

- Why are we pursuing this conversation?
- Are we sure it's worth it?
- What has been our history?
- · Where are we going?
- What are our key principles & guidelines?



Key Takeaways

- Jesus elevated the position, value, & worth of women relative to the culture & society surrounding him
- In Jesus' view women were worthy of respect, recognition and value
- Numerous examples where women did or could have functioned in prominent leadership roles in the church
- Other readings/texts must assume these roles/functions existed and were permitted; these other verses should be interpreted in that light



- Reading, interpreting and understanding Scripture is <u>difficult</u>
- We have approached the texts seriously, using the <u>best tools</u> of scholarship, history, original languages to handle the texts properly
- And we also have to understand that <u>everyone comes to</u>
 <u>Scripture with biases, cultural lenses, experiences & personal history</u> that immediately and often subconsciously affect the way we read Scripture and the way we interpret texts that have legitimate ambiguity regarding original & intended meanings

- Sometimes, honest, authentic disciples study the same passages & texts – applying consistent, reasonable tools of interpretation, translation, history, context and scholarship – and come away with very different readings of the same passages & texts
- In such cases, where the text(s) can honestly be read by earnest, serious Bible students who are faithfully seeking God's wisdom & guidance, we may have to conclude that the subject being studied is a *matter of opinion* not made clear by God in Scripture and not a matter of salvation or a "weightier matter of the Law"

"In matters of faith: unity; in matters of opinion: liberty; in all things: love"

- The Restoration Movement was founded on and by people who were unwilling to simple accept things as they were when they believed the traditions of men had come between people and God they insisted on pursuing truth even though it created anxiety, tension and discomfort for themselves and others; they were willing and, indeed did, leave churches, friends and family in their pursuit of the truth of God
- One of the key principles underlying this movement away from the traditions of men that they believed had wrongly bound up the person in Christ, was the one stated above

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- Scriptures are "God breathed" or inspired
- The indwelling Spirit of God
- The Holy Spirit bestows gifts upon God's children
- The fact that baptism is for the remission of sins
- The fact that the saints broke bread on the first day

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- All this is not to say that there is anything wrong with deductions. We have to draw deductions, the Bible being the kind of book it is. One might avoid deductions only when he is doing something like following the instructions on a prescription bottle or the directions on a can of paint. We only need to recognize that our deductions are fallible and cannot be imposed on others as if they were infallible.
- Only facts are infallible (?), not theories about those facts. As we study the scriptures in depth we will of necessity draw inferences and deductions from the facts we assemble. The more painstaking we all are the more likely it is that we will find general agreement on our interpretations. It is often the case that scholars reach almost unanimous agreement in their interpretation of scripture. We talk about rules of interpretation, which implies that if one ignores the rules he might get far afield in his deductions.

- So, where Scripture leads honest believers sincere, earnest students of Scripture who diligently apply and use tools of study – to very different conclusions, we must conclude that the subject matter may well lie in the arena of *opinion* rather than the arena of *faith*
- In such areas, leaders are left with choices:
 - We can choose to create rules beyond the express, clear teaching of Scripture – that reflect the interpretation of those with a more restrictive reading of Scripture

- In those times, places and matters where there is an honest diversity of opinion, we have consistently chosen to avoid making rules where Scripture has not clearly done so Speak where the Bible sy and love speaks and be silent where the Bible is silent
- We as your I willed the Division Street hose who prefer to make rules to bind on others, but we act in submission to the Holy Spirit with humility in the interest of peace and unity and the liberty for which Christ died



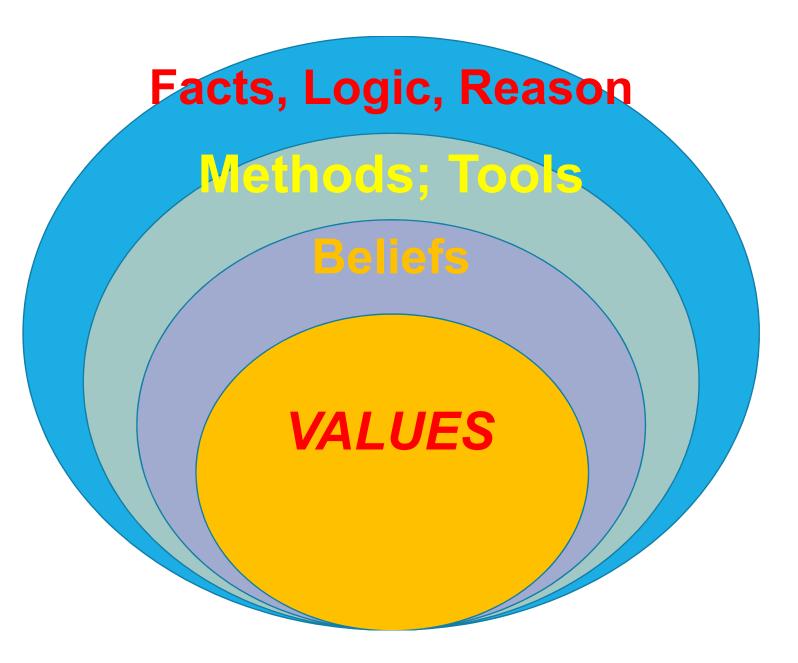
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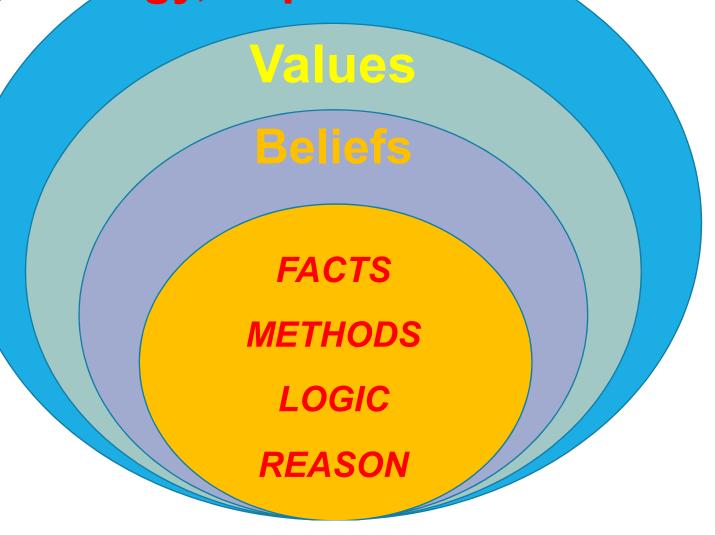
We can choose to **Create rules** – <u>beyond</u> the express, clear teaching of Scripture – that reflect the interpretation of those with a more restrictive reading of Scripture

Or we can refuse to create rules where Scripture has not clearly done so – trusting in the Holy Spirit, the mutual love of the saints, and God's everlasting and abundant mercy – *leaning into our liberty in Christ Jesus*





Psychology, Experiences & Culture





Evangelical Christians disagree

Theological Viewpoint	Roles in Worship	Roles in Home	Roles at Work
Patriarchal	Different	Different	Different
Strong Complementarian	Different	Different	Similar
Moderate Complementarian	Some differences	Different	Some differences
Soft Complementarian	Similar	Similar	Identical
Moderate Egalitarian	Same in theory	Similar	Identical
Strong Egalitarian	Identical	Identical	Identical
Extreme Feminism	Different	Different	Different