

Danvers Statement — Biblical Manhood and Womanhood

編者按：神造男造女，構造不同，特質不同，目的是讓兩性互相幫助，互相戀慕。一夫一妻的婚姻制度乃神在創世時為人類所設立的。可惜近年來，同性戀的歪風影響全球，世人已習以為常。以前同性戀者不敢公開身份，免受非議；今日卻肆無忌憚的手牽手上街。更有甚者，竟公開爭取同性婚姻合法化，要享稅務權益和領養子女的權利。

這種社會風氣已滲入教會，西方一些大宗派更同意為同性戀者證婚，並按立同性戀者為牧師。最近，加拿大政府更通過同性婚姻合法化，而美國最高法院亦裁定不容許同性戀者享婚姻福利或領養子女的判決違憲。這種現象值得我們福音信仰基督徒的關注。

今天福音信仰（相信並尊重聖經）的教會及信徒們應當深入了解這些背叛神旨的行為，並應大聲疾呼，以先知性的聲音，呼喚今世的人悔改，離開惡行，免得神的審判臨到。主僕司徒德（John Stott）的書《我們的沉默罪》（Our Guilty Silence）所指責的正是此點。

美國「男女本位」協會於1987年會議中制訂「丹福斯宣言」，闡釋聖經的男女觀和家庭觀，謹轉載如下，盼有助華人教會正視同性戀的問題。

The "Danvers Statement" summarizes the need for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood. It was prepared by several evangelical leaders at a Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood meeting in Danvers, Massachusetts, in December of 1987.

Rationale

We have been moved in our purpose by the following contemporary developments which we observe with deep concern:

The widespread uncertainty and confusion in our culture regarding the complementary differences between masculinity and femininity; the tragic effects of this confusion in unraveling the fabric of marriage woven by God out of the beautiful and diverse strands of manhood and womanhood; the increasing promotion given to feminist egalitarianism with

accompanying distortions or neglect of the glad harmony portrayed in Scripture between the loving, humble leadership of redeemed husbands and the intelligent, willing support of that leadership by redeemed wives; the widespread ambivalence regarding the values of motherhood, vocational homemaking, and the many ministries historically performed by women; the growing claims of legitimacy for sexual relationships which have Biblically and historically been considered illicit or perverse, and the increase in pornographic portrayal of human sexuality; the upsurge of physical and emotional abuse in the family; the emergence of roles for men and women in church leadership that do not conform to Biblical teaching but backfire in the crippling of Biblically faithful witness; the increasing prevalence and acceptance of

hermeneutical oddities devised to reinterpret apparently plain meanings of Biblical texts; the consequent threat to Biblical authority as the clarity of Scripture is jeopardized and the accessibility of its meaning to ordinary people is withdrawn into the restricted realm of technical ingenuity; and behind all this the apparent accommodation of some within the church to the spirit of the age at the expense of winsome, radical Biblical authenticity which in the power of the Holy Spirit may reform rather than reflect our ailing culture.

Purpose

Recognizing our own abiding sinfulness and fallibility, and acknowledging the genuine evangelical standing of many who do not agree with all of our convictions, nevertheless, moved by the preceding observations and by the

hope that the noble Biblical vision of sexual complementarity may yet win the mind and heart of Christ's church, we engage to pursue the following purposes:

To study and set forth the Biblical view of the relationship between men and women, especially in the home and in the church.

To promote the publication of scholarly and popular materials representing this view.

To encourage the confidence of lay people to study and understand for themselves the teaching of Scripture, especially on the issue of relationships between men and women.

To encourage the considered and sensitive application of this Biblical view in the appropriate spheres of life.

And thereby to bring healing to persons and relationships injured by an inadequate grasp of God's will concerning manhood and womanhood, to help both men and women realize their full ministry potential through a true understanding and practice of their God-given roles, and to promote the spread of the gospel among all peoples by fostering a Biblical wholeness in relationships that will attract a fractured world.

Affirmation

Based on our understanding of Biblical teachings, we affirm the following:

Both Adam and Eve were created in God's image, equal before God as persons and distinct in their manhood and womanhood (Gen 1:26-27, 2:18).

Distinctions in masculine and feminine roles are ordained by God

as part of the created order, and should find an echo in every human heart (Gen 2:18, 21-24; 1 Cor 11:7-9; 1 Tim 2:12-14).

Adam's headship in marriage was established by God before the Fall, and was not a result of sin (Gen 2:16-18, 21-24, 3:1-13; 1 Cor 11:7-9).

The Fall introduced distortions into the relationships between men and women (Gen 3:1-7, 12, 16).

In the home, the husband's loving, humble headship tends to be replaced by domination or passivity; the wife's intelligent, willing submission tends to be replaced by usurpation or servility.

In the church, sin inclines men toward a worldly love of power or an abdication of spiritual responsibility, and inclines women to resist limitations on their roles or to neglect the use of their gifts in appropriate ministries.

The Old Testament, as well as the New Testament, manifests the equally high value and dignity which God attached to the roles of both men and women (Gen 1:26-27, 2:18; Gal 3:28). Both Old and New Testaments also affirm the principle of male headship in the family and in the covenant community (Gen 2:18; Eph 5:21-33; Col 3:18-19; 1 Tim 2:11-15).

Redemption in Christ aims at removing the distortions introduced by the curse.

In the family, husbands should forsake harsh or selfish leadership and grow in love and care for their wives; wives should forsake resistance to their husbands' authority and grow in willing, joyful submission to their husbands' leadership (Eph 5:21-33; Col 3:18-19; Tit 2:3-5; 1 Pet 3:1-7). In the

church, redemption in Christ gives men and women an equal share in the blessings of salvation; nevertheless, some governing and teaching roles within the church are restricted to men (Gal 3:28; 1 Cor 11:2-16; 1 Tim 2:11-15).

In all of life Christ is the supreme authority and guide for men and women, so that no earthly submission-domestic, religious, or civil-ever implies a mandate to follow a human authority into sin (Dan 3:10-18; Acts 4:19-20, 5:27-29; 1 Pet 3:1-2).

In both men and women a heartfelt sense of call to ministry should never be used to set aside Biblical criteria for particular ministries (1 Tim 2:11-15, 3:1-13; Tit 1:5-9). Rather, Biblical teaching should remain the authority for testing our subjective discernment of God's will.

With half the world's population outside the reach of indigenous evangelism; with countless other lost people in those societies that have heard the gospel; with the stresses and miseries of sickness, malnutrition, homelessness, illiteracy, ignorance, aging, addiction, crime, incarceration, neuroses, and loneliness, no man or woman who feels a passion from God to make His grace known in word and deed need ever live without a fulfilling ministry for the glory of Christ and the good of this fallen world (1 Cor 12:7-21).

We are convinced that a denial or neglect of these principles will lead to increasingly destructive consequences in our families, our churches, and the culture at large.