

POSITION OF GROUP 1

1. Seventh-day Adventists hold the Bible as the only foundation for our teachings and unity (John 17:17-21; 2Tim 3:16-17). “The Bible must be our standard for every doctrine and practice. . . . It is . . . to decide all controversies” (Ellen White, 1888, pp. 44-45). “Those who believe the Word of God as it reads are walking in the light; for the Bible is its own interpreter” (18MR 145).

2. The Bible teaches that God’s Word applies to all cultures. Therefore we should not support disunifying appeals for regionally independent applications of Scripture based on cultures in the various world divisions (1Cor 1:10, 14:33).

3. The Bible teaches that God created men and women in His image, yet with different functions (Gen 1 and 2). Paul quotes Genesis to explain the principle of male leadership in the home (Eph 5:22-24, 31-33) and in the church (1Tim 2:11-14).

4. The Bible teaches that an elder must be of noble character, exemplary in home leadership, and “the husband of one wife” (1Tim 3:2-5; Titus 1:6-9). Otherwise he is disqualified from serving as an elder/minister who oversees the church. This instruction is based on the church as “the household of God” and applies to the whole church for all time (1 Tim 3:15).

5. The Bible is clear that no woman ever functioned as a priest, apostle, elder, or minister. In the Old Testament, male priests were ordained. In the New Testament church, Jesus ordained twelve men as apostles who were His gospel ministers to oversee the church. They in turn ordained elders as leaders in every church and ministers like Titus and Timothy to evangelize and maintain specific biblical qualifications for church leaders (Acts 14:23; 1Tim 5:22; 2Tim 1:6; Titus 1:5).

6. The Bible shows Jesus, the Head of the Church, and His apostles establishing and exemplifying a servant leadership model of church authority (Matt 20:25-28). Elders exercise authority in the church (Heb 13:17; 1Tim 5:17; 1Pet 5:1-4). Paul told Titus, “Speak these things, exhort, and *rebuke with all authority*” (Titus 2:15). Women were not to exercise this authority (1Tim 2:12) and were not ordained to these offices. Paul clearly states the biblical leadership/headship principle establishing man’s authority in the church (1Cor 11:3).

7. Women’s ordination, even regionally, undermines three of our Fundamental Beliefs and weakens the Adventist mission: (1) the doctrine of the Holy Scriptures, by not following the plain reading of Scripture; (2) the doctrine of the church, through an unbiblical church structure; (3) the doctrine of unity, by compromising the worldwide validity of ordination. Many denominations that

adopted women's ordination have experienced sharp divisions and membership losses.

8. The Bible shows women exercising important functions in God's church.

God used women to rear godly leaders, lead spiritual revivals, witness, and prophesy, etc. While the Bible and Ellen White's writings offer no clear support for the ordination of women to the gospel ministry or as elders who oversee the church, they encourage all women to participate actively in gospel work.