

Approaches to Women in the Church

Radical Feminism (Man Haters)
Strong Feminism
Forms of Egalitarianism
Forms of Complementarianism
Strong Patriarchalism
Radical Patriarchalism (Woman Haters)



	Radical Feminism ("Women All The Way" Egalitarianism)	Evangelical Feminism ("Even Playing Field" Egalitarianism)	Hierarchal Complementarianism ("All But One" Complementarianism)	Patriarchalism ("No Female Authority" Complementarianism)
Resulting View	Anything men can do, women can do just as well, if not better. There is no Scriptural reason to restrict women from any role or responsibility in the church, including authoritative or public ministry roles.	Men and women are to work as partners in mutual submission at home and in ministry. Men can lead and so can women.	Women can take part in any ministry task or other ministry position but are prohibited from holding the most authoritative office of a denomination or church. This is a pattern that can be seen from the Old Testament and throughout the New Testament and church history.	Women are to be loved and cherished but not in charge. Women can instruct children, non-believers, and other women but never men.
Genesis 1-3	If anyone is superior based on the creation account, it is woman. She is the last of all of God's creation. She is created as an "ezer" for man, the same word used to describe God's relationship with Israel in their times of trouble.	There are two different creation accounts but both speak of partnership. God creates man and woman equally in his image. The two become one flesh when they marry. Partnership was the ideal relationship before the Fall and should be what we strive for now.	God establishes a hierarchy not on characteristics or worth but by creating man first. Both are created equally in God's image but they do not have the same role. Since man is created first, his role is above the woman's role.	God established a clear hierarchy by creating man first and allowing him to name all of creation, including woman. Woman usurped her authority which led to the first sin and one of her consequences is for her husband to rule over her.
OT	Not only are there numerous examples of women as prophets, judges, queens, and with influence, God is often described with feminine characteristics and this part of God's identity should be enhanced.	The Old Testament has lots of examples of women in ministry and leadership; Deborah was a judge, Huldah and Miriam were prophetesses, and Esther was a queen. And these are just a few.	Many examples exist of women in prophetic or political roles of influence. Yet women never served as priests. The highest and most authoritative religious position was withheld from them per God's word and not just a patriarchal system.	While there are some women who serve in leadership roles, they are the exception and not the norm. Often this is because men would not step up to the task and so women stepped in.

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Jesus/NT	Phoebe and Junia are named as a deaconess and an apostle. How does a Gospel of grace fit with restricting women?	It is true that Jesus never chose a woman to be in his 12; but neither did he choose a Samaritan or a slave yet we do not restrict ministry positions to certain races or social statuses.	Jesus loved women and even spent time with the scandalous ones. Yet he never appoints any of them to authority. His actions do not demonstrate a full-egalitarian mindset. Many women served in the early church, but none were ever named to positions of overseers or apostles.	Jesus was not afraid to be radical and challenge the ways of old. If he thought women could be leaders or authorities, why did he not challenge the patriarchal system? He never even speaks on this idea let alone invites a woman into his inner-circle. He never demeaned them but he never promoted them to higher positions.
Galatians 3:28	The first 2 couplets in this verse are social justices that have been/are being addressed in the world. Women's roles is a social justice concern as well.	This verse has been used in issues of racism and oppression. Why can it not be used in cases of sexism too? Christianity is not just about salvation but a countercultural life of loving others and considering them equals.	This verse is in the context of baptism, a symbol for both men and women of their Christian faith. Circumcision was a symbol only men could have. Identity in Christ was equally open to both genders but this verse has nothing to do with gender roles.	This verse has nothing to do with social status or gender roles but everything to do with salvation and how it is available to all.

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1 Corinthians 11:3-16 Ephesians 5:21-24 Colossians 3:18-19	<p>The idea of men as the head of the household is patriarchal and antiquated. Today, both men and women work outside the home and share in responsibilities with raising children. Women can be independent and strong. The culture has changed since the Bible days and there's a lot of other cultural gender concepts in the Bible that we don't follow so why are we stuck on this one?</p>	<p>It was radical for the author to speak to the people with power in these household codes; he wasn't trying to emphasize their power but how their power was to be countercultural through mutual submission. All Christians are to submit to each other, not just wives to husbands. If husbands are the head like Christ is the head, then husbands must follow Christ's example, which is leading through service and sacrifice.</p>	<p>Male headship at home reflects the ideal relationship God instituted in the Garden of Eden before the Fall. This is to be a loving relationship with the husbands, not an abusive one. Women can pray and prophesy among other spiritual gifts; spiritual gifts are not gender-specific but there is a difference between gifts and official church offices.</p>	<p>These are all examples of the God-ordained hierarchy of male-female relationships. Leadership and authority go hand in hand. Wives are to submit to their husbands; if husbands also submitted to their wives, how would decisions ever be made?</p>
1 Corinthians 14:33-36 1 Timothy 2:8-15	<p>These texts may not even be original to their letters or originally Pauline. At the very least, 1 Timothy was written to a city where false teaching was rampant and to limit teaching to those who really understood the message, male or female, would have been wise. Women were far less likely to be educated back then but the author encourages them to learn, just not in a disruptive way.</p>	<p>Either Paul contradicts himself or women are not to remain totally silent in the assembly for in 1 Cor. 11 he allows them to pray and prophesy. 1 Tim. has multiple translation options and not just the traditional one about authority. Each letter was written in response to specific situations in specific cities. Paul was concerned about building up the body and how the church was able to appropriately witness to non-believers.</p>	<p>Reason for silence in 1 Cor. could be because women were talking or asking questions or evaluating the sermon during the assembly which disrupted others from learning. 1 Tim. could be translated with a hendiadys about "to teach with authority." The distinction between an overseer and a deacon in the next chapter is one of authority and teaching; if women cannot teach with authority they cannot be overseers but they can be deaconesses.</p>	<p>Paul permits women to pray and prophesy but he prohibits them from teaching and speaking. Women who want to know more can ask their spiritual leaders, their husbands, at home. The reasoning for this stems from the Creation account. For women to try and usurp the men's spiritual authority again could create disastrous results like in Eden.</p>