

New Saddleback Pastor Bucks SBC Resolution Saying Only Men Can Be Pastors

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As the successor to one of the most famous pastors in the world Rick Warren, new lead pastor for Saddleback Church Andy Wood is already making a name for himself.

In a recent message that Wood's wife Stacie preached at Saddleback Church, she was labeled a "teaching pastor" in contradiction to the Southern Baptist Convention's (SBC) resolution stating only men can hold the title of pastor within the church.

The resolution that the trustees drafted concludes by saying:

"It is further resolved that this Board encourages The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary administration and faculty to continue its theological training with this stated conviction—graduating both men and women for service to the church, but with men alone reserved for the office and function, and thereby title of pastor."

This bypassing of decisions is not the first of its kind at Saddleback.

In May of 2021, Saddleback Church, then still under the leadership of Rick Warren, ordained three female pastors. This decision led some within the leadership of the SBC to call for Saddleback to be removed from the denomination for this open defiance of the leadership's decision.

"These moves represent an attempt to redefine and reformulate the convictional foundation of Southern Baptist faith and cooperative ministry," contended the Southern Baptist

Theological Seminary President Albert Mohler. "Any use of the term 'pastor' for women in church leadership is, at best, unwise and confusing.

"The Southern Baptist Convention must not be unclear about our theological convictions and the ground of our cooperation. We cannot afford to be," he added.

Grace Bible Theological Seminary professor Owen Strachan echoed these statements, and even called for people to leave the church:

"Now is the time to leave and find a sound congregation. Do not delay. There is no spirit of competition in what I write here; what Saddleback is doing grieves me, and I have no doubt grieves many in the congregation," Strachan argued.

"Churches that affirm women pastors are opposing the Word of God, and opposing the Word of God means opposing God himself," he added.

There were others, some who have left the SBC, that disagree with the resolution passed and upheld by the leadership.

As reported by "The Christian Post," when the SBC said Scripture is clear about female pastors, Pastor Dwight McKissic Sr., senior pastor of Cornerstone Baptist Church in Arlington, Texas, took to Twitter to voice his disagreement on the topic.

"Rick Warren has written the bestselling book in Christendom & is a SWBTS graduate," McKissic tweeted. "Billy Graham affirmed women preachers. If the Scripture is 'clear' as you say, then Graham, Warren, & whoever let a woman preach in SWBTS, wouldn't have done so."

The tweet has since been deleted.

The ordination of the three women was hailed by Saddleback and its members as "historic" and met with praise and approval.

Wood appears to be following in Warren's footsteps and believes that while he is pastor, Saddleback Church "is empowered for men and women to lead."

Stacie Wood is listed as "Teaching Pastor, Saddleback Church," in the video posted to Saddleback's YouTube page.

Prior reports said that she was also listed as a teaching pastor on Andy Wood's bio on the church's website, but she is no longer listed as such.

Despite the tension between Saddleback Church and the SBC, Pastor Wood shows no sign in deviating from the path that Rick Warren himself took when it came to female leadership within the church.

"The church should be a place where both men and women can exercise those spiritual gifts," Wood says. "My wife has the spiritual gift of teaching and she is really good. People often tell me she's better than me when it comes to preaching, and I'm really glad to hear that." {eo}

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