

bWe – Baptist Women for Equality

for Women Deacons and Women Pastors

What can I do?

How do Pastors feel about women in leadership roles?

Why do I need to speak out if so many people are already doing so?

I don't really want a woman pastor, but I think women could be a deacon

What can I do?

- Find your voice. Start talking about the inequity of women in Southern Baptist churches. Talk to everyone, because that person may have been a Baptist or knows someone who is.
- Ask your friends at church how they feel about women deacons and possibly women pastors.
- Tell your family that you have come to realize that women should be allowed to serve as deacons and even to preach if the Lord calls her.
- Remember that you are a member of your church, and as such, have a right to have your voice heard.
- Connect with other Southern Baptist women who want to claim their equality in Baptist churches.

It will be harder for women in those churches that have signed agreements with the Southern Baptist Convention saying that they will not have a woman deacon or a woman pastor. How did we ever allow such arrogance in our churches! (Where were we when we were led down that road?) However, that agreement like any other signed agreement in these United States, can be changed. When enough women decide that enough is enough, then it will be changed.

How do Pastors feel about women in leadership roles?

It might surprise you to learn that there are many pastors who feel that women are getting a bad deal with the Southern Baptist Convention. You can read what they have to say on many websites. Then why aren't there more women deacons and women pastors? **There are not more because women themselves have not taken a stand.** We have sat back and accepted this as the way it has always been. Or we have decided that we can't do anything about it. Or maybe we are afraid to rock the boat. Or maybe deep down in our hearts we think that women are not as qualified as a man to serve a piece

of bread and cup of juice. It is demeaning to a woman to argue over whether or not she is scripturally qualified to be a deacon or pastor.

Why do I need to speak out if so many people are already doing so?

You need to speak out because it is the only way women can be taken seriously. If we choose to allow the Pastors to do all the standing up for us, then we present to the Southern Baptist Convention that we are weak and not yet ready to lead.

Stand up, speak up. Equality is not the Southern Baptist Convention's to give to us. It is for us to claim. They do not have the power from God to make us equals. Jesus has already done that for us. We have to claim it.

I don't really want a woman pastor, but I think women could be a deacon

That is something that I understand all too well as I have had to come to grips with those same feelings. Because I am a life-long Baptist and have been marinated in those beliefs that women are not to preach - much like Peter who wouldn't eat of the unclean meat - I came to understand that if women were to have equality that it had to be full equality. Not just another bone thrown to her.

Listen to a woman preach. Go on a website where a woman is a pastor and listen to her preach. I went to a Methodist church to hear and see a woman pastor preach and minister to her flock. The roof didn't fall in, and I came out of that church with the understanding that women are truly being called by God to pastor a church and they are just as capable as a man to do so.

Ask your church for a copy of your By-laws and read what it says the qualifications for a deacon are and what the duties are. It is in the By-laws that specify whether or not a deacon must be a male. Women can certainly handle the duties of a deacon. By-laws can be changed. Talk with your pastor and other church members. It won't be easy. But it will be right.