



HOPESIDE COMMUNITY CHURCH

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Understanding Biblical Unity for Mission

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Is gender exclusion compatible with the Great Co-Mission or Commission?

Understand unity, uniformity, gender, role, precedent, hierarchy, governance and headship in the church based on 1 Cor. 12 (Common English Bible CEB).

[The *English* word "church" comes from the Greek word *kyriakos*, "belonging to the Lord" (*kyrios*).

1 Cor. 3:16 “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?”

1 Cor. 14:39 “Therefore, my brothers and sisters, be eager to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues.”

Origin of the word “[pastor](#)”:

1325-75; < Latin *pāstor* shepherd, literally, feeder, equivalent to *pās-*, base of *pāscere* to put to pasture, feed + -tor -tor; replacing Middle English *pastour* < Anglo-French

Summary: All are called to pastor (serve or shepherd) the flock according to the gifting and calling of God. If not, the Babylonians will come and take you and your gift away. Are you willing to pastor your flock or area with the gifts you have been given?

Background: The confusion and controversy in the church about the role of a certain gender can be attributed to a misapplication and misunderstanding of the Bible about this topic.

Comments given below are in brackets and in bold in the analysis of the verses.

What is mentioned in this chapter should form the basis or foundation for unity and governance in the church first, without which there will be fighting within and without about who should be the head and who should be the tail with no end in sight.

1 Cor. 12

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+12&version=CEB>

¹ Brothers and sisters, I don't want you to be ignorant about spiritual gifts. ² You know that when you were Gentiles you were often misled by false gods" **(or false doctrines and teachings)** "that can't even speak" **(or have practical application).**

⁴ There are different spiritual gifts but the same Spirit;"

⁵ and there are different ministries and the same Lord;"

⁶ and there are different activities but the same God who produces all of them in everyone."

⁷ A demonstration of the Spirit is given to each person for the common good."

¹¹ All these things are produced by the one and **same Spirit who gives what he wants to each person.**" **(and not by gender)**

¹² Christ is just like the human body—a body is a unit and has many parts; and all the parts of the body are one body, even though there are many."

¹⁸ But as it is, God has placed each one of the parts in the body just like he wanted." **(God does the placement by calling, or gifting, or setting apart, also known as "ordaining", or role assignment in the body or church, as He wants, and not any human being or agency on earth).**

²⁰ But as it is, there are many parts but one body. ²¹ So the eye can't say to the hand, "I don't need you," or in turn, the head can't say to the feet, "I don't need you." **(in other words, one part cannot and should not dictate to another body part about its role in the body or church but get the direction or marching orders from the one who created the body or God and cooperate with one**

another to work together – the foundation or blueprint for unity and governance).

“²² Instead, the parts of the body that people think are the weakest are the most necessary.”

“²³ The parts of the body that we think are less honorable are the ones we honor the most. The private parts of our body that aren’t presentable are the ones that are given the most dignity.” (Those who argue that a certain gender is weak inherently and therefore should not be given a certain role in the body or church should note from this verse about how to treat or regard the “weaker” or less honourable or the “least”. Any one we think less of, is the “least” therefore, we are mandated to honor the less honourable the “most”. This principle has a greater application which is to be faithful in the least and to not ignore the details. Jesus said in [Matt. 5:19](#) that whoever shall teach men to ignore the least shall be called the least in the kingdom)

“²⁴ The parts of our body that are presentable don’t need this. But God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the part with less honor ²⁵ so that there won’t be division in the body and so the parts might have mutual concern for each other.” (God always operates by the principle of giving greater honor to the part with less honor, so that there will not be any division in the church body by fostering MUTUAL concern for each other. His mission is about equalizing all and therefore there is no Jew or Greek, male or female according to [Gal. 3:28](#) in mission or the work of Salvation. In fact, he exemplified by washing his disciples’ feet and becoming a servant of servants, and said that whoever seeks greatness in His Kingdom should become the least. It’s a position vs. mission choice. Consider the “servantship” model in mission most of all according to [Matt. 20:26](#))

“²⁷ You are the body of Christ and parts of each other.” (“You are the body” or church which includes male and female. This also means that no gender is automatically given a headship role in the church except Christ alone to whose order and authority the body and all its parts or church must submit to).

“²⁸ In the church, God has appointed first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, the ability to help others, leadership

skills, different kinds of tongues..." **(It is God who appoints anyone He may choose to any role or position with any gift. No gender is mentioned here).**

³¹ Use your ambition to try to get the greater gifts. And I'm going to show you an even better way." **(we are called to use our ambition and resources most of all to promote Faith, Hope and Love, and most of all "LOVE" according to [1 Cor. 13](#). These cannot be enforced in the name of unity or uniformity or voted upon in light of the biblical teaching of how the "calling" or "gifting" of all in the body or church takes place which is by God Himself. **Therefore, gender exclusion on any pretext is not compatible with the Great Co-Mission or COMMISSION and the context of the "priesthood of all believers", which is fully applicable in the end times.****

If God sets apart or ordain anyone for any role in mission, we can choose to accept and recognize or reject.

Ellen G. White, who has been recognized as being given the revelation of the [Spirit of Prophecy](#) or the prophetic gift did not choose to be a prophet and neither did any earthly agency or institution vote to give her. God himself called her after two men rejected the call. Though she was a woman who by virtue of her gender should not have exercised any authority over a man in the church as some have chosen to interpret some Bible verses without understanding the context, she was called to be given the Spirit of Prophecy whose authority cannot be challenged based on her gender. Therefore, when men don't show up for mission, women will be called and have been called to fulfil the mission. This same principle applies to all gifts and abilities. **Not following this principle will only delay and hinder the mission and cause more conflict and divert very valuable time and resources from mission completion.**

If a literalistic interpretation is used to interpret some verses that forbid women to take active part in a certain way, then the logical conclusion that has to be enforced is that women must cover their heads during worship according [1 Cor. 11](#). And women should not be allowed to speak, sing or pray in the church but only learn [silently](#). Using this same approach, it has to be concluded that only Jewish men can be disciples since Jesus selected only 12 male disciples. Further, according to [1Tim 3](#), only married men can be bishops or "pastors" or deacons of

churches. Singles and widowers are excluded. Consequently, it can also be argued that those not wishing to be overseers or wanting any church positions can have multiple wives. In fact, the patriarchs had multiple wives. How far can we go with this approach? It's a self-defeating mission.

Decoding 1 Timothy 2:12

“But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.”

This is the single most misinterpreted and misunderstood verse about women's role in worship. When you preach, teach and baptize, whose authority are you imposing? No authority is being imposed but responsibility exercised to **let it shine** to simply share the Gospel that can be accepted or rejected freely. Further, based on 1 Tim 2:12, the chapter started with how to worship in general and about the women, Paul writes about learning in silence, which then is also true for the man if he has to learn anything which is to keep quiet or being still to learn and know about God. Did Paul say in the same chapter that men can or should exercise authority over women because they were men? The admonition is to be submissive before learning can take place and then one can worship properly. This verse is talking about attitude in worship rather than authority. If women have to keep silent and learn, then how can they really learn without being allowed to ask questions? And how can women worship God actively if only silence is to be observed since worship is a two way interaction? If silence is the rule during worship, then when and where are they supposed to open their mouths and go preach and teach according to the Great Commission?

Who is the head of the Church?

Ephesians 5:

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians+5>

“21 and submit to each other out of respect for Christ.

22 For example, wives should submit to their husbands as if to the Lord.

23 A husband is the head of his wife **like Christ is head of the church**, that is, the savior of the body.

24 So wives submit to their husbands in everything **like the church submits to Christ.**" (All are asked to submit to Christ, the head of the church).

^obecause we are parts of his body. ³¹*This is why a man will leave his father and mother and be united with his wife, and the two of them will be one body*

Conclusion: Unity in the body cannot be achieved without mutual submission to one another and the mission of Christ who is the only head who calls and gifts as He may choose. This structure of cooperative submission and serving one another is what has to be exemplified in the home and in the church to become one or achieve oneness and be a unified "body". It is not about authority or hierarchy but about responsibility and service esteeming one another higher than one self as stated in [Phil. 2:3](#)

If a woman can bear the Saviour of the world in her womb by the Holy Spirit, she sure can bear witness to the world without any restrictions by any man.

All should pastor the flock:

Feed my sheep, feed my sheep, and feed my sheep ([John 21:15-17](#))

Based on [1 Cor. 12](#), we can understand that God Himself has enabled, gifted and called every member of the body or church in different ways to feed, pastor or lead to pasture, the body or church for the common good.

Jesus told His disciple Peter to feed or pastor His sheep three times as a test of love. As an example, Jesus Himself fed His disciples with a freshly caught batch of fish as found in [John 21](#).

In [1 Peter 2: 5-9](#), Peter exhorts all believers to put aside malice and all manner of evil to grow in the word and be part of the royal priesthood, feeding ministry, or pastoral ministry to which all have been called, or set apart, or ordained, without regard to gender but based on ability and gifting.

Therefore, according to the great gospel commission found in [Matt. 28:19-20](#) to preach, teach and baptize, pastoral ministry or the feeding mission is not gender exclusive or specific for the tasks of overseeing, preaching, teaching and performing certain rites like baptism and marriage within a specified space.

All are called to pastor (serve or shepherd) the flock according to the gifting and calling of God. If not, the Babylonians will come and take you and your gift away. **Are you willing to pastor** your flock or area with the gifts you have been given?