

American Council of Christian Churches
80th Anniversary, October 19-21, 2021
Hardingville Bible Church, Monroeville, NJ
Resolution on Women and the Local Church

A firestorm erupted within Evangelicalism when strong public disapproval of Beth Moore's ministry surfaced.¹ Moore is a female evangelist, who at the time was a member of the largest Evangelical denomination in the United States of America, the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC).² Around the time of this controversy, many SBC leaders, including President J. D. Greear³ and the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission's President Russell Moore,⁴ publicly aligned themselves with Moore and her ministry.

In May of 2021, the largest church associated with the SBC, Pastor Rick Warren's Saddleback Church, directly defied the SBC's governing document, *Baptist Faith and Message 2000*,⁵ by ordaining three women to the pastoral ministry.⁶ Women in pastoral ministry, once limited to liberal, mainline, and charismatic congregations, are now finding their way into Evangelicalism.

The Bible speaks clearly on the role of women in the local church. Its qualifications for a pastor/elder state that the candidate must be "the husband of one wife" (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:6), "one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity" (1 Tim. 3:4), and someone "having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly" (Titus 1:6). Being a faithful husband and leader in the home is a pastoral calling that the Bible uniquely delegates to men.

While the Bible states that a pastor/elder is to be "apt to teach" (1 Tim. 3:2), 1 Tim. 2:11-12 commands, "Let the women learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence." Confronting a problem found in many modern charismatic churches, the Apostle Paul instructs the church in 1 Cor. 14:33-35, "God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints. Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church." The Bible reserves for men alone the public preaching and teaching of its truth to an audience comprised of both men and women. Leadership in the church follows the male-only pattern laid out by God through the Old Testament priesthood.

Exclusion from the office of pastor/elder does not mean that God does not use women in teaching ministry. In fact, Titus 2:4-5 encourages older women to "teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed."

Therefore, the American Council of Christian Churches at its 80th Anniversary, October 19-21, 2021, at Hardingville Bible Church, Monroeville, NJ, resolves that pastors/elders in the church and teachers of the Bible who address mixed audiences are to be exclusively men. We furthermore affirm the unique role that spiritually mature women have in the church to instruct and encourage younger women to live godly lives in accordance with the roles God has allotted to them.

¹ <https://www.faithwire.com/2019/11/12/john-macarthur-doubles-down-after-telling-beth-moore-to-go-home/> .

² https://religionnews.com/2021/03/09/bible-teacher-beth-moore-ends-partnership-with-lifeway-i-am-no-longer-a-southern-baptist/?gclid=Cj0KCQjwssyJBhDXARIsAK98ITSinIUzE-NtiOHxbwFDm3I2f-7qJlgP3Tbd_5-RyWad7UHDNzeAHBwaAhAHEALw_wcB .

³ <https://twitter.com/jdgreear/status/1185644655632928774?lang=en> .

⁴ <https://www.commercialappeal.com/story/news/2019/06/10/southern-baptist-convention-beth-moore-rachael-denhollander-russell-moore-susan-codone-sexual-abuse/1414911001/> .

⁵ <https://bfm.sbc.net/bfm2000/#vi-the-church> – *Baptist Faith and Message 2000* reads, "The office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture."

⁶ <https://baptistnews.com/article/largest-church-in-sbc-ordains-three-women-as-pastors/#.YTOTeo5KjIU> .



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