

(1) What do the labels Complementarianism and Egalitarianism mean? What are the similarities as well as the differences between these two views?

(2) Read through this paragraph from Bridgeway's statement of faith and discuss it. Do you have any problems with this?

12. We believe that both men and women are together created in the divine image and are therefore equal before God as persons, possessing the same moral dignity and value, and have equal access to God through faith in Christ. We also believe that men and women are together the recipients of spiritual gifts designed to equip and empower them for ministry in the local church and beyond. We also believe that God has ordained the principle of male headship in both the home and in the local church and that certain governing and teaching roles are restricted to men (primarily the office of Elder) (Genesis 1:26-27; 2:18; 1 Corinthians 11:2-16; Galatians 3:28; Ephesians 5:22-33; Colossians 3:18-19; 1 Timothy 2:11-15; 3:1-7; 1 Peter 3:1-7).

(3) What do you make of the fact that the verb "to pastor" is only used twice in the NT with reference to local church leadership (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:2) and the noun "pastor" is found only once (Eph. 4:11)?

(4) What is the difference between a spiritual gift and an authoritative office in the life of the local church? If "pastoring" is a spiritual gift, might it be applied equally to women as to men? If not, why not?

(5) What might be the primary objections to speaking of a woman as a "pastor"? Is there any governing authority that comes with that spiritual gift? How do tradition and fear lead people to resist the idea of women as pastors?