

# The Complementarian Jigsaw: Gender, Ministry and Church

Graham Beynon - Priscilla & Aquila Centre conference, Moore College, February 4, 2019.

## Introduction

### Current concerns

- Separatism
- Permissionism
- De-contextualisation
- Individualism

## 1. Gender

### 1.1 Contemporary issues in gender

- Innate OR constructed?
  
- Specific roles OR all of life?
  
- Male and female traits<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Gender differences in personality traits across cultures: robust and surprising findings*, Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 2001, 8, 322-331, Schmitt, D., et al.

## 1.2 Biblical teaching

- Creation

*So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. Genesis 1:28*

- Gender differences<sup>2</sup>

*The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him." Genesis 2:18*

*Just as a nursing mother cares for her children, so we cared for you. .... For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory. 1 Thessalonians 2:7-8, 11-12*

- Commands

## 1.3 Conclusion

- Similar but different
- Honouring of differences
- Call to godliness rather than genderness

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<sup>2</sup> Alastair Roberts, *Heirs Together: A Theology of the Sexes* (Crossway, 2019); Sam Andreades, *Engendered: God's Gift of Gender Difference in Relationship* (Weaver Book company, 2015).

## 2. Ministry

### 2.1 Breadth of ministry

- Focus of ministry?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- Holistic or reductionistic?

### 2.2 Examples of women in ministry

*Churches meeting in woman's homes: Mary (Acts 12:12), Lydia (Acts 16:40); Chloe (1 Cor 1:11), Nympha (Col 4:13) [Priscilla and Aquilla (Rom 16:3-5; 1 Cor 16:19)]*

*...help these women since they have contended at my side in the cause of the gospel, along with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life. Philippians 4:3*

*Greet Tryphena and Tryphosa, those women who work hard in the Lord. Greet my dear friend Persis, another woman who has worked very hard in the Lord. Romans 16:12*

### 2.3 Differences in ministry?

### 2.4 Conclusion

### 3. Local church



#### 3.1 The identity of church

*His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace. Ephesians 2:15*

*There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. Galatians 3:28*

#### 3.2 The life of the church

- Unity

*Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. Eph 4:2-3*

- Equality

*There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. Ephesians 4:4-6*

- Growth

*...until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Ephesians 4:13*

– Family

*...you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household. 1 Timothy 3:15*

*Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but exhort him as if he were your father. Treat younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity. 1 Timothy 5:1-2*

– Love of the church

*Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly loved children and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. Ephesians 5:1*

*Be devoted to another in love. Romans 12:10*

## **Conclusions**