

## **Women at Work: Cultivating a Career and a Relationship with God**

As evangelical men and women we are called together "to bear witness to Jesus Christ and all his teaching in every sphere of society" (*The Cape Town Commitment*). This includes bearing holistic witness as female professionals in the marketplace. In this session, we will respond to some key challenges we may face as female evangelical leaders in the marketplace, such as having a stressful life with demanding working hours, experiencing isolation at work and alienation inside church, and facing tough priorities in relation to families and friends. The framework for responding to such challenges is a holistic understanding of calling, which includes a primary calling to worship God ("by God, to God, for God") and a secondary calling to serve him ("everyone, everywhere, in everything").

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### **I. Introduction**

- A. Our primary calling
- B. Our secondary calling

### **II. Foundations for Christian leaders, whether male or female**

- A. Growing in the loving relationship with the Triune God, with fellow Christian believers and with "my neighbour"
- B. Growing a strong Christian mind / worldview
- C. Growing in the understanding of the surrounding cultural context
- D. Growing in the commitments both to the cultural mandate and to the missionary mandate

### **III. Identity as Christian Women - and the storyline of the Bible**

- A. Creation – in the image of God – our original identity
- B. Fall – sin, guilt and shame – our distorted identity
- C. Salvation – in Jesus Christ our Saviour and by the Holy Spirit – our restored identity

D. Hope – through the return of Jesus Christ as Lord – our complete identity

*Identifying key challenges regarding our identity (cf. self-perception, self-esteem, self-confidence), as women in our cultural contexts.*

#### **IV Integrity as Christian Women - in different roles on different arenas**

*“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.” (Rom. 12: 1-2)*

A. In view of God’s mercy – called to live in view of God as Creator, Sustainer and Redeemer

*Whatever role and arena - identifying key spiritual roots*

B. Offer your bodies – called to live our everyday lives “as unto the Lord” (Col. 3:23)

*Whatever role and arena - identifying key challenges*

C. Do not conform – called to holiness, over against “the pattern of this world”

*Whatever role and arena - identifying key challenges*

D. Be transformed – called to see everything in light of the biblical storyline

*Whatever role and arena - identifying key challenges*

*Relating to role models from the Bible, Church history and today*

#### **V Holy women living a holistic life, with integrity - true to our identity**

A. *Identity* – cf. self-perception, self-esteem, self-confidence – as created in the image of God and renewed in Christ

B. *Calling* – in view of both the cultural mandate and the missionary mandate

C. *Integrity* – affirming our God-given womanhood regardless of age, social status and family context

D. *Counter-cultural lifestyle* – living radical “politically incorrect” lives

## VI Q&A / Discussion

### *Suggested Readings:*

Beasley, Kristin: *Who do you think you are? Good news about your identity.* (Kristin Beasley/Greater Reach Ministry 2010)

Crane, Jane L. "History of the Partnership of Men and Women in the Lausanne Movement", in L. Dahle, M. S. Dahle and K. Jørgensen (eds.) *The Lausanne Movement: A Range of Perspectives* (Oxford: Regnum Books, 2014), pp. 250-264. Available online: [http://www.ocms.ac.uk/regnum/downloads/The\\_Lausanne\\_Movement-Final-WMF.pdf](http://www.ocms.ac.uk/regnum/downloads/The_Lausanne_Movement-Final-WMF.pdf).

Dahle, Margunn Serigstad: "Worldview Analysis of Popular Media: A Christian Perspective" in Egil Grandhagen and Aage Myksvoll (eds): *Budskap 2006. Årsskrift for Fjellhaug Misjonshøgskole* (Oslo: Fjellhaug, 2006) pp. 165-174. (Available online: <http://misjonshogskolen.fjellhaug.no/assets/PDF-filer/Budskap/Budskap-2006-101106.pdf>)

Harrison, Glynn: *The Big Ego Trip. Finding true significance in a culture of self-esteem* (IVP, 2013)

Keyes, Dick: *Beyond Identity: Finding Your Self in the Image and Character of God* (Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2003)