

## Biggest Ideas that have shifted me to the Egalitarian Position:

### 1. The redemptive movement of God through time/scripture

a. Is slavery acceptable today? Yet, it was according to Paul. This redemptive movement can be attributed to the topic of women in ministry in the same way. Still, Paul made huge strides in the liberation of women compared to the culture

### 2. Paul's focus was on spreading the Gospel

a. I believe his letters to church leaders were focused on how to best spread this good news and how to navigate cultural issues.

b. The same kind of cultural encouragement would be used today for people seeking the best way to reach people in various cultures:

i. When I was first asked to put my position down in writing, the timing was very interesting. Jeanette Cook (a missionary to the Muslim community in Portland) was still at my house when the email request arrived. Throughout our discussion around the Cooks' ministry in Portland to Muslim immigrants, our discussion around women in ministry was blatantly ringing in my ears. Multiple cultural issues were mentioned as extremely important to their mission. If Paul was writing a letter to Mike and Jeanette, I believe it would include the following:

1. Do not deliver flowers to the funeral of a Muslim

2. When introducing the Bible, its' best to use story rather than pulling out an actual Bible which they may reject before you begin.

3. When serving tea to an Afghan, us a large cup, signifying their importance. When serving tea to a Saudi, us a very small teacup so their tea is always perfectly hot and you can offer more, over and over.

4. Jeanette told us a story about when there was almost a fistfight at the Pamoja House when their guests were arguing over head coverings. They were arguing over the meaning of "cover". I don't believe God is worried about if they cover their heads, yet it comes up multiple times: 1 Cor. 11, 1 Timothy 2. We have been willing to take "covering" (or long hair, braids, etc.) as cultural, but other issues we have not.

ii. None of the above points would be held as absolute truths across time and cultures. Rather, they are important considerations for Mike and Jeanette in order for their recipients to be open to their gospel message.

3. Dr. Nystrom's discussion around the potential meanings of "authentain" really made complete sense to me. I can see Paul pointing out the potential of a woman's new freedom being used to move up the ladder and grab power. Paul would of course address self-serving power moves. This goes for men and women, but at that time, it was the women who had the ability to gain in class structure. The fact that authentain was only used once in all of scripture is important. The fact that its usage in other writings always implied violence and even murder makes the idea "harsh, power grabbing" make the most sense to its usage.

4. I cannot think of any biblical tenets which I cannot rationalize as "the best way of living an abundant life". Giving, not lying, not coveting, saving sexual intimacy for marriage—these all make sense as the best, most rewarding ways of living, as well as avoiding much difficulty. The rationale for hierarchy and limiting a woman's ability to lead do not align in the same way. I don't see them as "God's design for the best way to live". Can it work? Of course. Does it seem like the best way? No, I can't imagine even the most devout complementarian saying it is a better model than mutual submission and equality. Rather, the argument comes down to "God's design", and we know He works in mysterious ways.

5. Kingdom Theology. If Jesus declared that the Kingdom was near 2000 years ago, wouldn't it make sense that it is truly here!?! This is new to me as of about a decade ago. If that it true, would we not be working toward a more perfect, redeemed design, as opposed to a cursed existence? Jesus came to

bring life to the full, so I don't believe we have to wait—we get to enter. And so we pray, "on earth as it is in heaven".

Big shifts like this are not easy for me. I tend to be conservative in nature. I want to "do the right thing". Truth is important to me. I believe this is why it took me many years of study. I think I can say that I have never researched any other topic to the level that I did the egalitarian/complementarian issue. I do not believe it is something that should divide. I have hope for the members of Monte Vista Chapel who may have the same fear that I had a decade ago but have not read the volumes I have read. My hope is that they put their trust in the slow work of the Spirit that has moved through our community, our leadership, and certainly our staff which we have chosen to lead us. We have many staff members with Masters Degrees and Doctorates, who are united in their agreement on this position. Even if I was on the fence, I believe I would be inclined to follow those we have chosen and hired to lead us.

Rick Moen