

## **In the Vineyard Movement, we believe that women are equally gifted, called and can hold the same authority as men.**

We hold this belief with a “high” view of scripture, or in other words: the entire Bible is inspired and has authority. We don’t want to fall into the two traps of either ignoring context (only reading “on the surface”) or simply cutting out the parts of the Bible we don’t agree with. Sometimes this means holding seemingly contradictory truths in tension. But often, what we perceive as contradictions can come from misinterpretation or our own lack of nuance. We also read the Old Testament in light of the New Testament. Jesus is the perfect picture of God, and it is to him that the Old Testament points, that the gospels testify, and the epistles (ie. Paul’s letters) apply to the church.

In our view, even passages that don’t seem to apply to our present context (ie. food sacrificed to idols) point to an eternal principle that is still true. As readers of the Bible and followers of Jesus, we are constantly trying to understand and apply these eternal principles from “then and there” to our “here and now”. This requires us all to have both a robust hermeneutic (developed method of interpreting scripture) and a posture of humility, especially as we engage the topic of women and leadership in its long history of controversy and pain. However, we believe the biblical vision for men and women is to be a kingdom of prophets, priests and kings as established in the Garden of Eden, distorted by the fall, promised in the Old Testament and fulfilled in the New Testament.

The the following document is from a study done by a church which originally did not allow women to hold “equal authority” as men in the church. Their new conclusion is that *“the practice of excluding women from ecclesiastical office [church leadership] cannot be conclusively defended on biblical grounds... [and] the most obvious teaching of Scripture is that both qualified male and female members of the church should serve [as leaders, specifically] in the offices of elder, minister, and evangelist.*

**To be clear: the following document is NOT from the Vineyard Movement, and we don’t define ourselves by all of the presuppositions or conclusions represented in this report.** We share it because we feel it is one of the most comprehensive survey giving clear and concise treatment on the subject that we have encountered. We appreciate that it uses biblical grounds to form its position.

We hope this is helpful as you engage in healthy and honest conversation about this topic, and we’re happy to continue the dialogue, so feel free to reach out.

With love and appreciation,

Amos & Alison Groenendyk

## Old Testament evidence

### a. Genesis 1

Genesis 1:16-27 affirms that both male and female were created equally in the image of God. It says nothing about defining the relationship of male and female but does indicate that they mutually are to image God and are to be equally involved in being fruitful and multiplying, in subduing the earth, and in having dominion.

### b. Genesis 2

The account of creation in Genesis 2 complements the account given in Genesis 1. Although the male has a certain priority in that Adam was created before Eve (vv. 21-22), woman is created as a “helper suitable” for man (v. 18). From other Old Testament uses of the word “helper” where it is applied to God, the word can probably best be understood not in any sense of subjugation but as “companion.” It is also true that Adam, in a fashion somewhat similar to how he named the animals, gave the “woman” her name (v. 23). This fact is immediately linked with marriage: verse 24 says, “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.” This verse is quoted three times in the New Testament (Matt. 19:5; Mark 10:6; Eph. 5:31) to show the intimate union between husband and wife, and the last part of the verse is quoted once (I Cor. 6:16) to show the disastrous results of the act of prostitution. There is nothing in Genesis 2 to suggest that male priority goes beyond the institution of marriage.

### c. Genesis 3

Genesis 3 recounts the story of the fall. Because of man’s sin, a curse falls on the serpent, on the ground, on the woman, and on the man. The pronouncement upon the woman is not only that there will be an increase in the pain of bearing children but also that, specifically with reference to the husband in the relationship in marriage, “he will rule over you” (v. 16). That this rule will be domineering and oppressive is suggested by the context. Man’s responsibility to work and take care of the garden (Gen. 2) is continued, but now, after the fall, he will work a land that is cursed, and he will toil with pain and sweat (Gen. 3: 17-19).

In its own way Genesis 3 seems to affirm that the only male leadership referred to in Genesis 2 was that in marriage and that now, after the fall, the male’s leadership has become distorted and oppressive.

### d. The rest of the Old Testament

1) It is clear that in the rest of the Old Testament males are more prominent than females. It is also clear that man is in charge, filling the prominent leadership roles both in the patriarchal period and in the later organization of Israel. In the latter, the leadership roles of prophets, judges, kings, and priests were exercised by men. Yet the exceptions are important. Hannah speaks prophetically in her prayer/song (I Sam. 2:1-10), pointing to the new era of leadership of Israel under a king. Her song is echoed in the “Magnificat,” or song of Mary (Luke 1:46-55), and the “Benedictus,” or song of Zechariah (Luke 1:67-79). In one sense the appearances of Miriam as prophetess (Exod. 15:20-21), Deborah as prophetess and judge (Judg. 4:4-10), and Huldah as prophetess (II Kings 22:14-20; II Chron. 34:22-28) are exceptions that prove the rule. But “rule” here cannot mean an exclusive God-ordained ordinance. It is a striking fact that when these exceptions occur, Scripture offers no

apologies for the religious leadership provided by these women and only a natural and willing acceptance by the people of these women's activities. Yet, in the main, leadership roles in the religious community were exercised by men, and there is no recorded exception to women serving as priests.

2) In fact, there are aspects of life in the old covenant that clearly show the diminished status of women. For example, circumcision, the sign of admission to the covenant, was administered only to males (Gen 17:9-14). Another striking example is the fact that a woman, after giving birth to a daughter, was considered ceremonially unclean for a period of time that is twice that (two weeks and sixty-six days) required after giving birth to a son (one week and thirty-three days). And it appears that the right to divorce was given to the husband but not to his wife (Deut. 24:1-4).

3) Even though the old covenant was made by God, there are many aspects to it that seem not to be his final will for his people. Already from the old-covenant prophets we repeatedly hear the word that God is going to do a "new" thing in and for his people that will transcend what he has done in the past. God, speaking through Jeremiah (31:31-34), even proclaims that he will make a new covenant with the house of Israel that will not be like the covenant that he made when he brought them up out of the land of Egypt. Speaking through Joel (2:28-32), God states that in that new day he will pour out his Spirit equally upon men and women, upon sons and daughters, so that both will prophesy. Ezekiel (11:19-20; 36:26-27) speaks of the time of renewal when God will make his people more obedient to him by giving them "hearts of flesh" rather than "hearts of stone." Isaiah also speaks clearly of that coming day of renewal. The new time will be more inclusive because God's "servant" (Isa. 49:6) will be light and will bring salvation to gentiles as well as Jews. God's coming salvation will include eunuchs and foreigners (Isa. 56:1-8), who under the law had been excluded (Lev. 21:17-23; Deut. 23:1-9).

From the manner in which New Testament authors use these Old Testament prophecies (see Heb. 8:7-13; Acts 2:16-21; II Cor. 3:1-3; Acts 13:47), it is apparent that they clearly understand that these prophecies will be fulfilled when the new-covenant gospel is proclaimed.

## 2. New Testament evidence

### a. . Galatians 3:28

Galatians 3 is an important passage for our purposes. It picks up some of the themes of the blessings promised by the prophets that are now being realized in the new age of redemption. Galatians is among the earliest writings of the New Testament. Galatians 3 contrasts the life realized in Christ with the previous life "under the law." Galatians 3:26- 29 may be translated as follows:

You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have been clothed with Christ: there is neither Jew nor Greek, neither slave nor free person, neither male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. Indeed if you belong to Christ, then you are the seed of Abraham and you are heirs according to the promise.

Everyone agrees that this text, among other things, declares that male and female share equally in salvation in Christ. But there are reasons to see broader implications in the text.

1) It is remarkable that here in Galatians Paul should include the pairs slave-free and male-female. The two issues implied by these pairs are not discussed elsewhere in the letter, which is primarily about the Jew-gentile agenda. The fact that he includes them suggests that this trio of paired opposites had become part of an early confession that announced the universality and inclusiveness

of the new covenant. It is likely that the confession was meant to counter the chauvinistic statements found in the Jewish cycle of morning prayers, in which the (male) believer thanked God that he had not been made a gentile, or a slave, or a woman. This early baptismal confession would thus announce the church's belief that in Christ the old racial schisms and cultural divisions had been healed.

2) As noted in the translation of Galatians 3:26-29 above, the grammatical construction of the pair "neither male and female" is different from that of the other two pairs, which read "neither . . . nor." It has been rightly discerned that this was done deliberately to pick up the language of Genesis 1:27 ("male and female created he them"), thereby indicating that in Christ male and female are restored to their original equal participation in the image of God and the concomitant call to jointly exercise dominion over creation.

3) From the reference to the first pair (Jew-Greek) it can be seen that the "oneness in Christ" proclaimed in Galatians 3:28 is relevant not only to the equal standing they all enjoy in salvation but also to some "societal" implications. Part of Paul's reason for writing was to clear up the problem of Peter's refusal to eat with gentiles at Antioch (Gal. 2:11-14). The oneness of Jew and gentile in Christ required equal treatment in table fellowship. Presumably that equal treatment in table fellowship would apply not only to the Jew-Greek pair but just as well to slave-free and male-female pairs. Indeed, so the church has understood it.

4) Although Galatians 3:28 does not explicitly speak of the social equality of male and female, it does seem to imply it. As noted above, the confession seems to pick up the theme of equality from Genesis 1:27. The force of the implied equality in this passage can be seen as follows. Just as it would be inappropriate to say, "Theophilus may not be an elder because he's a Greek," or "Onesimus may not be an elder because he's a slave," so too it is inappropriate to say, "Apphia may not be an elder because she is a woman."

5) Finally, one of the many blessings that all the believers in Galatia received through Christ and through baptism into him was their adoption: "you all are sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus." All the privileges that go with sonship were now equally theirs, whether they were Jew or Greek, slave or free, male and female. Women who are in Christ are "God's sons" and thus on a par with men. Therefore, they deserve the status that accompanies sonship.

#### b. Baptism as the sign and seal of the new covenant

As noted earlier, circumcision, the sign of the old covenant, was administered only to males. There is no text in the Old Testament that prophesied that in the new covenant the church would baptize both male and female. And there is no New Testament pronouncement that females as well as males should receive the initiatory rite of the new covenant. The church seemed simply to know that the great day of renewal, the day of universality and inclusiveness, called for the equal treatment of male and female. In the old covenant the women were not circumcised, but they were a part of the covenant. They were equal to men regarding salvation but unequal in other dimensions of their religion. Thus, in the new covenant the baptism of female along with male suggests a more profound equality than the simple equality of salvation under the old covenant.

c. The gifts of the Spirit and the right to exercise those gifts In keeping with the prophecy of Joel 2:28 and its recognized fulfillment in these last days (Acts 2:17-18), Paul often refers to Christians' receiving the gifts of the Spirit (Rom. 12:3-8; I Cor. 12:7-11; 27-30; Eph. 4:7-13). These gifts include

many leadership functions, such as those necessary for “apostles,” “prophets,” “evangelists,” “pastors and teachers,” and the gifts include such activities as “prophesying,” “teaching,” and “leadership.” Furthermore, these gifts seem to be given indiscriminately to all members, whether male or female. For example, Paul says, “Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good” (I Cor. 12:7; see also I Cor. 12:27; Rom. 12:3; Eph. 5:7). In addition, along with the gift there goes the right and duty to exercise that gift. If women who have been given leadership gifts are to function appropriately in the church, opening the offices of elder, minister, and evangelist to them seems to be necessary.

d. Women and men as prophets, priests, and kings in the new covenant

1) As Joel 2:28 had promised, both men and women received the Spirit to enable them to prophesy (Acts 2:17-18). Women (wives) as well as men (husbands) did prophesy in Corinth (I Cor. 11:5), and the daughters of Philip had the gift of prophecy (Acts 21:9).

2) Unlike the women under the old covenant, under the new covenant, women as well as men are priests and kings. In Exodus 19:5-7, God promised Israel that, if she was obedient to his covenant, she would become “a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.” In the New Testament this promise is applied to the church, sometimes with emphasis on the priestly aspect (I Pet. 2:4-10) and sometimes with emphasis on the kingly aspect (Rev. 5:10; see Rev. 1:6).

3) Citing a series of Old Testament texts in II Corinthians 6:16-18, Paul stresses first that all Corinthian believers, male and female, are priests. Then, modifying II Samuel 7:14 to his purpose, he applies God’s promise to David’s offspring so that it applies to both sons and daughters. Thus, under the new covenant, kingship is conferred upon women as well as men...

e. Women as witnesses and agents of special revelation in the new covenant

Women were the first to see the risen Christ and were thus the first witnesses of the resurrection (Matt. 28:1-10). The prophetic utterances of Mary and Elizabeth are recorded (Luke 1:39-56), and through them God continues to instruct the church. The Samaritan woman to whom Jesus ministered (John 4:7-42) led many to believe in him as a result of her testimony.

f. Women as fellow workers in Christ for the gospel

In ways that far outstrip the ministry of women in the old covenant, women under the new covenant are described as carrying out many leadership roles in the church. Phoebe is a “deacon” and a “helper” (Rom. 16:1-2). Priscilla and Aquila are both called “my fellow workers in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 16:3); they are also noted for instructing the mighty Apollos more fully in the gospel (Acts 18:24-26). Mary, Tryphena, Tryphosa, and Persis are called “hard workers” in the Lord (Rom. 16:6, 12). These examples are important not simply because they exhibited commendable zeal but particularly because Paul sometimes uses these words (“hard worker”) to describe those who have a leadership role in the church (I Thess. 5:12), including the work of preaching and teaching (I Tim. 5:17). Even more surprisingly, Paul refers to Andronicus and Junia (many translations have the masculine “Junias,” but that masculine form of the name has never been found), who are said to be “outstanding among the apostles.” Thus it is almost certain that this woman (wife) was among the foundational apostles of the church. And finally there were Apphia, who, along with Archippus, was a leader in the church that met in Philemon’s house (Philem. 2), and Euodia and Syntyche (Phil. 4:2), who were true “fellow workers” and who labored “side by side” with Paul in the cause of the gospel.

These specific cases of women in leadership roles in the new covenant support the notion that the baptismal confession of Galatians 3:28 functioned powerfully in the church. Women not only equally shared in salvation but were amazingly and to a surprising degree involved in essential leadership roles in the early church.

g. Passages which seem to disagree with this part of the biblical witness The case for opening the offices of elder, minister, and evangelist to qualified women rests upon the general analogy of Scripture, that is, on the “obvious scope and import of its teachings as a whole.” There would have to be explicit and universally binding scriptural arguments against this teaching in order to overturn it. Some think that such evidence exists in I Corinthians 11:2-16, I Corinthians 14:33b-35, and I Timothy 2:9-15. These texts may not be dismissed; they are to be dealt with according to Reformed hermeneutics, and their teaching must be honored. Rightly interpreted, these passages, too, can properly be understood to be in harmony with the general analogy of Scripture that has just been presented.

#### 1) I Corinthians 11:2-16

In Corinth the believing women were exercising their new-found freedom in Christ and were participating in the worship service by praying and prophesying. Paul in no way discouraged the women from praying and prophesying, but he did insist that they show proper decorum in doing so, probably by wearing long hair and an appropriate head covering. To support his concern, he states in I Corinthians 11:3, “I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.”

How is the term “head” (kephalê) used here? There are two reasons to suggest that here Paul is using “head” to mean “source.” First, in Greek the term “head” (kephalê), when used in a metaphorical way, did not mean “have authority over.” It wasn’t until later in Ephesians and Colossians, that Paul used it that way when he referred to Christ, so the Corinthians most likely would have understood kephalê as “source.” Second, when Paul elaborates later on the man-woman relationship (I Cor. 11:8-9), he elaborates on the idea of “source” (“for man did not come from woman but woman from man. . .”). In the context, then, kephalê (“head”) probably has that same meaning in verse 3.

It is also uncertain whether the references are to “man” or “husband” and to “woman” or “wife,” since the Greek words used here can mean either. Elsewhere in his letters Paul often takes pains to protect the relationship between husbands and wives, and that may also be his most important concern in I Corinthians 11. But there are some more inclusive statements here (such as “every man prophesy- ing” and “every woman prophesying”) that make it difficult to limit what Paul says here only to the marriage relationship. Even though acknowledging that man and woman have equality in praying and prophesying and mutual dependence in the Lord (I Cor. 11:11-12), he insists that women have their heads covered while praying and prophesying, because of man’s being the source of woman (vv. 3, 8-9), because of the angels (v. 10), because of what “nature itself” teaches (v.14), and because of the widespread practices in the churches at that time (v. 16).

But the church over time has judged that the wearing of head coverings by women is an application of a principle rather than the principle itself, and therefore it has not usually required women in other cultures to cover their heads. In fact, this passage clearly permits a woman to pray and prophesy in the worship services as long as she does so with proper decorum. So this passage supports rather than opposes what the Bible as a whole teaches, namely, that women and men share equally not

only in salvation in Christ but also in the responsibility of working for—and even prophetically proclaiming—the gospel.

## 2) I Corinthians 14:33b-35

The context of I Corinthians 14:33b-35 (see I Cor. 14:26-33a) speaks of the proper decorum during worship gatherings involving those who speak in tongues and those who prophesy. Participants—including prophets—must know when to keep silent (I Cor. 14:28-30). Wives also should be silent; they are not permitted to speak, and they must be in submission. If they wish to inquire about something, they are urged to ask their own husbands at home, since to do otherwise is disgraceful (I Cor. 14:33b-35).

Two things are to be noted about I Corinthians 14: (a) Paul here applies his instruction to the marriage relationship, since he says that the women should “ask their own husbands at home”; (b) the injunction to be silent was obviously not meant to be absolute, for that would contradict I Corinthians 11. So Paul must in this context be referring to the kind of disruptive speech that would be inappropriate in the marriage relationship and dishonoring to the God of peace who had called them. God is not a God of disorder but of peace.

To hear the enduring message of this passage, we must again distinguish between a principle and the application of a principle. Two principles seem to be at work here: (a) male headship in marriage must be honored, and (b) in worship everything must be done in an orderly and edifying way. As principles, these are valid for all times and places. The application of these principles in Paul’s day, in the rather free-flowing worship services at Corinth, required forbidding wives to speak in a disorderly way. Today, compliance with these principles means that wives (or women) may participate in the worship service as long as their participation does not violate headship in marriage and is not disruptive or unedifying.

## 3) I Timothy 2:9-15

Four features of I Timothy 2:9-15 deserve mention: (a) in the church women should pray and dress modestly and adorn themselves with good deeds rather than external finery (2:9-10);

(b) women are to learn but must do so in quietness and full submission (2:11); (c) Paul does not permit a wife (or woman) to teach or usurp authority over a husband (man) (2:12); (d) he bases this restriction on creation and the fall (2:13-14) but concludes with a message of hope for the woman (2:15).

Timothy was left in Ephesus to combat false teachers (I Tim. 1:3-7) who were promoting speculative theories and wrong ideas about the law, leading many astray. They seem to have had considerable influence among some women, especially younger widows (5:11-15). It seems that some of the younger widows (5:13) were even propagating this false teaching and some (5:15) had already capitulated to Satan. The false teachers seemed to be forbidding marriage and advocating other ascetic practices (4:3). The injunctions in I Timothy 2:11-15 can best be understood against this polemical background.

The meaning of verse 12 is crucial, though it raises three disputable issues.

*First, it is not clear whether Paul is addressing two issues—women are not permitted to teach men and women are not permitted to have authority over men—or only one issue—women are not permitted to teach with authority over men. In many ways the impact for the church is the same with*

*either meaning. Given what Paul states in I Corinthians 14, it seems more likely that he is referring to “authoritative instruction.” Second, the precise meaning of the word authentein (often translated “have authority over”) is disputed. The word occurs only here in the New Testament. The old King James Version translates it as “to usurp authority over,” which suggests a domineering kind of authority. But many modern translations, including the NIV, render it simply as “to have authority over.” Third, as in I Corinthians 11, the words for male and female can have the more general meaning of “man” and “woman” or the meaning specific to the marriage relationship, “husband” and “wife.”*

It seems likely that here again Paul is addressing the marriage relationship. The word “submission” is the same one used in Ephesians 5:22 and I Corinthians 14:34, where marriage is being discussed. And since I Timothy 2:15 refers to women being saved through childbearing, Paul seems to have the marriage relationship in mind—as he does in I Corinthians 14:33b-35.

Although the [greek] word *authentein* in I Timothy 2:12 can mean “to have authority over,” it seems likely that here it has the more pejorative force of “to usurp authority over,” as in the King James translation. One point in favor of the latter is that Paul uses a different word in

I Corinthians 7:4 when he affirms that in marriage a woman has authority over the body of her husband just as the husband has authority over the body of his wife. Given the context of teaching in I Timothy 2:12, what is probably being prohibited is the exercise of the wrong kind of authority within marriage, the domineering kind of usurping authority.

Paul’s injunctions in I Timothy 2:11-12 are rooted in an appeal first of all to the creation story: Adam was first formed, then Eve (2:13). (Paul made the same appeal in I Corinthians 11:8-10 in grounding his injunction for women to wear head coverings in worship.) This affirmation is best understood here as countering the false teachers who were forbidding marriage and advocating other ascetic practices by not adequately recognizing the good creation order (I Tim. 4:1-5).

The meaning of I Timothy 2:14-15 is notoriously difficult to interpret. These verses carry the argument about women in the church beyond anything we have elsewhere in Paul. Yet this very fact supports the suggestion that the entire passage has in mind a very specific problem in Ephesus, specifically, the one pictured in

I Timothy 5:11-15. Gordon Fee (*Gospel and Spirit*, pp. 57-59) interprets verses 14 and 15 in a way that seems right:

*Based on words of Eve in Genesis 3:13 (“the serpent deceived me, and I ate”), Paul states that Adam was not deceived (by the snake, that is), but rather it was the woman (note the change from Eve to “the woman”), who having been deceived (by Satan is implied) fell into transgression. That is exactly the point of 5:15—such deception of woman by “Satan” has already been repeated in the church at Ephesus. But, Paul says in verse 15, there is still hope she can be saved (eschatological salvation is ultimately in view, but in the context she shall be saved from her deception with its ultimate transgressions), provided she is first of all a woman of faith, love, and holiness.*

In summary, Paul in I Timothy 2:11-15 is seeking to preserve the integrity of marriage by forbidding women to teach their husbands in a domineering way. The reason for these injunctions can best be seen over against the false teachings that were troubling the church at Ephesus. Paul is here spelling out the application of the principle of male headship in marriage because of the kind of feminism that was present in Ephesus. Paul’s injunction against teaching done in a domineering way is similar to



his insistence in I Corinthians 11 on head coverings for women when they are praying and prophesying. Such a reading of what Paul teaches here regarding marriage and piety suggests that if women teach and exercise the authority of leadership without domineering, then there is no objection to their using these gifts for the upbuilding of the church.

### 3. Summary and conclusions

Male and female were equally created in God's image (Gen. 1); male priority in marriage was established with the first couple, Adam and Eve (Gen. 2). Sin corrupted what was originally intended, with dire consequences (Gen. 3). Throughout the Old Testament, leadership in the religious community was dominantly male. In addition, some aspects of the old covenant indicated the diminished status of the female. Through the prophets, God promised that a day of renewal was coming in which he would make a new covenant that would go far beyond the old covenant and its practices.

Part of the newness of the new covenant is that the equality of male and female was reestablished (Gal. 3). To be sure, male priority in marriage as depicted in Genesis 2 continues, but it is now revitalized by the sacrificial love of Christ (Eph. 5). The renewed status of women meant that they held leadership roles within the New Testament church that went far beyond those of the old covenant. For reasons of decorum and to protect the marriage relationship, Paul found it necessary to restrict the manner of functioning (I Cor. 11) and sometimes the role of married women (I Cor. 14; I Tim. 2). But this evidence is not sufficient to overturn the general analogy of Scripture that all the rights and privileges of the office of believer belong to women as well as to men.

To be sure, throughout the history of the church, some of these passages—especially I Timothy 2—have been understood as prohibiting

(a) women from voting in civil elections, (b) women from voting in congregational meetings of the church, (c) women from serving in any of the church offices, and (d) women from serving in the office of elder, minister, and evangelist. On several of these issues there has already been progress in the understanding of these texts. There may be a parallel in this situation to in the church's progress in its understanding of Scripture's teaching on human slavery. For many centuries certain regulations in the Old and New Testaments were understood as permitting, if not encouraging, human slavery. More recently, the church has progressed in understanding that at its core the Scriptures teach the kind of human equality that prohibits slavery. So, too, the church may be progressing in understanding that the oneness and equality of male and female are more basic than the temporary regulations regarding the functions of wives/women. ***Thus the most obvious teaching of Scripture is that both qualified male and female members of the church should serve in the offices of elder, minister, and evangelist.***

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