

The background is a solid blue color. It features several abstract white geometric shapes, including circles and semi-circles, scattered across the surface. Some of these shapes are partially cut off by the edges of the frame. The overall aesthetic is clean and modern.

A HISTORY OF COMPLEMENTARIANISM

PART ONE

WHY 'COMPLEMENTARIANISM' NEEDED A NAME

Complementarianism was not first and foremost a sociological descriptor or movement. Nor was it describing an ethos or a set of extrabiblical stereotypes. The term emerged as a shorthand to describe the theological vision of the Danvers Statement.

Denny Burk, 'Mere Complementarianism',
found at <https://cbmw.org/2019/11/20/mere-complementarianism/>

PART ONE

WHY 'COMPLEMENTARIANISM' NEEDED A NAME

‘as she made the beds, shopped for groceries, matched slipcover material, ate peanut butter sandwiches with her children, chauffeured Cub Scouts and Brownies, lay beside her husband at night, she was afraid to ask even of herself the silent question: “Is this all?”’

Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique* (1965), 13

PART ONE

WHY 'COMPLEMENTARIANISM' NEEDED A NAME

Patriarchy's chief institution is the family. It is both a mirror of and a connection with the larger society; a patriarchal unit within a patriarchal whole. [...] As the fundamental instrument and the foundation unit of patriarchal society the family and its roles are prototypical. Serving as an agent of the larger society, the family [...] acts as a unit in the government of the patriarchal state which rules its citizens through its family heads.

Kate Millett, *Sexual Politics* (1970)

found at <https://www.marxists.org/subject/women/authors/millett-kate/theory.htm>

Patriarchal religion could consolidate this position [i.e., of downgrading the role of women in procreation and ascribing all the power of life to men] by the creation of a male God or gods, demoting, discrediting, or eliminating goddesses and constructing a theology whose basic postulates are male supremacist, and one of whose central functions is to uphold and validate the patriarchal structure.

Kate Millett, *Sexual Politics* (1970)

found at <https://www.marxists.org/subject/women/authors/millett-kate/theory.htm>

Patriarchy has God on its side

Kate Millett, *Sexual Politics* (1970)

found at <https://www.marxists.org/subject/women/authors/millett-kate/theory.htm>

PART ONE

WHY 'COMPLEMENTARIANISM' NEEDED A NAME

We are Christians; we are also feminists. Some say we cannot be both, but Christianity and feminism for us are inseparable.

Daughters of Sarah 1 No. 1 (1974), 1
Journal of Evangelical Women's Caucus

The Judaic-Christian tradition has served to legitimate sexually imbalanced patriarchal society. Thus, for example, the image of the Father God, spawned in the human imagination and sustained as plausible by patriarchy, has in turn rendered service to this type of society by making its mechanisms for the oppression of women appear right and fitting. If God in 'his' heaven is a father ruling 'his' people, then it is in the 'nature' of things and according to divine plan and the order of the universe that society be male-dominated.

Mary Daly, 'After the Death of God the Father', (1971)

found at <https://www.commonwealmagazine.org/after-death-god-father>

If God is male, then male is God. The divine patriarch castrates women as long as he is allowed to live on in the human imagination.

Mary Daly, *Beyond God the Father* (1973)

found at <https://www.azquotes.com/quote/909755>

The Christian marginality of women has its roots in the patriarchal beginnings of the church and in the androcentrism of Christian revelation.

Elizabeth Schussler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins* (1983)

found at <https://www.azquotes.com/quote/1371630>

I am beginning to wonder whether indeed Christianity is patriarchal to its very core. If so, count me out. Some of us may be forced to leave Christianity in order to participate in Jesus' discipleship of equals.

Virginia Mollencott, letter to *Christian Century*
(March 7, 1984): 252

cited by Clark Pinnock in *Women, Authority and the Bible*, ed. Alvera Michelsen (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1986), 51

The patriarchal distortion of all tradition, *including Scripture*, throws feminist theology back upon the primary intuitions of religious experience itself.

Rosemary Radford Reuther, 'The Future of Feminist Theology in the Academy', *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 53 (1985): 710. *Italics added*

PART ONE

WHY 'COMPLEMENTARIANISM' NEEDED A NAME

We are pleased to announce the formation of the
COUNCIL ON BIBLICAL MANHOOD AND WOMANHOOD
*Established for the purpose of studying and setting forth Biblical teachings
on the relationship between men and women, especially in the home and the church.*

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT THE COUNCIL

Why did you form such a council?

Because there is much confusion about male and female roles in the Christian world today. We wanted to do something to help clear it up.

What do you stand for?

We hold that God made men and women to be equal in personhood and in value, but different in roles.

What do you mean by "different in roles"?

We are convinced that Scripture affirms male leadership in the home, and that in the church certain governing and teaching roles are restricted to men. On the other hand, Scripture strongly encourages women's full participation in a vast array of needed ministries, and supports active, informed participation by women in decision-making in the family and the church.

A more detailed statement of our position is found in the

"Danvers Statement," on the facing page.

But don't all Christians agree with these views?

Not at all. The idea of God-given distinctions between men's and women's roles in marriage and the church is under strong attack today in many books, articles, and speeches by people prominent in the evangelical world. And on the other side of this question, many families and churches have wrongly stifled women's ministries and have wrongly neglected informed participation by women in the decision-making processes of the home and the church.

What do you plan to do?

Publish books, articles, pamphlets. Hold seminars for scholars as well as large conferences for laypersons. And pray that the Lord would bring evangelicals to consensus on these issues rather than allowing controversies and divisions.

Are there specific publications coming out soon?

We expect our first book, *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, in the Fall of 1989. It is a collection of 31 essays by various evangelical men and women, edited by Wayne Grudem and John Piper of our Council.

What can someone do to help you?

Pray regularly for us. And send in the coupon below to be put on our mailing list and receive more information.

The "Danvers Statement" was prepared by several evangelical leaders at a CBMW meeting in Danvers, Massachusetts, in December, 1987. It was first published in final form by the CBMW in Wheaton, Illinois, in November, 1988.

We now offer this statement to the evangelical world, knowing that it will stimulate healthy discussion among Christians, and hoping that it will gain widespread assent. Endorsements from other Christian leaders would be welcomed by the CBMW.

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Jay Adams, Ph.D. Professor of Practical Theology Westminster Theological Seminary	John M. Frame, M.Phil. Professor of Systematic Theology Westminster Theological Seminary	George W. Knight, III, Th.D. Professor of New Testament Covenant Theological Seminary	Joyce Rogers Homemaker Memphis, Tennessee
Gary Almy, M.D. Prof. of Psychiatry and Assoc. Dean Chicago Medical School	W. Robert Godfrey, Ph.D. Professor of Church History Westminster Theological Seminary	Beverly LaHaye President Concerned Women for America	Ken Sarles, Th.M. Asst. Prof. of Systematic Theology Dallas Theological Seminary
Gleason Archer, Ph.D. Professor of Old Testament Trinity Evangelical Divinity School	Wayne A. Grudem, Ph.D.* Assoc. Prof. of Systematic Theology Trinity Evangelical Divinity School	Connie Marshner Editor Child & Family Protection Inst.	Sigfried Schatzmann, Ph.D. Professor of New Testament Oral Roberts University
Donald Baileys, J.D. Attorney, Wheaton, Illinois	H. Wayne House, Th.D., J.D.* Assoc. Prof. of Systematic Theology Dallas Theological Seminary	Douglas J. Moo, Ph.D. Chairman, Dept. of New Testament Trinity Evangelical Divinity School	Charles R. Smith, Th.D. Vice-Pres., Dean of Grad. Studies The Master's Seminary
James Borland, Ph.D. Prof. of New Testament and Theology Liberty University	R. Kent Hughes, D.Min.* Senior Pastor College Church in Wheaton (Illinois)	William Mounce, Ph.D. Asst. Prof. of New Testament Asia Pacific University	Larry Walker, Ph.D. Professor of Old Testament Mid-America Seminary
Waldemar Degner, Ph.D. Professor of Evangelical Theology Concordia Seminary (St. Louis, Mo.)	James B. Hurley, Ph.D. Professor of Counseling Reformed Theological Seminary	Dorothy Patterson, D.Min. Homemaker Dallas, Texas	Bruce Waltke, Ph.D. Professor of Old Testament Westminster Theological Seminary
Lane T. Dennis, Ph.D. President, Crossway Books	S. Lewis Johnson, Jr., Th.D.* Minister, Bellevue Chapel, Dallas	John Piper, Dr. Theol.* Senior Pastor Bethlehem Baptist Church (Minneapolis)	William Weinrich, Ph.D. Professor of Church History Concordia Seminary (St. Louis, Mo.)
Thomas R. Edgar, Th.D. Professor of New Testament Capital Bible Seminary	F. F. F. Kessler, Ph.D. Editor, The Gospel Advocate		

*Currently serving on the Council's Executive Committee

BOARD OF REFERENCE

Hudson T. Armerding	Erwin Lutzer
Bill and Vernetta Bright	Thomas McCormick
Harold O. J. Brown	Paige and Dorothy Patterson
D. A. Carson	Adrian and Joyce Rogers
Edmund Clowney	Bob Slosser
Jerry Fawcett	R. C. Sproul
Carl F. H. Henry	James A. Stahr
Paul Karlsen	John F. Walwood
Gordon R. Lewis	Peter Williamson

☐ Yes, I am interested in the Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood.
☐ Please put me on your mailing list and send me more information as it becomes available.
☐ Please send me _____ copies of the "Danvers Statement."
(Suggested donation: \$9.00 for 50; postpaid: \$15.00 per 100; postpaid, in quantities of 100 or more.)
Name _____
Address _____
City, State, Zip _____
Mail to: CBMW, P.O. Box 1173, Wheaton, IL 60187.

COUNCIL ON BIBLICAL MANHOOD AND WOMANHOOD
The Danvers Statement

RATIONALE

We have been moved in our purpose by the following contemporary developments which we observe with deep concern:

1. The widespread uncertainty and confusion in our culture regarding the complementary differences between masculinity and femininity;
2. The tragic effects of this confusion in unraveling the fabric of marriage woven by God out of the beautiful and diverse strands of manhood and womanhood;
3. The increasing promotion given to feminist egalitarianism with accompanying distortions or neglect of the godly harmony portrayed in Scripture between the loving, humble leadership of redeemed husbands and the intelligent, willing support of that leadership by redeemed wives;
4. The widespread ambivalence regarding the values of motherhood, vocational homemaking, and the many ministries historically performed by women;
5. The growing claims of legitimacy for sexual relationships which have biblically and historically been considered illicit or perverse, and the increase in pornographic portrayal of human sexuality;
6. The upsurge of physical and emotional abuse in the family;
7. The emergence of roles for men and women in church leadership that do not conform to Biblical teaching but backfire in the crippling of biblically faithful witness;
8. The increasing prevalence and acceptance of hermeneutical oddities devised to reinterpret apparently plain meanings of Biblical texts;
9. The consequent threat to Biblical authority as the clarity of Scripture is jeopardized and the accessibility of its meaning to ordinary people is withdrawn into the restricted realm of technical ingenuity;
10. And behind all this the apparent accommodation of some within the church to the spirit of the age at the expense of witness, radical Biblical authenticity which in the power of the Holy Spirit may reform rather than reflect our ailing culture.

PURPOSES

Recognizing our own abiding sinfulness and fallibility, and acknowledging the genuine evangelical standing of many who do not agree with all of our convictions, nevertheless, moved by the preceding observations and by the hope that the noble Biblical vision of sexual complementarity may yet win the mind and heart of Christ's church, we engage to pursue the following purposes:

1. To study and set forth the Biblical view of the relationship between men and women, especially in the home and in the church.
2. To promote the publication of scholarly and popular materials representing this view.
3. To encourage the confidence of laypeople to study and understand for themselves the teaching of Scripture, especially on the issue of relationships between men and women.
4. To encourage the considered and sensitive application of this Biblical view in the appropriate spheres of life.
5. And thereby
—to bring healing to persons and relationships injured by an inadequate grasp of God's will concerning manhood and womanhood,

We grant permission and encourage interested persons to use, reproduce, and distribute the Danvers Statement.
For further information, write to: CBMW, P.O. Box 1173, Wheaton, IL 60187.

—to help both men and women realize their full ministry potential through a true understanding and practice of their God-given roles,

—and to promote the spread of the gospel among all peoples by fostering a Biblical wholeness in relationships that will attract a fractured world.

AFFIRMATIONS

Based on our understanding of Biblical teachings, we affirm the following:

1. Both Adam and Eve were created in God's image, equal before God as persons and distinct in their manhood and womanhood.
2. Distinctions in masculine and feminine roles are ordained by God as part of the created order, and should find an echo in every human heart.
3. Adam's headship in marriage was established by God before the Fall, and was not a result of sin.
4. The Fall introduced distortions into the relationships between men and women.
—in the home, the husband's loving, humble headship tends to be replaced by domination or passivity; the wife's intelligent, willing submission tends to be replaced by usurpation or servility.
—in the church, sin inclines men toward a worldly love of power or an abdication of spiritual responsibility, and inclines women to resist limitations on their roles or to neglect the use of their gifts in appropriate ministries.
5. The Old Testament, as well as the New Testament, manifests the equally high value and dignity which God attached to the roles of both men and women. Both Old and New Testaments also affirm the principle of male headship in the family and in the covenant community.
6. Redemption in Christ aims at removing the distortions introduced by the curse.

—In the family, husbands should forsake harsh or selfish leadership and grow in love and care for their wives; wives should forsake resistance to their husbands' authority and grow in willing, joyful submission to their husbands' leadership.
—in the church, redemption in Christ gives men and women an equal share in the blessings of salvation; nevertheless, some governing and teaching roles within the church are restricted to men.

7. In all of life Christ is the supreme authority and guide for men and women, so that no earthly submission—domestic, religious or civil—ever implies a mandate to follow a human authority into sin.
8. In both men and women a heartfelt sense of call to ministry should never be used to set aside Biblical criteria for particular ministries. Rather, Biblical teaching should remain the authority for testing our subjective discernment of God's will.
9. With half the world's population outside the reach of indigenous evangelism; with countless other lost people in those societies that have heard the gospel; with the stresses and miseries of sickness, malnutrition, homelessness, illiteracy, ignorance, aging, addiction, crime, incarceration, neuroses, and loneliness, no man or woman who feels a passion from God to make His grace known in word and deed need ever live without a fulfilling ministry for the glory of Christ and the good of this fallen world.
10. We are convinced that a denial or neglect of these principles will lead to increasingly destructive consequences in our families, our churches, and the culture at large.

Why did you form such a council? Because there is much confusion about male and female roles in the Christian world today. We wanted to do something to help clear it up.

What do you stand for? We hold that God made men and women to be equal in personhood and in value, but different in roles.

What do you mean by “different in roles”? We are convinced that Scripture affirms male leadership in the home, and that in the church certain governing and teaching roles are restricted to men. On the other hand, Scripture strongly encourages women’s full participation in a vast array of needed ministries, and support active, informed participation by women in decision-making in the family and the church.

But don't all Christians agree with these views? Not at all: The idea of God-given distinctions between men's and women's roles in marriage and the church is under strong attack today in many books, articles, and speeches by people prominent in the evangelical world. And on the other side of this question, many families and churches have wrongly stifled women's ministries and have wrongly neglected informed participation by women in the decision-making processes of the home and the church.

Recovering Biblical MANHOOD & WOMANHOOD

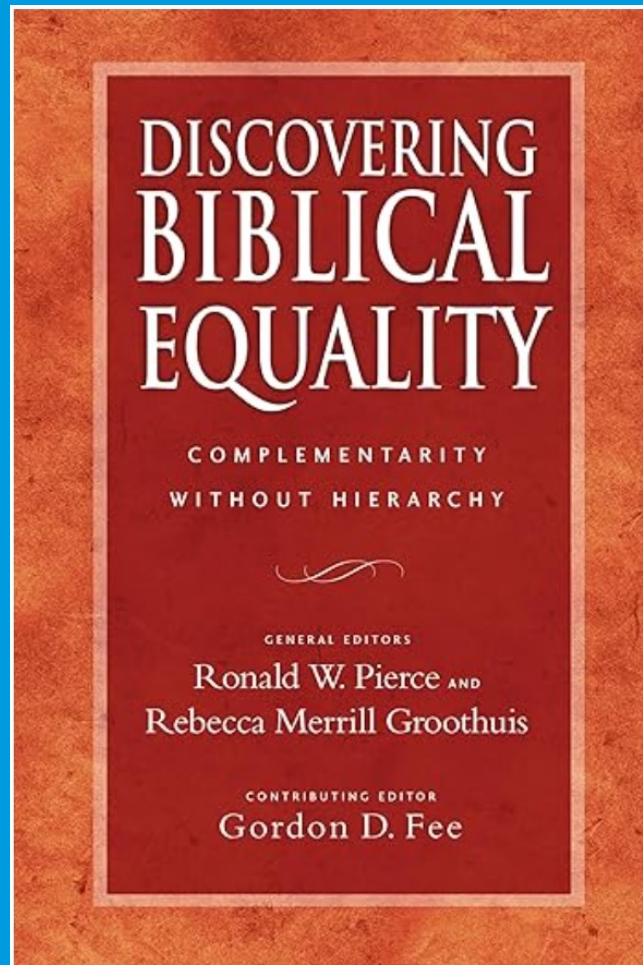
A Response to
Evangelical Feminism

EDITED BY
John Piper and Wayne Grudem



PART ONE

WHY 'COMPLEMENTARIANISM' NEEDED A NAME



Egalitarianism recognizes patterns of authority in the family, church, and society—it is not anarchistic—but rejects the notion that any office, ministry, or opportunity should be denied anyone on the grounds of being male or female. This is because women and men are made equally in God's image and likeness (Gen 1:27), are equally fallen (Rom 3:23), equally redeemable through Christ's life, death, and resurrection (Jn 3:16), equally participants in the new-covenant community (Gal 3:28), equally heirs of God in Christ (1 Pet 3:7), and equally able to be filled and empowered by the Holy Spirit for life and ministry (Acts 2:17).

Discovering Biblical Equality

eds. Ronald W. Pierce and Rebecca Merrill Groothius (2004/2005), 13;
eds. Ronald Pierce, Cynthia Westfall, *et al.* (2021), 2 (with minor variations)

Egalitarianism recognizes patterns of authority in the family, church, and society—it is not anarchistic—but rejects the notion that any office, ministry, or opportunity should be denied anyone on the grounds of being male or female. This is because women and men are made equally in God's image and likeness (Gen 1:27), are equally fallen (Rom 3:23), equally redeemable through Christ's life, death, and resurrection (Jn 3:16), equally participants in the new-covenant community (Gal 3:28), equally heirs of God in Christ (1 Pet 3:7), and equally able to be filled and empowered by the Holy Spirit for life and ministry (Acts 2:17).

Discovering Biblical Equality

eds. Ronald W. Pierce and Rebecca Merrill Groothius (2004/2005), 13;
eds. Ronald Pierce, Cynthia Westfall, *et al.* (2021), 2 (with minor variations)

PART TWO

LIVED COMPLEMENTARIANISM

... settled on this word because there simply wasn't another one that adequately described their view. The term has a profound exegetical and linguistic root in the Hebrew of Genesis 2:18 (*kenegdo*), which the lexicons define as 'corresponding to' .

Denny Burk, 'Mere Complementarianism'

found at <https://cbmw.org/2019/11/20/mere-complementarianism/>

... the claim that complementarianism is a man-made doctrinal innovation is a myth. The word 'complementarianism' is indeed a relatively new term. But it is a new term coined to refer to an ancient teaching that is rooted in the text of Scripture. On the contrary, egalitarianism is the doctrinal innovation, not the biblical idea that men and women are created equally in God's image with distinct and complementary differences. Indeed, some version of what we now call 'complementarianism' is what the church has assumed for its entire 2,000-year history. Recent attempts to flip this script amount to unserious historical revisionism.

Denny Burk, 'Is Complementarianism a Man-made Doctrine?'

found at <https://cbmw.org/2021/06/08/is-complementarianism-a-man-made-doctrine-2/>

PART TWO

LIVED COMPLEMENTARIANISM

‘G*d’ or ‘God/dess’

VOL. 12, NO. 2



03/29/1997

‘... aggressive efforts to update the North American edition of the NIV with gender-accurate language’.

Timothy C. Morgan, ‘Biblical Feminists Press for Gender Inclusive NIV’,
Christianity Today (Sept. 1, 1997), 78

PART TWO

LIVED COMPLEMENTARIANISM

‘it must be admitted, because of overstatement and lack of precision in some of its advocates’.

Mark Thompson, ‘ERS: Is there order in the Trinity?’ (9 June 2016)

found at <https://markdthompson.blogspot.com/2016/06/ers-is-there-order-in-trinity.html>

... an ERAS [Eternal Relations of Authority and Submission] view of the Trinity is not required to uphold a complementarian view. In fact, a complementarian view stands on its own due to the teaching of Scripture.

Stephen Wellum, 'Does Complementarianism depend on ERAS?: A Response to Kevin Giles, 'The Trinity Argument for Women's Subordination', *Eikon* 5 (Spring 2023): 62

thin
narrow
ideological

thick
broad
natural



DISCOVERING BIBLICAL EQUALITY

COMPLEMENTARITY
WITHOUT HIERARCHY



GENERAL EDITORS

Ronald W. Pierce AND
Rebecca Merrill Groothuis

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Gordon D. Fee

THIRD EDITION

Discovering BIBLICAL EQUALITY

Biblical, Theological, Cultural & Practical Perspectives

RONALD W. PIERCE AND
CYNTHIA LONG WESTFALL, editors
CHRISTA L. MCKIRLAND, associate editor

• • • • •

With contributions from
LYNN H. COHICK, GORDON D. FEE,
MIMI HADDAD, CRAIG S. KEENER,
AND MORE

One of my colleagues predicted that I would endorse same-sex marriage within ten years because of the ‘interpretive method’ that led me to advocate for gender equality. This slippery slope argument is still commonly heard—and for some this has been their experience.

Ronald w. Pierce, ‘Biblical Equality and Same-Sex Marriage’, *Discovering Biblical Equality*, 3rd ed (2021), 491. *Italics added*

‘the belief that males and females are born with distinctively different natures, determined biologically rather than culturally. [...]’ In other words, men and women are essentially different on the basis of being a man or a woman [where] there are male persons who are meant to act like men (masculinity) and there are female persons who are meant to act like women (femininity).

Christa McKirland, ‘Image of God and Divine Presence: A Critique of Gender Essentialism’, *Discovering Biblical Equality*, 3rd ed. (2021), 283.

PART TWO

LIVED COMPLEMENTARIANISM

However, the digital din of debate over evangelical gender roles has been nearly eclipsed by the clamor of a new rhetoric, with concepts like gender fluidity, gender nonconformity, and transgenderism rapidly transposing cultural mores. Before one can answer the question of what ministries a woman can fulfil in the church, one must now first define what a woman is. Before one can defend marriage as a covenant between male and female, one must be prepared to stipulate that maleness and femaleness are unalterably determined at birth.

1/2

In short, conversations on *how* one expresses one's gender risk falling on deaf ears apart from a clear defense of *why* gender differentiation matters at all. And in a society that increasingly accepts the idea that one's biology is irrelevant to determine one's gender, answering this *why* seems more urgent than ever.

Katie J. McCoy, 'What it means to be male and female', in *Created in the Image of God: Applications and Implications for our Cultural Confusion*, ed. David S. Dockery (2023), 142–43. *Emphasis* original.

— JOHN CHAPMAN —

PREACHING INITIATIVE

1 SEPTEMBER 2025 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM
VENUE **MOORE COLLEGE, NEWTOWN**

2 SEPTEMBER 2025 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM
VENUE **MOORE COLLEGE, NEWTOWN**

PLAN A SERMON SERIES

LAMENTATIONS WITH ANDREW SHEAD

PLAN A SERMON SERIES

LUKE WITH PETER ORR

moore.edu.au/events



Centre for
**Christian
Living**

BIBLICAL ETHICS WORKSHOP

THE SMARTPHONE DISCIPLE

7:00 pm – 9:00 pm
27 October 2025



HOSTED BY
Tony Payne

moore.edu.au/events



2026 Annual Conference

Monday, 2 February 2026



Simon Flinders
on
Church as Family

moore.edu.au/events

Sign up for the P&A Newsletter

