

Candlelight Christian Fellowship

Positional Paper: Women in Ministry

In recent years the western Church has been influenced by secular and humanistic thinking. Some of this thinking has given place to a “modern view” of women in ministry. The desire to blur the lines on leadership in the local Church has become a confusion; therefore, we require this positional paper.

In the “modern church” one will find that there are women pastors, women elders, etc. However, there are no examples of women pastors or elders in the Church Age doctrines or history of the Bible. Furthermore, there are no instructions for the ordination of women to places of leadership in the local or global Church. Therefore, it is the position of Candlelight Christian Fellowship that leadership over the general assembly as described in the New Testament/Church Age doctrine is male.

The Bible does make clear that there is a vital place of ministry for women in the Church. Furthermore, ministry gifts are given to both men and women. In Scripture we read of great women who were influencers in the national health and safety of Israel, influencers in the lives of great men and other women of God in the Church Age, and evidently valuable to the family, the Church, and society.

At Candlelight we allow “pulpit time” for women to pray, give announcements, share testimonies, provide insights for child rearing, speak about business, constitutional and legislative issues, current events, etc. We also allow for women to sing lead vocal for songs of praise and worship from the platform – under the public leadership of a male worship and arts pastor/leader.

We do believe it is appropriate to have a woman teach “Women’s Bible Studies,” provide counsel to other women, instruct children, assist with administration, serve in various departments of the church, provide hospitality, visit the sick, etc. We also allow for questions and comments from women during a mixed assembly, when called upon by the pastor or male leader, during “Q and A sessions” in “Small Group Bible Studies,” “Wednesday Evening Services,” etc.

We do not allow women to teach from the Scriptures on the subjects of Theology, Soteriology, Israelology, Ecclesiology, Eschatology, etc., in any general assembly or mixed gathering of male and female. Furthermore, we do not ordain women to the roles of pastor, elder, or deacon.

Paul told Timothy, *“And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.”* 1 Timothy 2:12–14 (NKJV)

We do not believe that women are less educated than men, have lesser giftings than men, are poorer communicators than men, etc. However, we do believe that the role of women in the home, the Church, and society are specifically spelled out in Scripture, and we therefore make every effort to follow the biblical guidelines as best understood.

Finally, when Church Age doctrines are unclear, we reflect on Old Testament examples for insight. However, we recognize that history and administrative allowances in previous dispensations do not provide doctrine for the Church Age.

Our desire is to make Candlelight a Biblical example of adherence to sound doctrine and practice amidst a changing society.

May the Lord bless each of us as we employ these standards!

May He allow for greater and greater ministry opportunities as we faithfully serve – in Jesus’ name!