

ROLE OF MEN IN THE CHURCH

SESSION 1 – INTRODUCTION STUDY QUESTIONS

“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.” Genesis 1:27

1. Some suggest that the most critical crisis we face in the church today is the role of men in the church. Whether you agree with this or not, list below some reasons men may have difficulty with their role in the church today.
2. Consider the following distinctions: male and female; men and women; masculine and feminine. Do you view these terms differently? If so, why? If not, why not? Can you find passages in the scriptures in which, for example, male/female would be distinct from men/women?
3. Find a passage of scripture in the New Testament where the term “man” or “men” is used yet the scripture clearly refers to both men and women. (This should be easy.)
4. Find a passage of scripture in the New Testament where the term “man” or “men” is used and the passage clearly refers to men rather than women. (Passages such as “the man Jesus...” don’t count. Passages which refer to husbands and wives don’t count.) Can you identify a passage where the role of men is discussed yet there is not a companion reference to the role of women? For example, in I Timothy 2, the reference to men lifting holy hand in prayer is accompanied by the passage regarding the dress and behavior of women in worship services.

5. Many have summarized the problem with the role of women in the church as a problem regarding the activities in which women can and cannot participate. This clearly does not capture the problem regarding the role of men in the church. How would you characterize the problem of the role of men in the church (if you view this as a problem)?

6. Are there masculine and feminine characteristics of the Christian faith? Are there passages of scripture which you would consider referring to masculine characteristics? Are there passages which you would consider referring to feminine characteristics? If you believe there are masculine and feminine characteristics of the faith, do males only aspire to masculine characteristics? Do females only aspire to feminine characteristics? Consider Ephesians 5:22-24, 6:10-18.

7. Some have suggested that the church today tends to emphasize the feminine over the masculine. These critics have targeted mainline Protestant churches and the Catholic Church more than evangelical churches. Can you give some reasons for this criticism?

8. Can you identify activities within the church (and parachurch organizations) which attempt to combat the perspective that the church emphasizes the feminine rather than the masculine?