

Complementarity
Theological distinctive # 4

1. Announce text

- a. Theological distinctives series
 - i. The authority of Scripture
 - ii. Gospel centrality
 - iii. Reformed theology

2. Prayer...

3. Introduction...

a. Have you ever wondered...

- i. What would have happened if Alexander the great would have lived to be an old man?
- ii. What would have happened if Hitler would have died from leukemia at age eight?
- iii. What would have happened if the Spanish Armada defeated the British?
- iv. What would have happened if George Washington had never been born?

- v. We get so used to the way things are, that we rarely think about the way things might have been...

b. What would have happened if God...

- i. Only created males?
- ii. Or only created females?
- iii. Or decided to create three or four sexes?
- iv. Of course, God did not do any of these things.
- v. Instead, God very specifically decided to create two (and only two) sexes—male and female—to complement each other.

- vi. Why did he do it this way? In his perfect wisdom, he knew that two different, but complementary sexes, would most glorify his name.

- vii. This was God's good plan for humanity, yet we are often ashamed of the Bible's teaching on the sexes.

- viii. Rather than be ashamed of God's plan for the sexes, we should rejoice in God's plan for the sexes.

c. This brings us to our fourth theological distinctive and the topic of complementarity.

- i. Recommend Deyoung's brand new book.
- ii. Recommend the book Radiant: fifty remarkable women from church history.
- iii. Discuss the different positions.

d. We are going to look at biblical complementarity under four headings-

- i. Equal in value

- ii. Different in function
- iii. Answering objections
- iv. Making application

1. Men and Women are equal in value

- a. **Equal in value-** Gen 1:27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.
- b. **Equal heirs of the spirit-** Act 2:17-18 "And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; (18) even on my male servants and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy.
- c. **Equal heirs of salvation-** Gal 3:28-29 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. (29) And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.
- d. **History shows that wherever Christian influence is felt, women are treated with more equality, dignity, and respect.**
 - i. In the well-researched book *Jesus Skeptic*, author John S. Dickerson argues that the countries with the best record of women's rights have predominately Christian populations. And the countries with the worst record of women's rights happened to be very hostile to Christianity.
 - ii. According to the World Economic Forum (a secular organization), here are then nations that lead the world in Woman's rights
 - 1. Show image on page 41 of *Jesus Skeptic*.
 - a. On average people that self-identify as Christian make up 75 percent of the population of these nations.
 - b. Includes matters such as equal pay, the right to vote, the right not to be sold into marriage, etc...
 - 2. Show image on page 42 of *Jesus Skeptic*
 - a. These are the ten worst nations for woman's rights in the world today.
 - b. Christians are a stifled minority in the nations with the worst records for woman's rights.
 - c. None of these nations have had a significant Christian influence. In most of them Christianity is outlawed.
 - d. "No matter how much you may respect other global cultures, if you have a daughter, sister, or mother ,you do not want her living in one of these societies." (*Jesus Skeptic*, 42)
- e. Christianity liberates women.
- f. The Bible clearly teaches that men and women are equal in value.
 - i. our conversation about the sexes must begin here.
 - ii. Christian men must lead the way in the fair treatment of women.

- iii. Christian husbands must treat their wives with love, tenderness, and respect.
- iv. Christian dads must treat their daughters the same way.
- v. Christian single men must be exemplary gentlemen.

g. *Men and woman are equal in value.*

2. Men and women are different in function

a. **1 Timothy 2:8–15 (ESV) — 8** I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling; **9** likewise also that women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire, **10** but with what is proper for women who profess godliness—with good works. **11** Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness. **12** I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet. **13** For Adam was formed first, then Eve; **14** and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. **15** Yet she will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith and love and holiness, with self-control.

b. Paul is giving Timothy instructions about the public gathering of Christians to worship God, which means that the context is the public gathering of the saints.

c. Let's look at the five key phrases in this passage-

d. First key phrase

- i. V. 9 **“likewise also that women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire”**
- ii. This does not mean that woman can't braid their hair and wear jewelry.
- iii. “Women in the first century often wove gold, pearls, or other jewelry into their hair styles (“braided hair”) to call attention to themselves and their wealth or beauty. The same was true of those women who wore costly clothing. By doing so they would draw attention to themselves and away from the Lord, likely causing the poorer women to be envious. Paul's point was to forbid women from flaunting their wealth and distracting people from worshipping the Lord.” (MCB)
- iv. Application – Women (and men) should dress modestly and in ways that don't draw attention to their wealth. (the opposite of the preacher's sneakers website).

e. Second key phrase

- i. V. 12 **“I do not permit a woman to teach”**
- ii. This is not merely Paul's opinion. He is speaking as an apostle who represents the risen Christ (1 Thes. 4:1-2; 2 Thes. 3:6) If we challenge this point, our doctrine of inspiration evaporates.
- iii. The teaching that is prohibited is teaching the Bible to the gathered church composed of males and females.

- iv. This means that it is ok for women to teach men Mathematics, Literature, History, philosophy, church history, etc....
- v. This does not prohibit a woman teaching other women (Tit 2) or women teaching children (2 Tim 1:5). Or women have authority over men in other contexts.
- vi. Nor does this prohibit a woman from reading scriptures or from sharing a testimony in church.
- vii. **What about????**

- 1. **1 Corinthians 14:34–35 (ESV) —34 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. 35 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.**
- 2. “Silent in the churches” in the context of this passage means silent in regard to evaluating prophecy when the church gathers.

viii. Application:

- 1. To sum up verse 12, Paul is saying that woman should not teach the Bible to men, when the church gathers.

f. Third key phrase

- i. V. 12- **“I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet.”**
- ii. Not only is teaching the Bible prohibited but exercising authority is also prohibited.
- iii. This means that two activities are prohibited in this verse, not one activity.
- iv. **ESV Study Bible-**
 - 1. **“The presence of the word *or* (Gk. *oude*) between “to teach” and “to exercise authority” indicates that two different activities are in view, not a single activity of “authoritative teaching.”**
- v. Objection 1
 - 1. Some egalitarians say that Paul is prohibiting authoritative teaching. In other words, it is ok for women to teach men as long as it is not authoritative.
 - 2. But this is not what Paul says... Furthermore, there is no such thing as non-authoritative Bible teaching...
- vi. Objection 2
 - 1. What Paul really means is that women should not usurp authority. In other words, they can teach the Bible to men as long as they don’t usurp authority.

2. Here is the problem with this interpretation. Scholars have found over 80 instances of the word translated “exercise authority” outside of the NT. And every time the word means exercise authority, not usurp authority or abuse authority. (ESVSB).

vii. Objection 3

1. Women can teach as long as they are under the authority of men. Again, this ignores the specifics of this verse. This verse says that they can’t teach or exercise authority.

viii. Application

1. Women are prohibited by God from teaching the Bible or exercising authority in the context of the gathered church.
2. Furthermore, since the role of pastor/elder/teacher is rooted in the task of teaching (1 Tim. 3:2), women are prohibited by God from the office of elder.

g. Fourth key phrase

- i. **“I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet. 13 For Adam was formed first, then Eve; 14 and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor.”**

ii. Paul lists two reasons for his prohibition.

1. “Adam was formed first...”

- a. At the beginning of creation Adam was formed first and Eve was formed second. This means that husbands are called to lead, and wives are called to respond to their husband’s leadership.
- b. Furthermore, this means that the role of woman in church was not a result of the fall. It is a result of God’s created order.

2. “Adam was not deceived..”

- a. When Paul says that Eve was deceived, he is not implying that Eve was more gullible than Adam, he is simply pointing out that Satan attacked Eve, intentionally undermining God’s created order.
- b. Eve should have sought the counsel of her husband. And Adam should have protected Eve. They both failed miserably.

iii. Objections-

1. Many egalitarians agree with all that I have said so far.
 - a. Paul told the church in Ephesus that woman could not teach the Bible to men.
2. But, this command no longer applies to us. Why?

- a. The women in Ephesus were teaching false doctrine.
 - i. Response- there is zero historical evidence that women were teaching false doctrine. All the false teachers named are men (1:19–20; 2 Tim. 2:17–18; cf. Acts 20:30).
 - b. Paul gave this prohibition because the woman in Ephesus were uneducated, but now that women are educated this prohibition no longer applies.
 - i. Response- research has shown that women in Ephesus were well educated. (Baugh, Grudem, and ESVSB))
 - c. Or... this command only applies to the first century culture.
3. But, we don't have to guess why Paul gave us this command.
- a. Paul tells us exactly why he wrote these words...
 - b. Paul roots this prohibition in the created order, transcending all cultural boundaries. Which means it applies to all times and all places.
 - c. Which is why this has been the position of nearly every Christian denomination for the last 2000 years.
4. *This brings us the last key phrase-*

h. Last key phrase-

- i. V. 15 “Yet she will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith and love and holiness, with self-control”
- ii. What in the world does this mean? This is a notoriously difficult verse.
- iii. Paul clearly is not teaching that woman are saved by having babies, the rest of the NT makes that very clear.
- iv. More than likely Paul is saying that woman will be saved (i.e., preserved in the faith) when they remain faithful to the God given role. What is the God given role of women? Women are designed by God to give birth to children. This is something than men can't do.
- v. In other words, Paul is saying that it is very important for women to act like women and men to act like men.
 - 1. “Ultimately, Paul wants women to understand that they do not have to reject their homes and families in order to have worth in God's sight or to enjoy all the benefits of redemption; rather, they work out their salvation in fear and trembling (Phil. 2:13, 14) as they fulfill their calling in the home.” (RSB)
- vi. How appropriate that today is mother's day...

- i. Summary
 - i. We have covered a lot of ground in this key passage.
 - ii. Here is the summary.
 - 1. Men and women are equal in value but have different functions in the church.
 - 2. These different functions are based not on 1st century culture, but they are based on the creation of man and women in the Garden of Eden.
- j. One other key passage
 - i. Men are called to lead in marriage.
 - 1. **Ephesians 5:22–27 (ESV)** — **22** Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. **23** 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. **24** Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. **25** Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, **26** that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, **27** 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.
 - 2. It does not make any sense for men to lead in marriage and then women to lead in the church. If a wife was leading her husband in the church how could her husband lead her at home in obedience to Eph 5?
 - 3. Since I covered this in detail in our Ephesians series I will not say much here about marriage.
- k. *So far, I have laid out the complementarian position.*

3. Objections to the complementarian position-

- a. You are saying that men and women are equal but if they have different roles how can they really be equal?
 - i. The Trinity is our paradigm.
 - ii. Ontological equality and economic subordination.
- b. If God has genuinely called a woman to be a pastor, who are you to challenge her?
 - i. Debate at Whitworth...
 - ii. Who calls into ministry?
 - iii. Who inspires the Bible?
 - iv. But she has a profound teaching gift!!!
 - v. How does one know that God has called them into ministry?
 - vi. This is the American way. We are told from day one that we can be whatever we want to be someday.
 - vii. What if I told you that the Holy Spirit told me to divorce my wife and leave my kids in order to marry someone else!!! You would think I was crazy! Why? The Bible clearly prohibits such activity.

- c. What about examples of women leading in scripture???
 - i. Miram the prophetess? (she focused her ministry on the women of Israel)
 - ii. What about Deborah a prophetess and judge in Israel?
 - 1. The refrain of the book of judges is that everyone did as they sought right in their own eyes. In other words, this book is not paradigmatic for ministry.
 - 2. Furthermore, we are specifically told in Judges 4:9 that she was a judge because the men in Israel failed to lead. Her leadership was meant to shame the men into leading.
 - iii. What about Huldah the prophetess 2 Kings 22? She prophesied privately to the king. She did not teach a mixed audience or rule.
 - iv. What about Priscilla and Aquilla a husband wife team who instructed Apollos? Surely this is an example of a female teaching a male. Yes, but it is a one on one or a two on one discussion.
 - v. Finally, we can say that the history of the Bible is the history of male leadership. All the prophets (office of prophet), kings, priests, apostles, and elders were male.
 - vi. If Jesus wanted female pastors and teachers, he would have appointed them. Last time I checked Jesus was not afraid to upset the status quo.

- d. This is a secondary issue why get so worked up about it?
 - i. When women lead the church, all the men leave.
 - 1. This has happened over and over and over again in church history.
 - ii. The Egalitarian position is a slippery slope to theological liberalism.
 - 1. This issue will test one's view of Scripture.
 - 2. Is the scripture authoritative or not?
 - iii. **Wayne Grudem** in his book "Evangelical Feminism; A new path to Liberalism" describes what happened to most of the American mainline denominations-
 - 1. It always starts with a low view of Scripture
 - 2. Followed by the ordination of women
 - 3. Followed by the denial of any distinctions between male and female
 - 4. Followed by referring to God as Mother
 - 5. Followed by an endorsement of the homosexual lifestyle.
 - 6. If you doubt this, let me encourage you to study the history of
 - a. UMC
 - b. ELCA
 - c. PCUSA
 - d. The mainline Congregational church
 - e. Some Baptist groups
 - iv. The very nature of God is at stake within the trinity.

- e. *We have looked at three things-*
 - i. *Equal in value*
 - ii. *Different in function*
 - iii. *Objections*

4. Application

- a. God's plan is always the best
 - i. When men exercise Godly, Masculine, humble leadership in the church and in the home families and women in particular flourish.
 - ii. God's plan really works.
 - iii. When men lead in the church other men are drawn to the church and they are encouraged to love and serve their families. (recent 9 marks conference)
 - iv. God is not out to destroy our happiness he wants us to be happy! His plan leads to the most happiness.
 - v. On the other hand, when women lead the church, the men leave the church and the church shrivels up and dies. (American church history proves this)

- b. Ok, so what can women do in the church?
 - i. Ministries of evangelism
 - ii. Teaching other women, the Bible
 - iii. Biblical counselor to other women
 - iv. Children's Sunday school teacher
 - v. Women can write Christian books on theology and scripture (similar to one-on-one teaching)
 - vi. Women can serve as church secretaries/treasurers
 - vii. Women can read Scripture on Sunday mornings
 - viii. All kinds of missionary work that does not involve preaching or pastoring.
 - ix. They can share their testimony about God's work in their lives
 - x. Help to serve the Lord's supper
 - xi. On and on the list goes...

5. In conclusion

- a. Let's go back to where we started.
 - i. God could have decided to make everyone in the human race male.
 - ii. God could have decided to make everyone in the human race female.
 - iii. Or he could have created 3 sexes.
 - iv. But... that is not what he did.
 - v. Instead, God acting in perfect wisdom, decided to create two sexes, male and female—equal in value, yet different in function.
 - vi. Instead of being embarrassed about God's design, lets rejoice in God's design.

- b. Let's pray...