



Egalitarianism, within Christianity, is a movement based on the theological view that not only are all people equal before God in their personhood, but there are no gender-based limitations of what functions or roles each can fulfill in the home, the church, and the society. It is sometimes referred to as **biblical equality**. Egalitarians understand the Bible as teaching the fundamental equality of women and men of all racial and ethnic groups, all economic classes, and all age groups, based on the teachings and example of Jesus Christ.

Egalitarians' interpretation of Scripture [commonly] brings them to the conclusion that the manner and teachings of Jesus, affirmed by the Apostle Paul, abolished gender-specific roles in both the church and in marriage. Accordingly, this view teaches that God calls believers to roles and ministries in the church without regard to class, gender, or race, and all have *equal* responsibility to use their gifts and obey their calling to the glory of God, with no limitations or privileges according to gender. They conclude that male headship is not biblically-ordained either in the home or in the Church.

Egalitarians teach that roles in the church and home are to be *gift-based* rather than *gender-based*. They advocate for mutual submission within marriage as well as the ordination of women as pastors, elders, and other authoritative teaching positions within the body of Christ. Egalitarians deny that any differences related to gender call for strictly prescribed roles. They argue that such distinctions are best utilized by including both women and men at all levels of ministry leadership.

<http://www.theopedia.com/egalitarianism>



Define "continuum", "misogyny", "misandry" and be clear about imperceptible gradient between extremes versus "boxes" or "pigeonholes" that represent completely and distinctly.

"Radical Feminism" -- Extreme terminus of egalitarian end of the continuum:

- Full equality & opportunity for women, with a view to reparations (equity over equality)
- Abolish all forms of gender hierarchy, including male God "If God is male, then the male is God"
- Sexual freedom absolute, including abortion
- Power and control are key issues
- "Misandry" vs. "Misogyny"
- Betty Friedan, Gloria Steinem examples "A woman needs a man like a fish needs a bicycle"

IMPORTANT: I don't *think* we have anyone at Northside with this extreme viewpoint.

"Evangelical Feminism" - somewhere short of the extreme

- Strong appeal to Biblical text
- Traditional exegesis is incorrect (not because it's traditional, because it *is*)
- Often turn to original languages for original meaning (translation is interpretation to a degree).
- Cultural context of the writing as well as the reading is vitally important.
- The "Great Story" of the Bible is key; pre-Fall, post-Fall, Reconciliation of original design / intent
- The whole of scripture & God's view of women indicate how to interpret difficult passages
- Appeal to many examples of women teaching and leading in OT and NT
- Generally view the specific injunctions of 1Cor 14 and 1Tim 2 as correcting specific problems
- Pivotal passage Gal 3:28 (no racism, no slavery, no gender bias)
- Creation order does not imply that first-made = most important.
- Submission to one another among all Christians, regardless of gender
- Men can lead and so can women (from Approaches... matrix)
- "Headship" as source/origin vs. authority/power
- Who is to serve in teaching and leadership not based on gender but on...
 - who is called
 - who is gifted
 - who is trained
 - who is given opportunity
- Practical appeal - We are wasting talent that God gave the church
- Social imperative vs. permissibility ("like racism and slavery")



Comparison of E and C

While the extreme ends of the continuum share little to nothing of significance (schoolyard fight), there is much that the more tempered positions have in common ("Evangelical Feminists" and "Hierarchical Complementarians" in the handout).

Good things in common

- Belief in God, a good and loving creator and ultimate king of all things
- Bible as authoritative expression of His will
- Scholarly and devotional approaches to the text
- Manuscript tradition of Bible history
- Read scriptures w recognition that culture then and now has influenced both writers and readers
- Maintain an inherent equal value of the sexes
- Reject extremism

Not-so-good things in common

- Struggle to be objective (maybe that *is* good...)
- Tend in some cases to throw stones and build straw men in relation to alternate views
- Tend to radicalize opponents views because the extremes are easier to argue against

Because societal culture in America over the past 50-60 years has changed significantly in regard to women's roles and rights...

1. Egalitarians are often accused of making culture their standard for scriptural interpretation & application
2. Complementarians are often accused of making tradition or status quo their standard for interpretation & application

The door swings both ways. Both accusations wrongly impugn the motives and integrity of the alternate view. That must not be us.

--- Definitions ---

Continuum - a continuous sequence in which adjacent elements are not perceptibly different from each other, although the extremes are quite distinct.

Misogyny - (*/mɪˈsɒdʒɪni/*) is the hatred or dislike of women or girls. Misogyny can be manifested in numerous ways, including sexual discrimination, hostility, male supremacist ideas, belittling of women, violence against women, and sexual objectification of women

Misandry - (*/mɪˈsændri/*), from the Greek misos (μῖσος, "hatred") and anēr, andros (άνήρ, gen. άνδρός; "man"), is the hatred or dislike of men or boys. Misandry can be manifested in numerous ways, including sexual discrimination, denigration of men, violence against men, or sexual objectification[3] of men. The term misandrist was first used in 1871.