



# BWIM | MONTH OF ADVOCACY

## RESOURCES FOR MALE ADVOCATES

For too long, the voices of Baptist women called to ministry and leadership have been muted, their gifts undervalued, and their leadership potential stifled. While women have tirelessly championed their own cause, true and lasting change requires the active participation of men. We believe that men, when joining with their sisters in ministry, can amplify the call for equality, challenge entrenched biases, and open doors that have been unjustly closed.

This resource is meant to be a starting place for men seeking to become effective advocates for women in Baptist ministry. By exploring the systemic barriers women face and learning practical ways to support their calling, men can play a vital role in building a more just and equitable future for the Baptist church, one where the full potential of all God's people is unleashed. This is just the beginning of the journey, and we encourage you to continue learning and growing as an advocate.

### DIRECT ACTION AND SUPPORT

**Amplify Women's Voices:** Actively share and promote sermons, articles, books, and other content created by women in ministry and leadership. Reshare on social media, recommend to others, and cite their work.

**Mentor and Sponsor:** Offer mentorship and sponsorship to aspiring and current women ministers and leaders. This includes providing guidance, networking opportunities, and advocating for their advancement. Sponsorship goes beyond mentorship by actively using your influence to open doors for them.

**Challenge Sexism and Bias:** Publicly and respectfully challenge sexist remarks, jokes, or discriminatory practices in church settings ***even when it's uncomfortable***. Be an advocate in meetings and discussions, ensuring women's voices are heard and respected.

**Support Women-Led Initiatives:** Actively participate in and financially support ministries and organizations led by women.

**Create Space for Women:** Advocate for women to have equal opportunities to preach, teach, and lead in all areas of church life. This might involve turning down invitations you receive and suggesting women for committees, leadership positions, and speaking engagements.

**Promote Inclusive Language:** Be mindful of using inclusive language in sermons, prayers, hymns, and other church communications.

**Attend Women's Events:** Show support by attending conferences, workshops, and other events focused on women in ministry and leadership.

**Offer Practical Help:** Provide practical support to women ministers and leaders, such as childcare, transportation, or other assistance that might ease their burdens.

## **EDUCATION AND AWARENESS**

**Educate Yourself:** Read books, articles, and listen to podcasts about women in ministry and leadership, feminist theology, and the history of women's contributions to the church. Understand the challenges they face. Here are some resources to get you started.

[Thoughtful Ways to Empower Women in Ministry](#) by Nancy de Jong

[12 Ways to Advocate for Women in Ministry](#) by Elizabeth Graham

[How Men Can Be Advocates for Gender Equality in Church](#) by Christopher Schilling

[Uncovering and Dismantling Barriers for Women Pastors](#) by Heather Matthews

[Raising Up Allies: A Standardized Pathway for Developing Men into Allies to Women](#) by Rob Dixon

[BWIM's Reading List](#)

**Engage in Dialogue:** Start conversations with other men in your church about the importance of supporting women in ministry and leadership. Share what you're learning and encourage them to join the effort.

**Challenge Your Own Biases:** Reflect on your own assumptions and biases about gender roles and leadership. Be open to learning and growing.

**Use Your Privilege:** Recognize that men often have a platform and influence that women may not. Use your privilege to amplify women's voices and advocate for their inclusion.

## **SYSTEMIC CHANGE**

**Advocate for Policy Changes:** Work to change church policies that limit women's participation in ministry and leadership. This might involve advocating for equal representation on church boards and committees.

**Support Organizations:** Support organizations that are working to empower women in ministry and advocate for gender equality in the church. <https://bwim.info/give/>

**Hold Leaders Accountable:** Hold church leaders accountable for creating a culture of inclusion and equity. Don't be afraid to speak up if you see injustice.

**Be a Role Model:** Model respectful and equitable behavior towards women in ministry and leadership. Show others what it means to be a true advocate.

## **IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS**

**Listen to Women:** The most important thing is to listen to women in ministry and leadership and learn from their experiences. Don't assume you know what's best for them.

**Be Humble:** Be willing to admit when you're wrong and to learn from your mistakes. This is an ongoing process.

**Don't Center Yourself:** The focus should be on supporting women in ministry and leadership, not on your own ego or self-promotion.

**Be Patient:** Change takes time and effort. Don't get discouraged if you don't see results immediately.