

"male and female He created them." (Gen. 1:27)

God's Grand Design

The Beauty of Biblical Complementarity

¹⁹And His mother and brothers came to Him, and they were unable to get to Him because of the crowd. ²⁰And it was reported to Him, "Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, wishing to see You." ²¹But He answered and said to them, "My mother and My brothers are these who hear the word of God and do it." (Luke 8:19-21)

²⁷While Jesus was saying these things, one of the women in the crowd raised her voice and said to Him, "Blessed is the womb that bore You and the breasts at which You nursed." ²⁸But He said, "On the contrary, blessed are those who hear the word of God and observe it." (Luke 11:27-28)

The Apostles, Elders, and Co-Workers

Acts and the Early Church

Acts and the Early Church

1. Role of the Apostles

➤ Acts 1:12-26

- they were teachers (2:42), leaders of the church (4:25), witnesses of the resurrection (4:20; 5:32) (*e.g. the appointment of the seven – 6:1-7*)
- the ministry of the Apostle Paul and his co-workers (Acts 13-28)

Acts and the Early Church

2. Role of Elders

➤ Acts 14:21-23; 20:28

- these men were the overseers, teachers and shepherds of local churches (c.f. 1 Peter 5:1-5)
- they must exemplify godly character and the ability to teach sound doctrine (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9)

Acts and the Early Church

3. Role of Women

➤ *women are seen as active participants in the church's life and witness*

- Lydia (Acts 16:13-15) – an unmarried business woman who hosted the church in Philippi

Acts and the Early Church

3. Role of Women

- *women are seen as active participants in the church's life and witness*
- Priscilla (and Aquila) (Acts 18:2-3, 26) – a married couple who were bi-vocational co-workers of Paul, instrumental in the churches at Corinth, Ephesus and Rome

Acts and the Early Church

3. Role of Women

- *women are seen as active participants in the church's life and witness*
- Phoebe (Rom. 16:1-2) – an unmarried “servant” of the church who was a helper (patron) of many, including Paul

Galatians 3:28

²⁶ For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.
²⁷ For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. ²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹ And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's descendants, heirs according to promise.

Galatians 3:28

- Spiritual status in Christ (not gender roles)
 - through faith in Christ, all—regardless of race, class or gender—inherit the promise (salvation)
 - there is a spiritual unity (“one”) in Christ amidst racial, socioeconomic and gender diversity