

The Transforming Power Of CBE's Work

A collective of common experiences from CBE readers

"I grew up believing that women were meant to submit, that leadership was for men, and that questioning this order was dangerous—maybe even sinful. In my fundamentalist church, women could serve, but only within rigid limits. Yet deep down, I sensed God's calling wasn't bound by gender.

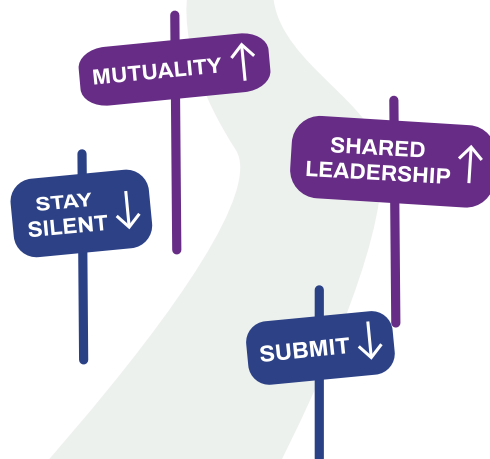
Still, I spent years trying to thrive in complementarian spaces (belief that women have distinct roles and responsibilities), hoping for change. My church seemed open to discussion, but when my pastor publicly reaffirmed complementarianism, I felt deep betrayal. Leaving meant grieving, lost hope, and lost relationships. But in the midst of that grief, God was at work.

Through studying Scripture, I began to see how God speaks to women—with love, affirmation, and purpose. But I didn't know where to turn for answers. Traditional bookstores only reinforced the same messages I had been taught. Then, I found CBE. Reading their blogs and biblical resources was like scales falling from my eyes. I discovered a history of strong women in Scripture and church leadership that I had never been taught.

CBE became a lifeline. Their resources helped me unlearn misinterpreted theology and embrace biblical truth. They guided me through healing—grieving, surrendering guilt, and stepping boldly into God's call for my life. Today, I am free to live out that calling, and I want others to experience that same freedom."

This is why CBE matters. It's why CBE's work must continue. Will you stand with us in equipping women and men with the biblical truth of women's equality?

In many churches, homes, and Christian communities, women are denied fundamental opportunities not because they lack ability, but due to deeply rooted theological patriarchy that distorts Scripture to mandate women's submission to men. CBE exists to change that!



THE PROBLEM

Christian Patriarchy Limits Women's Empowerment and Service

Faith Systems Shape Attitudes Toward Women

The system of men holding power over women has been entrenched in Christian theology through centuries of flawed readings of Scripture that fuel biased traditions and misguided beliefs, teachings, and practices. This has demeaned and excluded women's God-given gifts and service which are needed in the church, homes, and world.



As Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. pointed out, "laws cannot change the heart."¹⁰ It is through society and faith systems that attitudes toward women change.

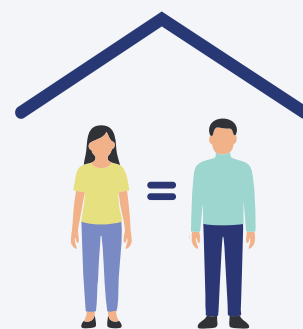
Thus, concerted effort needs to be invested in changing faith beliefs and attitudes toward women to successfully create a just society inclusive of women and men living and working in mutuality.

"Inequality is the result of cultural and historical developments and religious customs predominant in society."¹



Gender inequality in the home can limit women's opportunities for education, paid work, and leisure time.²

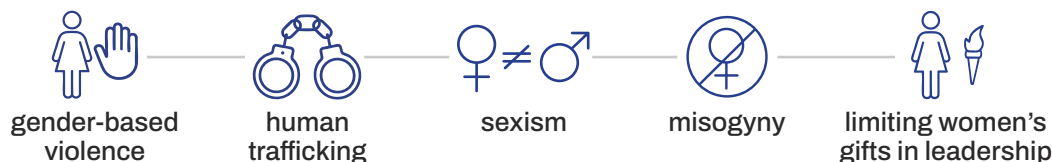
"Women with equal partners at home are more successful at work. They're more productive and able to take advantage of growth and advancement opportunities."³



Theologians show that the shared authority of women and men reflects a consistent and faithful reading of Scripture, and leads to vibrant, flourishing human communities.⁴

Gender-Based Violence

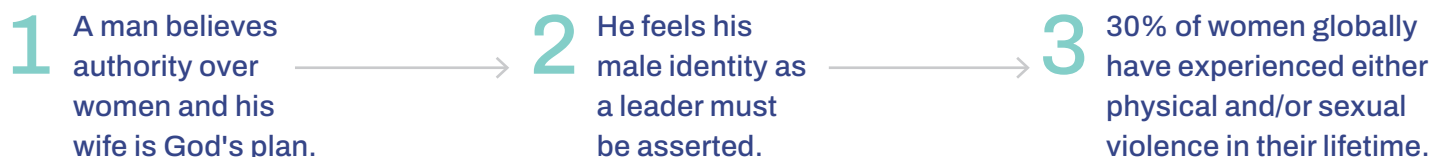
Women's inequality often leads to devastating outcomes like:



Elevating women's equality in culture is not attainable without addressing the underlying misinterpreted biblical and faith-based beliefs.

Research has consistently found that men who hold traditional, hierarchical views about gender roles and relationships are more likely to perpetrate violence against women.⁵ "At the core of domestic violence, abusers have a sense of entitlement and a belief that they *should* be in control."⁶ When a man believes authority over his wife is God's plan, he feels his male identity as a leader must be asserted and obeyed.

Many women leave the church because they feel unheard, treated as inferior, and their gifts and callings are ignored.⁷



Both secular and Christian humanitarians increasingly acknowledge the influence of faith leaders in promoting the dignity and agency of females. Faith can be an important part of preventing abuse and bringing healing to survivors.⁹

The Role of Faith Leaders

In the course of CBE's work, we have heard from countless women who shared their stories of marginalization and abuse in the church, and the pain and disillusionment because of their treatment. Whether the abuse was from an intimate partner, family member, pastor, coworker, or leader, their stories make it painfully clear that there is a connection between the church's stated and implied views on women and their marginalization and abuse.⁸

A compassionate, informed, and effective response by faith leaders and communities can promote critical healing and recovery. It could be lifesaving for survivors and their families. Faith communities also have the potential to create barriers to overcoming abuse through the misuse of religious beliefs and teachings.

Corrects Misinterpreted Biblical Passages and Faith-Based Beliefs

CBE is the only Christian organization working to expose flawed sexist interpretations of Scripture. CBE resources provide more accurate translations of the Bible to support Scripture's message on the shared leadership and mutuality between women and men. (Genesis 1:26, Romans 16:1-15, Galatians 3:28)

People searching the internet looking for answers to why their churches treat women as inferiors often find CBE because we have the, most expansive free online library of egalitarian resources on women, mutuality, and the Bible in more than 23 languages.

Global Online Reach

Since 2020, we have averaged



1.5 million page views on our website per year.



1 million unique page views per year for CBE's journal, magazine, and blog.



These statistics reflect only a fraction of CBE's reach given our international partnerships!

cbeinternational.org



Online Resources/ Blog



Magazine/ Academic Journal



Educational Radio Spots



Podcast



Conferences and Events



Books/ Articles



Video and Audio Resources



Local Chapters



"I return again and again to the resources of CBE to renew my spirit when I begin to slip into discouragement with patriarchy in the church. CBE has been used by God to heal my heart, to bring light and life back into my life, and to renew a passion to declare his grace." –Dawn

Global Impact

At CBE, we collaborate with pastors, churches, institutions, and NGOs worldwide to advocate biblically for the dignity, agency, and leadership of women.



Together we upend theological patriarchy and while doing this, we raise the status of women to promote human flourishing. CBE's global partners help us create a world where women and men are free to serve and lead together.

CBE's Africa partner CoMaFo trains male and female community leaders on women's biblical equality.

The "CBE in Brazil" group was established during CBE's 2023 international conference in Brazil. Different members of the group have published books and studies on women's biblical equality. A speaker from the conference in Brazil has since been ordained and is serving in her church.

CBE's partners in Africa leveraged CBE's teaching to lobby Zimbabwe's Ministry of Women Affairs to create a referral path for abuse survivors and influence legislation to better protect a wife's inheritance and end child marriage. As reported, "religion, culture, and society" all have a bearing on the outcome of a sexual and gender-based violence case.¹¹

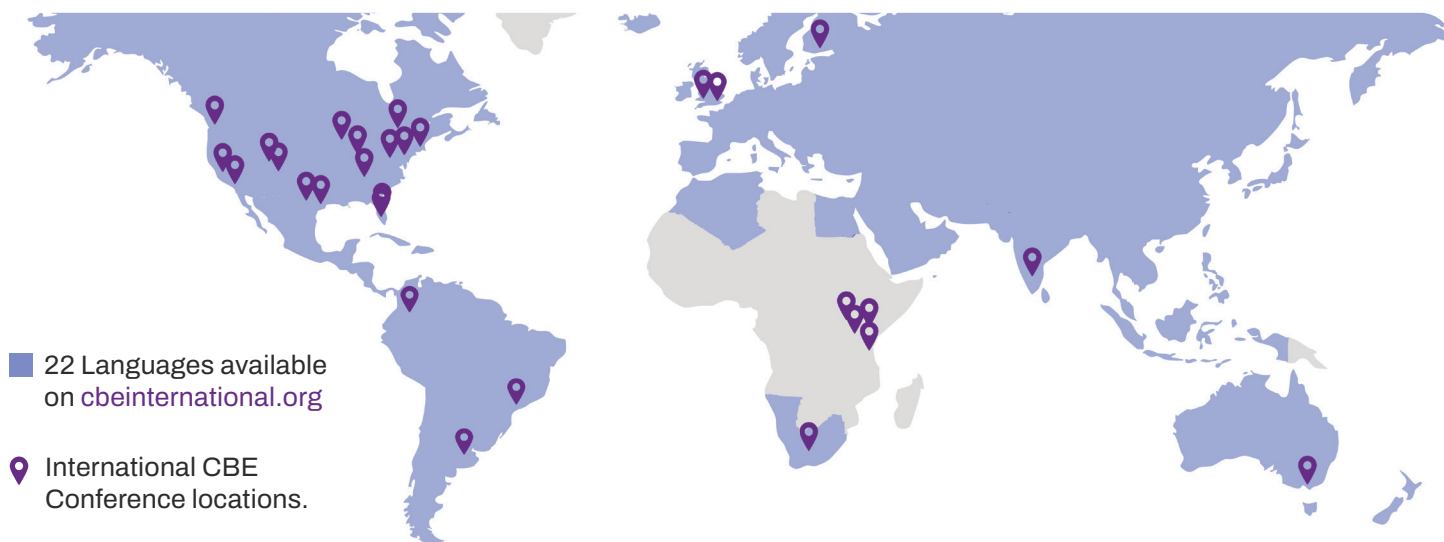
Campus Crusade for Christ (CRU)—the largest international college campus ministry worldwide—is training their international team at CBE conferences on Scripture's egalitarian teachings. CRU staff from Asia and South America are now advancing women's biblical equality through education, advocacy, and even through a CBE podcast series.



Reaching the Global Spanish Community

As a result of CBE's successful Spanish radio spots on a North Texas Christian radio station, within the first year, Spanish speakers visiting CBE's website increased from a few hundred per month to 3,000 per day! Seven of the top ten countries coming to CBE's website are from Spain, Mexico, Colombia, Venezuela, Argentina, Chile, and Peru!

Spanish speakers are calling and writing to request more resources in Spanish. So, CBE created a Spanish resource page on our website. All of CBE's current Spanish resources can be found on this page at cbe.today/spanish.



CBE International Conferences

CBE holds yearly conferences alternating between cities around the US and abroad. Together with leaders in the US and other countries, we explore egalitarian issues historically, biblically, and socially. Attendees also gain awareness and the ability to address the abuse of patriarchy within their spheres. Through these conferences, we analyze scriptural text supporting women's voice and leadership, alongside ways to empower women to lead in all areas of life.

As one attendee told us: "I cannot tell you how astonished I am to have found CBE, which is the result of 15 years of disillusionment of being a Christian. It is very profound for me to be here. I looked for clarity in my local church, and at faith related places, not even in the secular culture could they assist me holistically. Finally, I found CBE. An organization of selfless believers and people willing to make cultural change."



"I'd grown up under a complementarian view of female/male relationships, so when I was introduced to CBE, it revolutionized my world! CBE has shown a beautiful new dimension to the human experience: gender equality under God." –Katie

CBE Chapters at Work Worldwide



Chapters are a local expression of the movement led by CBE, collaborating to advance the biblical basis for shared leadership between women and men in their homes, churches, and communities.

Engaging their individual creativity and unique gifts, CBE chapters have hosted a variety of events like educational forums, leadership summits, book discussions, community meals, fundraisers, film screenings, and coffee talks. An Australian CBE chapter provided a list of where women preach in Sydney and New South Wales. CBE's Chapter in Washington DC put together and distributed reusable pads for girls in Uganda.

Local chapters also function as incubators where chapter members grow their egalitarian advocacy and communication skills. They also contribute to CBE's magazine and blog—*Mutuality*, CBE's academic journal—*Priscilla Papers*, and CBE's annual conferences.

THE NEED

Empowering Women Leaders Is a Critical Priority

Decades after many denominations began ordaining women, there remains a significant lack of women pastors—especially in senior leadership roles. While many evangelicals support women in some areas of church leadership, the highest positions often remain closed to them.¹²

Only fifty-five percent of pastors surveyed said their church would allow a woman to serve as senior pastor.¹³ A range of barriers— theological, cultural, historical, sociological, and institutional—continue to prevent women clergy from fully flourishing at all levels of leadership.¹⁵ These challenges must be addressed for women to achieve equal leadership opportunities in the church.



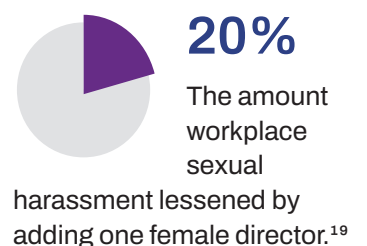
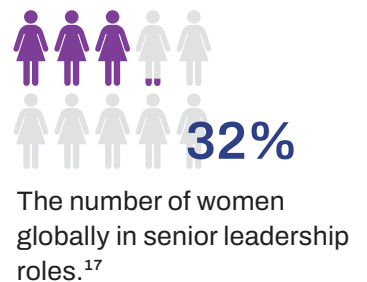
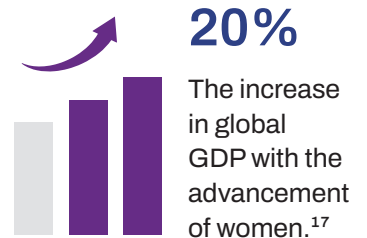
“Findings suggest that gender biases and stereotypes contribute to sustaining the patriarchal leadership structure in churches, and even when women become lead pastors, their presence is concentrated in smaller and financially stressed churches.”¹⁶



Scripture depicts women as leaders from the beginning of creation to their partnerships with Paul, but churches ignore this evidence and “focus on a few contested verses” used to support male-only authority instead.²³

Many Christian leaders, churches, and seminaries leverage mistranslations of Scripture to oppose women’s equality and leadership in the church. These influential gatekeepers rely on flawed Bible translations to uphold male-female power imbalances in their families, churches, and communities, subverting God’s original plan for mutuality between men and women.²⁴

As noted in a 2021 UN white paper, **“Religion has been called the hardest barrier that women must overcome in the path to gender equality. The amplification and catalyzation of women leaders who are advancing gender equality in faith contexts is an urgent priority.”²²**



Women Faith Leaders Flourish Their Communities

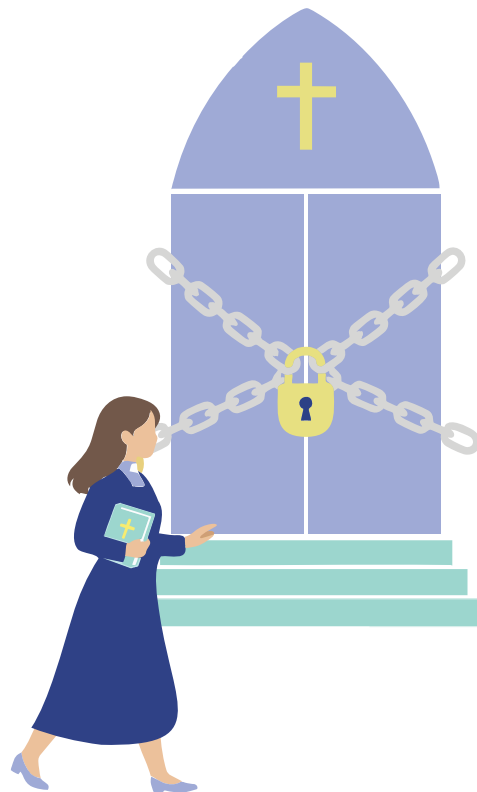
Studies show that women's equality is necessary for human flourishing.¹⁸ Women leaders who work alongside men in ministry settings are necessary for their churches and communities to thrive. What is more, when women join all male leadership teams, ethical practices increase along with productivity.¹⁹

CBE's website is filled with stories about women who are not allowed to use their God-given talents and answer their call to leadership in the church and Christian organizations. Here is one example:

"As I walked toward the doors on the last day of my church internship, I ran into a pastor for whom I'd done some exegesis. I figured since I had not been offered any kind of position, I asked him, 'If I were a man walking out these doors with an MDiv, what might happen?' He said, 'Off the record, you'd be offered a pastor position.' I went out to my car and sobbed."
—Melissa



An average 36% of evangelical men prefer a male leader rather than a female leader. "Evangelical men in the Church consistently valued women less than non-evangelical men outside the church."¹⁴



When women serve in churches where women have been sexually abused and/or harassed,²¹ having women leaders in ministry can significantly increase safety and healing for survivors and their loved ones.

Prohibiting women from fully exercising their God-given gifts in leadership and service to the home, church, and world, constitutes an injustice that impoverishes the body of Christ and its ministry in the world.

“ ”

Comments sent to CBE

"God has used you and your staff to bring healing to my tired spirit." —Elizabeth

"Your work has been a source of growth, freedom, and hope during some very dark times. It lets me know again and again how kind and merciful God is. That he did not create women to be on the outside of his kingdom, looking in, but to be fully accepted and beloved." —Mary

"I have been a sponge, soaking in your articles and reading the many books I found in your resource library. I have found comfort, support, and encouragement in knowing I am not alone."
—Kristin

Elevates Equality in Women's Christian Leadership.

CBE promotes equal opportunities for women by advancing the Bible's extensive support for women's shared leadership, through our international programs and multi-language resources.



Scholarships for Women in Ministry and Leadership

CBE has the only scholarship program specifically designed to support women in ministry. The Alvera Mickelsen Memorial Scholarship (AMMS) was created to help women answer their call to ministry. It provides financial assistance to women pursuing a master's degree in a ministry field related to preaching, communications, writing, youth ministry, pastoral, or nonprofit work. AMMS scholarships enable women to work as confident faith leaders beside men in churches and ministries, which strengthens teams and communities. AMMS recipients have fewer loans to pay back as they enter the workforce.

"Receiving this scholarship means that I will graduate with less debt and more freedom as I continue to pursue God's call on my life."
—Charity

"The AMMS award helped me continue my seminary studies at a crucial moment. It prepared me to lead, teach, shepherd, and preach well as a solo pastor." —Laura

"Receiving the AMMS award has given me opportunities to share my work with a greater platform, which has strengthened my confidence that my voice matters in academia and in the church." —AMMS Award Recipient

"The AMMS award affirms the work I do among the marginalized and my calling as a woman leader in the church." —Emily Lu Isbell



Hear the stories of past participants at cbe.today/ammsstories.

Audio Recordings About Women in Scripture and History

CBE's website hosts free short audio recordings on Women in Scripture and History, available in English and Spanish. These messages show that women were created in God's image to share leadership and ministry with men. See ministrywomen.org to learn more about these women.

Content Advocating for Women's Leadership Worldwide

Partner Collaborations

CBE's partner—Rt. Revd. Dr. Emily Onyango—was ordained as the first woman Anglican bishop in Kenya. Dr. Onyango speaks for CBE audiences, writes for CBE, and joins CBE speakers at events worldwide. She also uses CBE resources to promote biblical equality for women and girls.

A church within the Reformed Church in America now ordains women after a CBE member leveraged social change theories and theological education using CBE's resources.

For 70 years, no women served on the Evangelical Theological Society (ETS) boards. Through CBE's egalitarian advocacy,²⁵ and other voices, Dr. Karen Jobes was elected the first woman president of ETS,²⁶ and women have gained the highest levels of leadership as plenary speakers and as study section leaders. In 2025, ETS appointed their second woman president, Dr. Gwenfair Walters Adams.



Gender-Accurate Bible Translation Project

CBE launched an initiative to examine the biblical passages most often mistranslated and used to uphold male authority over women. We recruited an international translation team of women and men to assess the accuracy of 500+ Bible verses (nearly seventy different passages).

This team has finished the final stages of a rigorous six-step translation process of these 500+ Bible verses along with a commentary explaining their translation decisions. This project will provide the revised texts and commentary as a gender-accurate supplement to the reader's Bible translation of choice. CBE will publish our Bible Translation Project as a book with a trusted Christian academic publisher.



International team
of women and men
Bible translators



Translating
500+ Bible
verses



Gender-accurate
supplement for
Bible study

Empowers Women. Restores Mutuality. Changes the World.

CBE International (Christians for Biblical Equality) is a 501c3 US nonprofit educational organization that serves women and men, their families, churches, organizations, and communities globally.



Mission Statement

CBE exists to promote the biblical message that God calls women and men of all cultures, races, and classes to share authority equally in service and leadership in the home, church, and world. CBE's mission is to eliminate the power imbalance between men and women resulting from theological patriarchy.

Envisioned Future

CBE's envisioned future are churches and Christian families where women and girls are equally valued to men and boys and empowered to freely exercise their gifts without gender bias or limitations.



Equality Based on Scripture

We believe that the Bible, properly translated and interpreted, teaches the fundamental equality of women and men of all racial and ethnic groups, all economic classes, and all ages, based on the teachings of Scriptures such as Galatians 3:28:

“There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”
—Galatians 3:28 (NIV 2011)

Ambassadors Upending Christian Patriarchy

CBE is part of God's work to oppose injustices as required in Scripture (Micah 6:8). CBE affirms that Scripture does not support male dominance or Christian patriarchy, which perpetuate injustices and contributes to the marginalization and abuse of women. CBE addresses theological and historical errors, and flawed translations of Scripture that devalue girls and women. These distortions limit their voice, agency and God-given gifts that families, churches, and communities need to flourish.



"God gave me so much through CBE. I cannot think of any organization that has made such a change in my life."

—Michelle



"To act justly and to love mercy
and to walk humbly with your God."

Micah 6:8b

Diverse Christian Leaders Worldwide

CBE's leaders are Christian women and men that span denominational affiliations, cultures, races/ethnicities, and social and educational status worldwide. CBE's skilled staff and extensive network of leaders, allies, and activists have the necessary education, experience, and respect to collaboratively disseminate its online resources among influential thought-leaders and communities.

Global Community

CBE collaborates with the most extensive egalitarian Christian network worldwide. Working with Christians on every continent, in more than 100 denominations and 214 countries and territories, we provide education and biblical resources in more than 30 languages.

Providing Healing and Transformation

“To achieve gender equality, there is an increasing need to address outdated biased and detrimental gendered stereotypes and norms.” This will “support societal and cultural change through individual attitudinal and behavior change.”²⁷

PATRIARCHAL BELIEFS:

Women must submit

Only men can lead.

Only men have authority.

Women must be silent

FACTS:

Miriam

Abigail

Esther

Women leaders in the Bible:

Priscilla

Phoebe

Women given authority in the Bible:

Junia

Deborah



CBE’s work dismantles theological and social barriers rooted in misinterpreted faith beliefs that perpetuate injustices against women. This transformation is made possible through a biblical critique of patriarchy. That critique demonstrates how patriarchy distorts Scripture and fails to reflect God’s design for the shared leadership between women and men.

Through CBE’s education and advocacy, we generate cognitive dissonance around patriarchal beliefs while biblically demonstrating women’s worth and shared leadership. When biblical perceptions change, women are valued and given freedom to use their gifts to participate equally in the home and in their communities worldwide.

Through CBE’s message upholding the strength and dignity of women, we have heard countless testimonies of social, economic, and spiritual flourishing.

Male supporters of CBE have reported that their parenting of daughters, interactions with female students in higher education, work places, and leadership within religious institutions have been forever changed for the better because of CBE’s advocacy and resources.

“ ”

“CBE literally saved my life. I had lost my dignity as a human being and struggled with the issue of submission. I was trying to live under multiple masters and walking through a maze trying to figure out what messages I should obey. I finally realized I needed to know who I was with God. My sister put me in contact with CBE, and I found the materials I desperately needed! It was like a salvation experience all over again. I went from death to life—darkness to light—when I learned what the Bible really says about women!” –Liz

“Egalitarian theology changed my life—to go from thinking I was inferior to finding out that I am not. It changed my identity!” –Polly

Restored. Renewed. Reclaimed.

When women learn that they are equally valued and called by a loving God to lead and serve, it transforms their lives, and their faith is strengthened and often restored. Many share that CBE was uniquely and powerfully instrumental in improving and strengthening their relationships and career choices.

You can read some of their stories at cbe.today/whatdonorssay.



“I began reading your materials that opened my mind and heart to the truth of biblical equality. I went to a CBE conference and heard about the importance of responding to God’s call upon your life, which for me included more active leadership in the church. I then left a conservative Baptist church and joined a Lutheran church (ELCA). It was a painful move, but necessary. I’m grateful for the opportunity to preach and lead worship in the church. God bless your good work to ensure that no woman is ever discouraged from answering God’s call.” —Patricia

“CBE has been the only place that has shown me the light of the gospel for women. You have no idea how much it means to me.”—Renee

“God made it clearer what he has called me to do and what he has for me. He created me in His image and likeness as a woman. I have abilities and gifts that God can use for his greater glory. He has something for me that is world-changing and transformational.”—Marissa, Uganda conference attendee

“It’s a comfort to know you are there making the world a better place for women. When I face obstacles of inequality, I lean on what I have learned from CBE over the years.”
—Nancy

“My subjugation as a woman nearly led me to despair and a loss of my faith in a loving God. I am so grateful for the work of CBE in evangelism.” —Allison

Be Part of CBE's Transformative Mission.

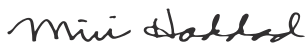
We invite you to partner with CBE International in advancing biblical equality and empowering women worldwide.

By fostering a deeper understanding of Scripture, together we can leverage positive change, empower women to achieve economic independence, elevate their social status, lower abuse, and contribute to a flourishing society.

With your support, we can grow CBE's impact—breaking cycles of inequality and unlocking the full potential of women to transform their communities and the world. With your support, CBE can expand into new regions where the need and potential for impact are greatest.

Together, we can expose and break the chains that demean and marginalize women, building a future where their skills and talents are recognized, celebrated, and supported for the common good.

Thank you for joining hands with CBE,



Mimi Haddad, PhD

President

P.S. Please join CBE and help improve lives worldwide.



Thank You!

 **CBE**
INTERNATIONAL

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