breaks the heart of the God who made us male and female. Both genders and the roles assigned to each are designed by God to teach spiritual truths. The Bible says that Christian men are to lead and Christian women should follow. This doesn't apply in the secular arenas of government, business, society-at-large, but in God's living room – in the church and in the home – this is how He wants Christians to order their relationship with the opposite sex. These roles paint a picture to the world of God's relationship with His people. Throughout the Bible God speaks of Himself in the masculine and His people in the feminine. Jesus is the groom and the Church is His bride. God leads and Christians follow. And it's God's will that every church and marriage serve as a reminder.

This is why a woman's role in the church is such a watershed issue. It's not that women are incapable of offering spiritual leadership and biblical instruction. To the contrary, women may be the more suited for service. But giftedness is not the issue. There are times when God's purpose is spiritual and emblematic, more so than practical and utilitarian. When a woman yields leadership to a Spirit-anointed man she fulfills a higher, holier purpose, than simply the task at hand. The Apostle Paul said her actions intrigue the angels. In the eyes of God any of the pastoral duties she might perform pales in comparison to the beauty and significance of her submission. God wants us all to see and serve the big picture.

And yet Saddleback is not the only church that has allowed the pressure of culture to obscure the purpose of God. Giving women the authority to teach men and pastor the flock is spreading. Even some Calvary Chapels are compromising the biblical ideal.

I want to remind the Calvary Chapels that might be influenced by the example of Saddleback and those likeminded, that our pastor was clear about what the Bible taught. Recently, I ran across a personal letter I received in the early 80s from Pastor Chuck. I was struck by its relevance to today. At the time I was a young pastor prayerfully sorting these matters out for myself. I sought Chuck's counsel. His reply was simple and gracious as always, but it was also biblical and clear. And as I share it these many years later, I pray its clarity speaks to you!

Pastor Sandy Adams



Calvary Chapel Statement of Faith Reference

We believe in the pattern and principle of male leadership and responsibility in both the home and the church, according to the sacrificial example of Jesus. We believe this limits the roles of pastoral leadership and doctrinal authority to qualified men (I Corinthians 11:1-12; I Timothy 2:1-15). We believe in the universal church, the living spiritual body, of which Christ is the head and all who are born again are a part of the Body of Christ (I Corinthians 12:12-13; Ephesians 4:15-16).

<https://calvarycca.org/statement-of-faith/>