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## The Single Woman and Complementarianism

### Introduction

*“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

**Foundational truth:** As creature before Creator, and as redeemed before Redeemer, we want to wholeheartedly embrace who He has made us to be, and what He has called us to do.

### What does God’s word teach about gifts?

1 Cor 7:7 *“But each has his own gift from God, one of one kind and one of another.”*

1. Gifts always have a Giver
2. We do not get to decide what gift we want.

“We are given [this gift] by a divine Giver who knows the end from the beginning, and wants above all else to give us the gift of Himself. It is within the sphere of the circumstances He chooses for us – single, married, widowed, etc. – that we receive Him. It is there and nowhere else that He makes Himself known to us. It is there we are allowed to serve Him.”<sup>1</sup>

3. We must live for God within the gift he’s assigned to us.

*“Let each person lead the life that the Lord has assigned to him, and to which God has called him”* 1 Cor 7:17

### What is Complementarianism?

1. Complement – “Something that completes or brings to perfection; either of two parts or that complete the whole or mutually complete each other.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Elliot, Elisabeth. *Let Me Be A Woman*, (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishing, 1976). Pg 25-26

<sup>2</sup> [www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com)

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“Male and female are counterparts in reflecting God’s glory. Having two sexes expands the view. Though both sexes bear God’s image fully on their own, each does so in a unique and distinct way. Male and female relationships reflects truths about Jesus that aren’t reflected by male alone or female alone.”<sup>3</sup>

2. The design of man and woman is meant to complement not to be equal because God designed us different.
3. It does not mean that women are suppressed
4. It does mean that women flourish when they live according to God’s design, working together with men.

### **What examples of complementarianism are in Scripture?**

1. Rom 16:12 – Tryphaena and Tryphosa, appreciated and devoted to serve the Lord
2. Rom 16:7 – Junia, persecuted and imprisoned along with Paul
3. Acts 9:36 – Tabitha, full of good works and acts of charity
4. Acts 12 – Mary, opened her home during a time a great persecution

Scripture is clear that men and women are needed and necessary for the function of the church.

### **How does the single woman serve or function in a complementarian framework?**

#### **A. God-given Gifts**

“There are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities but the same God who empowers them all in everyone.” 1 Cor 12:4-6

- a. What are your gifts the Lord has given?
- b. Are you using them for his glory and the building up of the church?
- c. The attitude behind the service is just as important to God as carrying out the gift.

#### **B. God-designed Roles**

- a. Submission (Heb 13:17; Jms 4:7)
  - i. To the Lord and God-given authority
  - ii. “Submission to God-given authority is not captivity.”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> “Complementarianism for Dummies”, Mary Kassian

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/complementarianism-for-dummies/>

<sup>4</sup> Elliot, *Let Me Be A Woman*, 131.



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- b. Help (Gen 2:18,20)
    - i. Not specific to marriage only but can also be fleshed out in the body of Christ.
  
  - c. Respond/Follow
    - i. God made women to respond, receive and follow.
  
  - d. Nurture

The culture will pull us in different ways. But we must always go back to God's design and authority. God wants us as single women to flourish and see His good and great design all around us.