

Article II – Regarding Women's Role in Ministry

(1) Authority and Leadership in Church

Men are called to take on ecclesiastical (church) leadership: 1 Timothy 2:8, 2:12-15, 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9

We the PCCO/OIF Church Council believe the bible teaches that while male and female were created equal in value in the image of God (Gen 1:26-27), brothers are called to take on the authority and leadership in the church.

In 1 Timothy 2:12, Paul writes that women are not to have authority over men. We can infer that Paul writes about this in the context of the church by looking at verse 8 where he begins to talk about what is proper in the place of worship (church). Elsewhere, in passages that talks about the qualifications of an elder, such as in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9, the elder is always referred to in the masculine gender as “a man of one wife”.

It is also worthwhile to note here that the creation order and the different gender roles apply first and foremost in the family, through the divine institution of marriage. It also applies to local church administration. This order was also noted by Paul in 1 Timothy 2:12-15. By referring to the creation order, 1 Timothy 2:12-15 can not be excused as only a localized cultural context, but apply to all locations at all time.

In light of this, we believe that only brothers are permitted to take up the pastoral role and eldership in PCCO/OIF. Our church's position is against the ordination of any woman to serve as a pastor, an elder, or a lone cell group leader (without her husband's co-leadership, unless its an all-sisters group).

(2) Teaching and Preaching from the Pulpit.

We the PCCO/OIF Church Council believe that teaching, preaching, or speaking to a larger audience in church does not necessarily imply a position of authority or leadership. While the authority over the pulpit is vested in the pastors and the elders of the church, a speaker at the

pulpit, man or woman, may be granted delegated authority, and should be given the opportunities to exercise and develop their God-given gifts.

a) women can be gifted with the gift of prophecy

We believe that having a woman speak from the pulpit does not contradict our stated position that the authority and leadership in the church is the calling of brothers. We recognize that there are women who are gifted in prophecy such as those recorded in 1 Corinthians 11:5-6 and Acts 21:9; that is to teach and preach in a respectful manner with the purpose of edifying, exhorting and comforting fellow believers with the Word of God (1 Corinthians 14:3).

b) women are not to teach men by seizing power from them

Concerning 1Timothy 2:12 (NIV), "I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she must be silent," the PCCO/OIF Church Council recognizes that if we take the meaning of this verse literally, this would mean women are not permitted to teach men at all when it comes to the Word of God. This would contradict biblical examples of women teaching such as Priscilla (Acts 18:26) and passages about women prophesying. Rather, we believe that the intended meaning in 1 Timothy 2:12 is closer to the following paraphrase, "I do not permit a woman to teach by usurping/seizing authority over a man." (For reference, refer to [Archer 1982].¹)

Taking all the above into consideration, women are permitted to preach from the pulpit or teach adult Sunday School as long as they have been given and submit to delegated authority and seek to edify, exhort and comfort all fellow believers (men and women). This would not be contrary to biblical teaching.

We humbly submit to the teachings of the bible but we recognize that this position of having women preachers and women teachers can be a source of misunderstanding and stumbling. Therefore, it is the general practice of PCCO/OIF that we will delegate the authority for preaching God's Word to brothers. It will also be the norm that we appoint brothers as lead teachers in an adult school class.

It is our continuing quest to put into practice the correct understanding and interpretation of all Scriptures. We also recognize that there will

¹ Archer, Gleason L., "1 Timothy," in Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties, Zondervan Publisher, 1982, pp.411-415.

be fellow believers and servants of God in our church who may hold a different view, especially on the interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:12. Members of our church can maintain and express their personal convictions on the issue of women teaching. However, if they are expressing their convictions of a particular interpretation that is contrary to the church's position in a teaching capacity, either within the church or as a representative of our church, they must explicitly make the distinction that what they are teaching is their personal conviction and explain the church's position as stipulated above.

(3) Serving as Deacons or Ministry Staff Members

We the PCCO/OIF Church Council believe that serving in the various other church ministries does not constitute a position of authority and leadership responsibility as that of pastors, elders, and cell group leaders. Therefore the role of a deacon, or core team member in our organizational structure, and other ministry staff positions, can be taken up by men as well as women.