

Introduction

In MTS we are training both men and women for the ministry of the gospel. There is much in common in the training. All the Training Goals and Exercises relate to men and women to some degree. Both genders need to grow in their knowledge of God through the Scriptures, apply this knowledge to every facet of life, and learn how to teach this knowledge of God to others. At this point there is no difference in the training. We seek to build godly men and women, filled with knowledge of God and willing to serve Christ in any way.

Different emphases in training arise from two realities, one theological, the other personal. This is not the place to argue for the reality of these differences. Firstly, God has ordained distinct roles for men and women in the ministry of the gospel. Men are to take the overall teaching and leadership responsibility in the church and in the home. They are the overseers and husbands. Women are to submit to the leadership of their husbands and be co-workers with men in the gospel. (see Rom 16:1-16; 1 Cor 11:1-16; 14:33-35; Eph 5:21-33; Phil 4:2-3; 1 Tim 2:9-15).

Secondly, men and women adopt certain beliefs, values and behaviour patterns related to being a man or woman. Whether these derive from nature or nurture, or nurture reinforcing nature, is not relevant at this point. However, in our training, these patterns need to be tested and sometimes re-shaped to reflect godly manhood and womanhood. Because ministry is in the context of relationships, our assumptions about being a man or a woman have a great impact on our ministry.

Men and Women in the Pastoral Epistles

Try this exercise to ground the discussion in the Bible.

1. In the Pastoral Epistles, where men are specifically addressed, they are to:

(1 Tim 2:8; 3:1-10, 12-13; 5:1-2; 6:11-16; Titus 2:1-2; 6-8. Note, we could include all requirements laid upon Paul, Timothy and Titus)

- Pray without anger and disputing
- Be above reproach
- Be the husband of one wife
- Be self-controlled and temperate
- Be respectable
- Be hospitable
- Teach, preach
- Not be drunk
- Not be violent but gentle
- Not be quarrelsome
- Not love money or pursue dishonest gain

- Manage their family well
- See that their children obey them with proper respect
- Have a good reputation with outsiders
- Be sincere
- Exhort older men as fathers
- Treat younger men as brothers
- Treat older women as mothers
- Treat younger women as sisters with absolute purity
- Pursue righteousness
- Pursue godliness
- Pursue faith
- Pursue love
- Pursue endurance
- Pursue gentleness
- Fight the good fight of the faith

2. In the Pastoral Epistles, where women are specifically addressed, they are to:

(1 Tim 2: 9-15; 3:11; 5:3-16; Titus 2:3-5)

- Dress modestly with decency and propriety
- Dress with good deeds appropriate for women who worship God
- Learn in quietness and full submission
- Not teach or have authority over a man
- Be worthy of respect
- Not be malicious talkers
- Be temperate
- Be trustworthy in everything
- Put their hope in God
- Pray night and day for help
- Not live for pleasure
- Be faithful to her husband
- Be well known for her good deeds
- Bring up children
 - Show hospitality

- Help those in trouble
- Be dedicated to Christ
- Not to be idle, gossips and busybodies
- Marry
- Have children
- Manage their homes
- Help widows in her family
- Be reverent in the way they live
- Not be slanderers
- Not to be addicted to much wine
- Teach what is good
- Train the younger women
- Love their husbands and children
- Be self-controlled and pure
- Be busy at home
- Be kind
- Be subject to their husbands

3. Work out what is same and different about these attributes and roles?

This paper

What is below is not an analysis of men and women and their differences, but some observations and implications for our training. These observations are not drawn specifically from the above passages, but are distilled from the overall teaching of the Bible and some years of training men and women in ministry.

Remember, generalisations are just that, general!

Issues in Training Men

Train men as your sons, equipping them for independence and the achievement of great service in the name of Christ and the preaching of the gospel (Phil 2:19-24).

1. Equip men for strong leadership.

Our goal is to train a generation of godly, robust, adventurous men who will preach the gospel faithfully and gather others around them in the enterprise. They need confidence, optimism, decisiveness, initiative, wisdom and rapport with others. To lead the church they must be able to win the loyalty and respect of others.

Some men seem to have these qualities naturally, through their family and school influences. Their

socio-economic class affects their view of themselves as leaders or followers. Some from working class backgrounds do not see themselves as leaders and need lots of encouragement and opportunity to develop these attitudes and skills.

Extending responsibility is one of the great builders of men. Stretch them beyond their comfort zone. Whenever possible, deploy men to commence a new ministry area, for which they are responsible. This will test their initiative and ability to recruit and build a team around them.

Expect high performance standards, otherwise your approval means nothing.

Teach men to lead through their own personality, not mimicking others.

2. Train men to love passionately

We must not remove leadership from the context of love. Strong leadership is not authoritarianism. Timothy was to pursue love. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. Husbands are to love their wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her (1 Tim 6:11; John 10:11; Eph 5:25).

To love God and men are the two greatest commands. Love must not be reduced to law, fulfilling certain tasks or coldly fulfilling our duty. This is not the model of the Psalmist (for example, trace the delight of the Psalmist in Psalm 119).

Men in our culture have problems with the emotional side of love and relationships. They have been taught that masculinity is expressed by toughness and competitiveness. Expressing emotions is deemed to be a sign of weakness. Men have not been loved by their fathers and cannot express their love to others.

For some men, it seems they have the emotional - relational switch in the off position. They cannot feel what it means to love or be angry, because they have never felt the freedom to express it.

This has all sorts of implications in marriage and ministry. Women need the comfort and tenderness of their men. Without love, relationships are limited and artificial, which inhibits drawing people into our lives and ministries.

Encourage men to talk about the hurts and frustrations of life, past and present. Give time to listen to them. Your modelling of this will shape how they minister.

3. Train men to lead with humility.

This is the paradox of Christian leadership. We need to raise up men who can conquer the world, by being no-bodies. They must seek first Christ and his kingdom. The servant of all is the great one (Matt 6:33; 20:20-28).

Men leading without humility become domineering and overbearing. The paradox is that men have fragile egos. Our culture trains men to measure success by their performance and achievements. Men are competitive and terrified of failure. Dealing with failure is the essential training exercise. They must learn to persevere and pick up the pieces after failure and criticism. Some have never failed in anything ever before.

Yet be gentle with men's egos. A harsh critique can be remembered for a lifetime and destroy their soul.

4. Train men to train men

It is easier for men to minister to women. Men enjoy their relationships and ministry with women for many reasons. Women are expressive, articulate, emotional, caring, teachable and spiritually hungry. They boost the male ego and provide a level of intimacy foreign to men.

Train men to reach men with the gospel and train men in the Bible and Christian living.

5. Train men in self-awareness.

Some men fail to perceive how they are 'coming across' to others. They fail to see how their grooming, hygiene, clothing, manners, habits, speech and so forth are effecting others and their relationships.

(See Training Exercise 4.10 Personal Presentation)

6. Train men to understand people.

Men tend to de-personalise ministry. They focus on the goals and tasks and the content of what has to be taught and lose track of what is happening to people. Teach men to be listeners and to be curious about people and what makes them tick. Teach them to work out why people think a certain way or engage in particular behaviour. Train men to pick up on the emotions people are expressing. Teach them to read body language.

Men need to broaden their interests to relate to others.

7. Train men to understand women and how to lead them.

A woman's capacity for relationships is greater than for men. However, because of the bigger investment they make in friendships, ministry takes a greater toll on women. Most women in full-time ministry burn out after 10 years. It is difficult for a woman to distance herself emotionally from people and their problems.

Women's ministry is much more time consuming and exhausting. We should not expect women to work with as many people as the men.

Women tend to talk in order to relate and think things through, whereas men tend to talk to communicate and solve problems. It often appears to men that a woman's conversation is not going anywhere. To a woman, to talk is to relate.

In group contexts women perceive what is happening with individuals, while men will focus on the content of the discussion. This gives great strength in working together.

Understand that, for women the future is less certain than for men, and this leads to frustration.

Men tend to be too businesslike in their relationships. Women need to develop some relationship with their colleagues and feel that they are known as a person. For example, when men lead a planning meeting, their agenda will more likely be tasks than the development of people.

It is right for men and women to care deeply about each other as we minister together, but this can lead to problems. We need to maintain a professional relationship in the midst of genuine concern and affection.

Men tend to make unilateral decisions rather than taking advantage of the insights and wisdom of

women.

8. Train men to be the protectors of women

Men are to use their physical strength to protect women. We have customs that seem pointless because we have forgotten the reasons for them. For example, teaching men to walk on the roadside of the footpath teaches the men to protect women. As far as possible men should do the physical work of setting up meetings etc.

Never give out a woman's phone number, even to a church member.

9. Prepare men to be godly husbands and fathers.

A man's wife and children are the first members of his congregation (1 Tim 3: 4,12). Whether married or single during their MTS apprenticeship, equip men with the vision and attitudes of serving their families. Often during these training years they are building the foundations of their marriage and setting the patterns for marriage and ministry life. They are facing for the first time the tensions of marriage and ministry such as financial pressures, time priorities and ministry to their wives.

Men will be dealing with different 'problems' in building their family life. Train them according to their needs.

- Increasingly men are growing up in divided or dysfunctional families and have not experienced fathers who are loving and reliable. Often the trainer becomes the replacement father in a positive sense, providing basic instruction and modelling in caring for women and children.
- Some men need responsibilities in Sunday School and crèche, to gain experience in bonding with children and teaching them. They also observe Christian families in this context.
- Workaholic husbands, who are so caught up with their ministry, need help in looking after their wives and programming time together .
- Some men are physically at home but emotionally absent. Teach them to spend time listening to their wives, talking about their own joys and fears, talking about what happened in their day.
- At the other end of the spectrum, some wives are too demanding and emotionally dependent. Husbands have to learn to gently strengthen their wives, so they can give their husbands the freedom to do their work. The men need to draw their wives into the vision of discipleship and ministry to others.
- Some husbands treat their wives as another team member, having unreal expectations. Their wives are required to go to work, lead Bible studies, go to conferences, meet with individuals and support their husbands.
- Most men need help and encouragement in leading their wives spiritually, reading the Bible, praying, growing in Christ together.
- There is sometimes a problem with female team members unsettling the marriage. Wives can become jealous of the time and attention their husbands give to women on the team.

It's the eternal triangle. Make sure the wives know and trust the other women. There must be no threat to the marriage.

- Some single men will consider staying single for ministry. They need to be objective about their 'gift' in this area. They need to be aware of the confusion and hurt they can cause if they are getting too close to women without any intention of considering marriage.
- Many single men need a firm hand in being moved along toward marriage. Some have such high standards for a wife, that they will never approach anyone. Others have had bad romantic episodes and need to try again. Some need to see their own selfishness and realise that there are many godly women who desire to marry and share in ministry with a husband.
- Some marriages have such conflict and communication problems that a more formal program of counseling is required. Don't leave it too late.

(See *Training Exercise 4.02, Marriage and Ministry*)

Issues in Training Women

Train women as your daughters, with gentleness, warmth and protection. Defer to the needs of the women on the team before the men.

1. Set realistic expectations for the ministry of women.

Our goal is to train women who love the Lord Jesus and his people and have the confidence and ability to use whatever situation they find themselves in to minister to others.

The ministry of individual women is enormously varied. To describe the opportunities and gifts, the needs and relationships is beyond the scope of this paper. Broadly speaking there are two foci of Christian ministry: the public and extensive and the family and intensive.

As women pass through different phases of their family life so the shift takes place from a public and extensive ministry to a family and intensive ministry and back to a public and extensive ministry again. It is a shift of emphasis rather than a complete change. Even though a woman may give priority at a certain phase in her life to the intensive ministry of her family, she may still maintain some public and extensive ministry. However, when caring for her husband and small children there is a decided shift in the character of the extensive ministry that is available for a woman. The opportunities of being out many nights in a week are limited. It is important that the lifestyle and ministry that is adopted promotes unity within the marriage rather than militating against it. After the child rearing years are passed there is a greater possibility of moving back to more extensive ministry. However, age, sometimes ill health, and a new maturity may change the pattern and character of that ministry.

In terms of extensive ministry there are three broad groups of women in the church.

Firstly there are those who are married with children and whose job and commitment to family life is such as to only allow limited ministry outside the home. They only have some evenings and weekends available for ministry.

Secondly there are those who are in a position to undertake part-time paid employment and

provide for themselves while undertaking part-time ministry. This would be particularly true of women prior to marriage or just married. This is also possible for women whose children are now independent and whose husband can afford to continue to provide for them. Many wives have used this economic freedom to undertake extensive ministries such as teaching Scripture in schools and conducting Women's Bible study ministries.

Thirdly, there are those who are single and who can give a lifetime to Christian ministry and therefore should undertake theological training and be provided for by the congregations to whom they minister.

2. Expose women to a variety of ministry models and opportunities.

During MTS apprenticeship, help women see the diversity of ministries for women, by giving them a range of responsibilities and the opportunity to meet others in ministry.

3. Train women to be content.

Women often do not know in which situation of life they will serve Jesus Christ. They might be single, married, mothers, in paid ministry or volunteers or married to a minister. If they are fixed on one outcome, they are not trusting Christ and may be disheartened.

4. Encourage women to value singleness

Encourage a positive view of singleness and the opportunities that such freedom gives. Married women in training with us also need this positive training about the single life. Understand the insecurities felt by single women and the way these are reinforced in church life. We tend to communicate that marriage is like a woman's graduation ceremony and becoming a mother is like getting honours. Help them not to become introspective and complain about being single. Teach them that marriage is just a different set of problems. In reality single women can only plan 1-2 years ahead.

Hold before them the challenge to remain single for the sake of particular ministries.

5. Encourage women to value marriage.

Ensure they are positive and hopeful of marrying and raising a family. Hold this before them as a godly desire. Do not let their ministry ambitions lead to a negative view of marriage. They may choose to remain single for the gospel, but not because they think marriage is undesirable. Expose them to godly marriages and families while doing an MTS apprenticeship, especially if they have never seen Christian family life.

Instil in them the commitment to build their husband into the godly man God wants him to be. They must learn to respect men. Help them not to compete with men for status, power and position. Encourage them to be a woman of strength, liberating their husband to do his work.

6. Encourage women to value motherhood.

Expose women to the nurture and teaching of children, through Sunday Schools and creche. Talk to the women about creating a home that their children and their friends will want to be in.

7. Train women as Bible teachers.

We need to prepare women for possible roles in public ministry, such as evangelistic speaking, conference speaking and training events for women in ministry. Provide the opportunities for women to learn platform skills and the basics of giving talks from the Bible.

Women tend to be strong in personal ministries, because of their capacity for loving, caring, nurturing relationships. However this strength can become a weakness, when personal ministry centres on helping women with their problems. Train women to have an agenda of Bible study and prayer when meeting with other women. This is the goal of ministry, to increase in the knowledge and love of Christ. The problems will still be discussed and faced, but in the context of learning God's will.

Women need to extend their teaching ministries beyond a few deep and meaningful relationships. They often assume that a significant friendship is a pre-requisite for ministry, thus reducing their ministry opportunities. Train women to minister to many others and to commence the relationship by meeting for Bible study and prayer.

(See Training Exercise 6.01 Helping People make Progress)

8. Train women to say the hard things.

Because of their compassion and sensitivities to people, women tend to avoid difficult conversations, where particular needs and sin needs to be confronted.

As a training exercise in this area, train women to give a critique of a talk by another woman on the team. Help them give constructive criticism and not just the positives.

9. Be attentive to the practicalities of life.

Ministry takes a greater toll on women, because of the emotional investment they make in relationships. With this in mind, we need to look after the women in the whole of their lives, especially when they are single.

Help women with: time management, housing needs, budgeting, raising funds, finding suitable part-time work, relating to their families, diet and exercise, taking regular days off, taking holidays, recreation and other interests, time with friends.

10. Train women to deal with specific problems women face.

These might include:

- eating disorders,
- abortion,
- infertility,
- guilt,
- self-esteem.

11. Train women to understand and work with men.

This is important preparation for possible team appointments in the future. Some women have had terrible experiences with men, which have left emotional scars (sometimes physical), which must be

understood and progressively dealt with.

Teach them about men: their fragile ego, their competitiveness, their tendency to focus on the task, their inhibitions in relationships, how their sex-drive works and so on.

Women will normally want to build friendships with the men on the ministry team Give them realistic expectations about men's interest and ability to form these friendships.

Make sure they understand how easily men are manipulated by women.

Train them to work submissively and respectfully under the authority of men. This is usually under your leadership as the Trainer. Some will have a problem with authority, for personal or ideological reasons, or a combination of both.

Train them to work with male co-workers in a way that encourages their leadership. This is often difficult when the women can see what should be done and how to do it or what should be said. They have a great ministry to the men when if they can sit back and let it all unfold without always taking over.

12. Cultivate their confidence and security.

Many women are very insecure and yet wish to serve the Lord Jesus Christ however they are able. Every woman has some confidence problems. They have imbibed the subtext of our culture. Women have made it and are worthwhile if they look good, with a size eight figure, in fashionable clothes, with a go-ahead career, and the right man on their arm.

Preach the gospel of their intrinsic worth to God as His creatures and daughters in Christ.

For those, who have dealt with their insecurities by dressing in a dowdy or masculine way, help them enjoy their femininity and appearance.

Help women to realise their competitiveness with other women. They will have reactions to other women that are based on what she wears, what she talks about, who she goes out with etc. Envy, superiority and prejudice can be a problem.

Issues in Training Godly Leaders

Despite all the differences we have already mentioned, the one fact that we keep returning to is training in understanding the Bible and teaching it to others. Both men and women are called to be children of God and live lives worthy of the Lord. The differences in the way each sex does this complements each other when working together as the body of Christ.