





# THRIVE

ALL LEADERS FLOURISHING

A Predictive Model for women and men to thrive alongside one another in leadership



## Context

My **Biblical understanding** of egalitarianism and thriving.

My own **journey of leadership** as a woman.

Experiencing both thriving and challenging environments.

Recent **Founder and Executive Director** of Women Leaders Network. [www.globalleadership.org/womenleaders](http://www.globalleadership.org/womenleaders)

- A global movement championing men and women leading well together. Now in more than 23 countries.

### **Global Concerns**

United Nations – Violence against women, gender equity gaps in workforce and pay, girl child violence in many nations, church discrimination and religious prejudice...and the list goes on.

### **Shifting the Needle**

Micah 6:8 Justice, Mercy, Humility.



What this  
IS NOT

- An **argument** for or against Egalitarian Leadership
- An attempt to persuade others to **change theological views**
- An **aggressive or combative** approach

# What this IS

- Reflections coming from **lived experience**.
- Reflections resulting from the lived experience **of others**.
- Prompted from a **spiritual place** for the time and season we find ourselves in globally in 2024.
- **Practical ways** for leaders to bring change and growth to women leaders through a **Prescriptive Model**.
- An attempt to keep the **conversation moving forward**



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THRIVE :  
to flourish,  
to prosper,  
to progress

(Mirriam-Webster Dict)

## Galatians 3:28,29

There is no longer Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male and female.

**For you are all one in Christ Jesus.** And now that you belong to Christ, you are the true children of Abraham. You are **his heirs**, and God's promise to Abraham belongs to you.

THRIVE:  
John 10:10

I have come that **THEY**(all people) may have life and have it **to the full**. NIV

I have come so that they may have life and may **have it abundantly**. NET

My purpose is to give them **a rich and satisfying life**. NLT

My purpose is to give life **in all its fullness**. LB

I came that they may have and **enjoy life**, and have it **in abundance** [to the full, **till it overflows**.] AMP



Why Christian  
women  
are **NOT**  
thriving in  
leadership

### Cultural hindrances [UAE]

- Geographical culture
- Religious culture

### Religious hindrances [Aust]

- Theological differences
- Historical practices and contexts

### Work-place hindrances

- Glass Ceilings
- Conditions
- Attitudes of colleagues/organisations

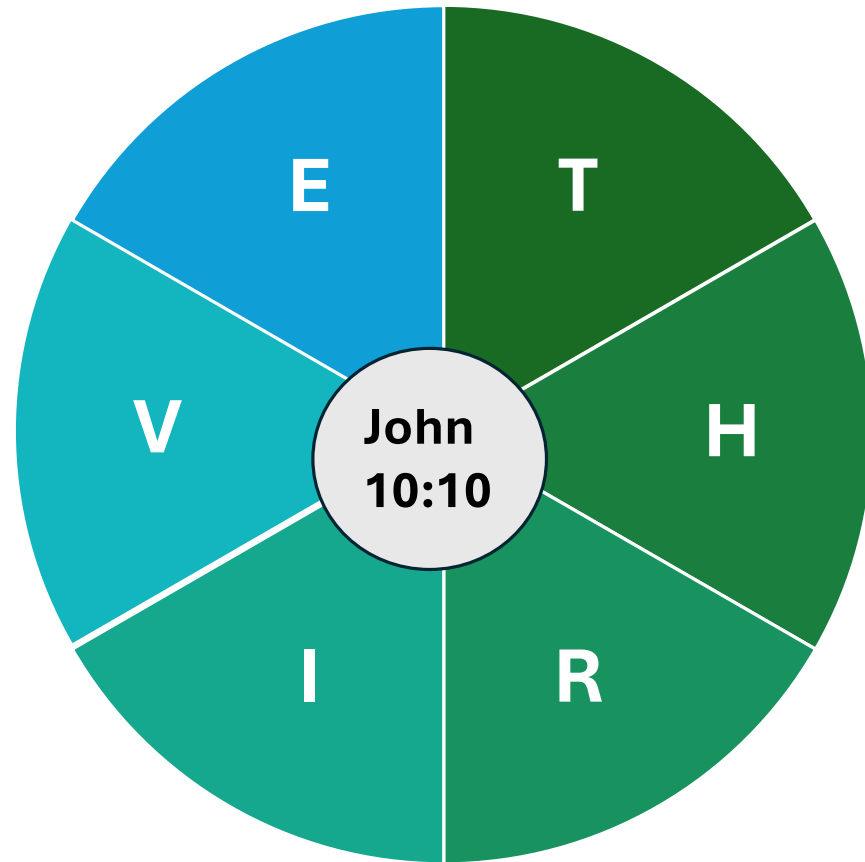
Answering  
the big  
Question:

What are the environments needed in churches and organisations to ensure Christian women and men will **THRIVE** in leadership together?



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# Thinking

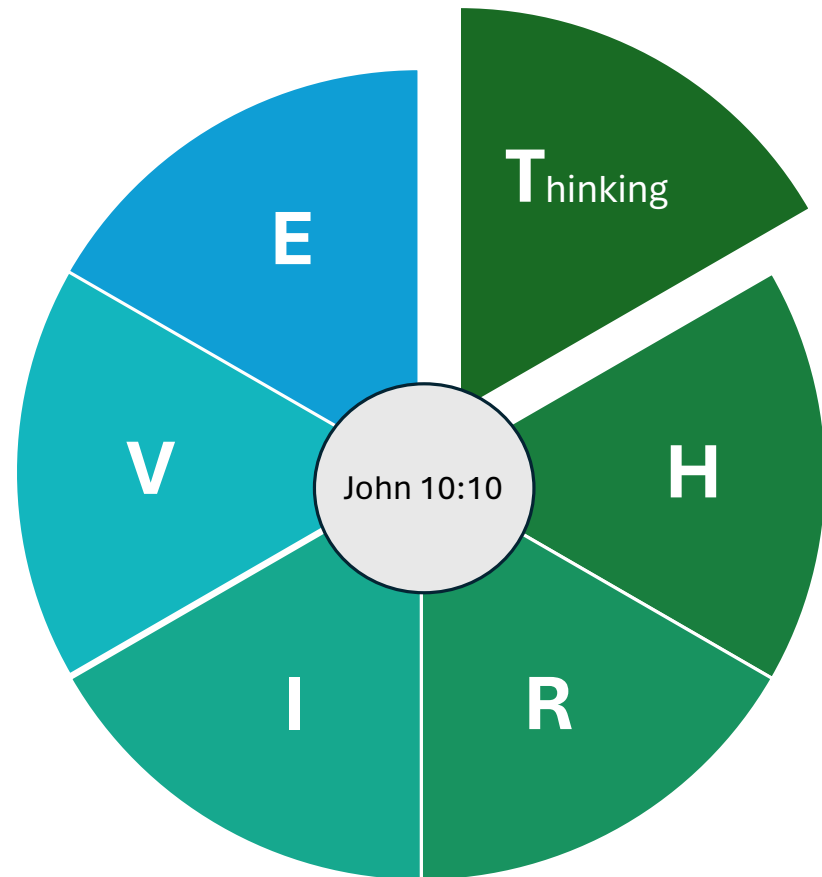
Theologically grounded

Decisive about gender thriving

Deliberate in planning

Analysis of data

Considered and clear



A thorough exploration of boundaries, beliefs and expectations.

# Thinking

## Authors:

**Philip B. Payne** **The Bible vs Biblical Womanhood: How God's word consistently affirms gender equality.**

*Examining Biblical passage alleged to teach gender hierarchy, Payne demonstrates rather humility, service and mutual submission is required of all believers. The Bible in fact offers freedom of women to serve and lead however God has called them.*

**Kevin De Young** **Men and Women in the Church: A short, biblical, practical introduction.**

*Approached from a strongly complementarian viewpoint. Highly patriarchal teaching of submissive and subservient role of women in relation to men.*

**Ellen Duffield** **A Theology of Thriving: Belonging, Being and Contributing.**

*Focusing on Gen 1:25 unpacks the concepts of who we belong to, our identity and our role on this Earth: men and women thriving equally together.*

**J. Lee Grady** **10 Lies the Church Tells Women: How the bible has been misused to keep women in spiritual bondage.**

*Religious and cultural traditions/bias have limited and abused women for centuries. Unpacking theological passages (including Genesis account) Grady debunks myths.*

**Studies:** Global Leadership Network Australia 2024 (GLNA)  
Australian Baptist Ministries/National Church Life Survey 2023 (ABM/NCLS)  
Barna 2023

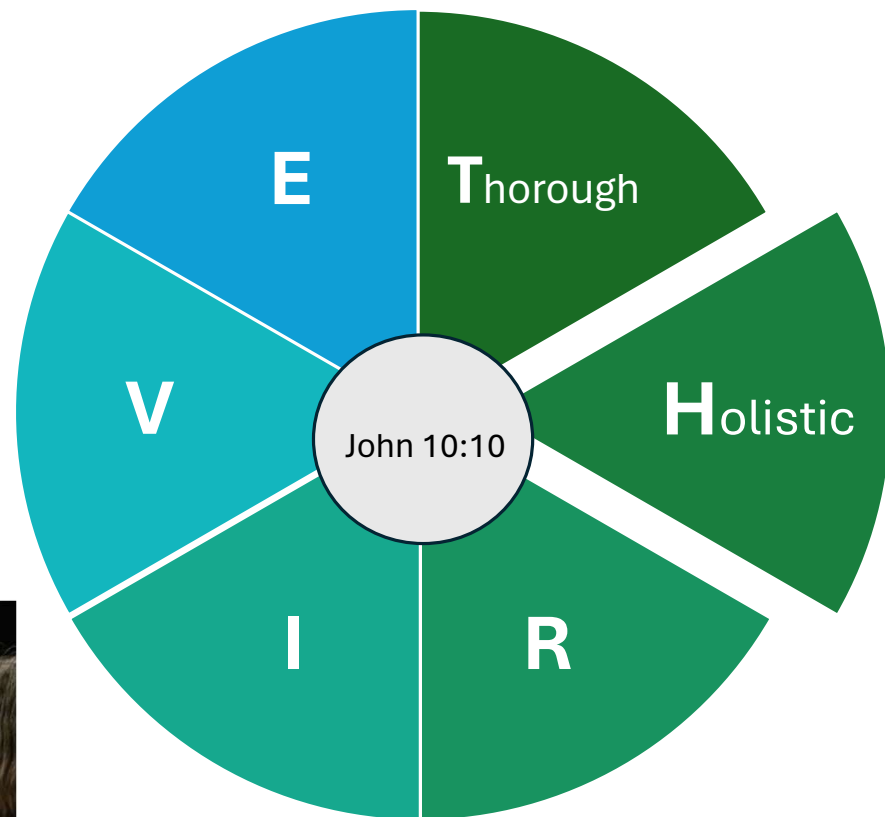
# Holistic

Family Friendly policies

Emotional intelligence

Focus on workplace  
satisfaction and interaction

Focus on outcomes rather  
than hours



A holistic framework with flexibility for wellbeing.

# Holistic

## Authors:

**Carolyn Moore**    **When Women Lead: Embrace your authority, move beyond barriers, and find joy in leading others.**

*Focussing on six common barriers for women to thrive in leadership there are practical tools to help and guidance around unique qualities at work when women lead.*

**Ellen Duffield**    **A Theology of Thriving: Belonging, Being and Contributing.**

*Focusing on Gen 1:25 unpacks the concepts of who we belong to, our identity and our role on this Earth: men and women thriving equally together.*

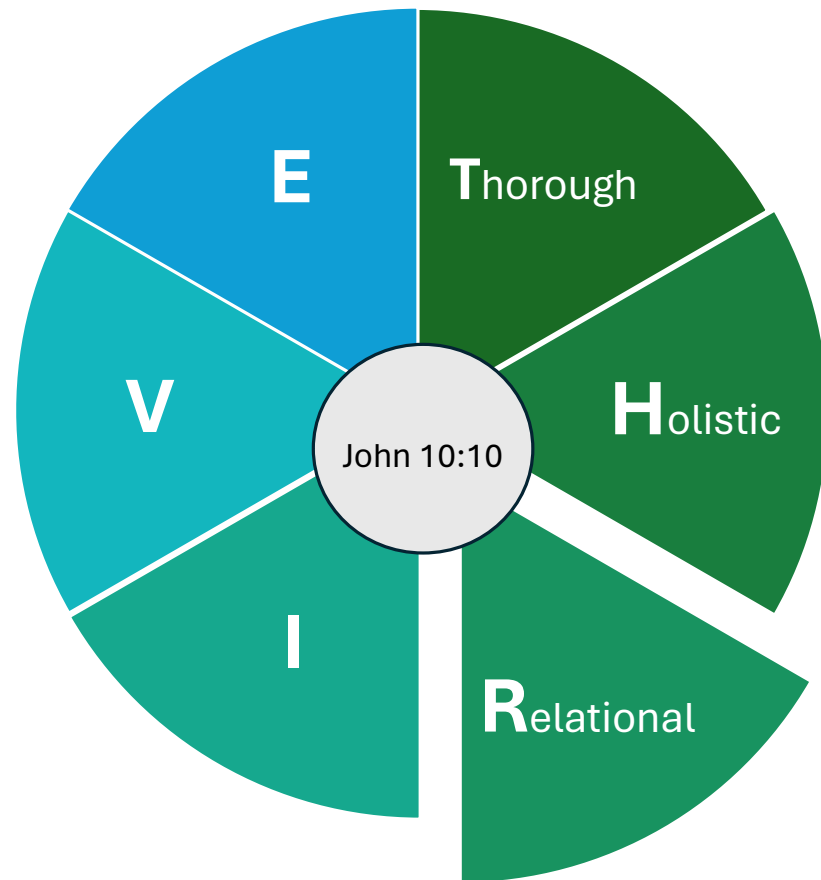
# Relational

Warmth of environment

Mutual respect of genders

Role models and mentors

External connections



High value placed on relational and interdependence of team.



# Relational

## **Authors:**

**Carolyn Custis James** **Half the Church: Recapturing God's global vision for women.**

*A holistic embrace of all that God calls women and men to be in his world: allies and mutual contributors. Including a global conversation dealing with culture and practices world-wide*

**Julia Staton** **What the Bible says about women.**

*Clearly articulating from creation, throughout scripture and in the modern church, the honour is given to women validating their place in family and church, their leadership calling, and ministries done by women and men together.*

**Danielle Strickland** **Better Together: How women and men can heal the divide and work together to transform the future.**

*A Highly practical approach (including the Genesis account) around healing and proximity and mutuality rather than segregation of the sexes and how to bring change together.*

**Stanley J. Grenz and Denise Muir Kjesbo** **Women in the Church: A biblical theology of women in ministry.**

*Historical, biblical and theological considerations converge in insisting that women serve as full partners with men and thrive in leadership of the church.*

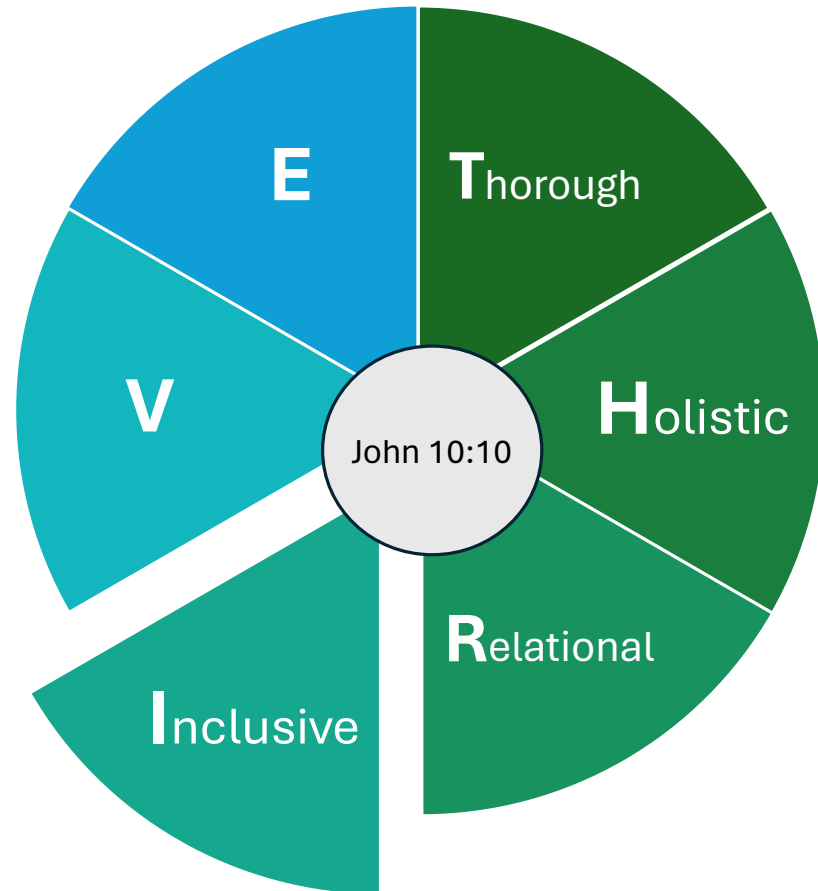
# Inclusive

Room for different voices to be heard

Remove glass ceiling

Clear in culture and behaviours

Faith



Inclusive approach offering opportunity in diversity.

# Inclusive

## **Authors:**

**Scott McKnight** **A Fellowship of Differents: Showing the World God's Design for Life Together.**

*Focussing on flourishing (thriving) because of our differences, with the transforming power of the Spirit. A theology of flourishing must involve a focus on love, hope, grace and others.*

**Nancy Beach** **Gifted to Lead: The Art of Leading as a Woman in the Church.**

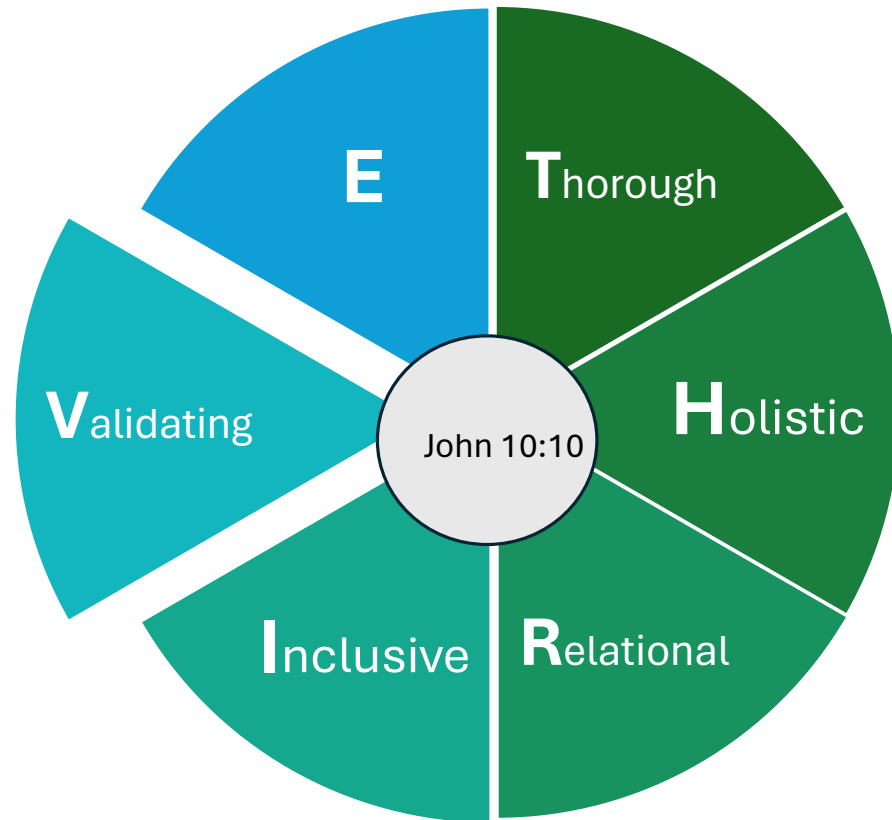
*A practical and inspiring book empowering woman to know who they are, celebrate their femininity and step into new spaces. Women were created to lead, and their calling is unmistakable.*

**Gordon D. Fee** **Discovering Biblical Equality: Complementarity without hierarchy.**

*Twenty-six evangelical scholars who look at historical, biblical, theological, hermeneutical and practical approach to dispelling myths and affirming the complementarity of men and women without requiring a hierarchy of roles.*

# Validating

- Openness and respect
- Celebrating wins
- Promotion on gifting
- Appropriate working conditions
- Generosity of spirit



Encouragement and validation of people and contribution made.

# Validating

## Authors:

**Gilbert Bilezikian** **Beyond Sex Roles: What the Bible Says and a Woman's Place in Church and Family.**

*Unpacking the Creation account and the concept of mutual submission, this book empowers women in almost every leadership role possible. Biblically supported with an egalitarian foundation focussing of gifting and freedom in Christ.*

**Priscilla Shirer** **The Resolution for Women.**

*Expounding deeply feminine traits, Shirer seeks to demystify women and to highlight that which we carry uniquely in our presence. Biblically teaching around creation and grace, it is a more moderate portrayal of theological gender equality.*

# Empowering

Reinforcing beliefs

Providing opportunity

Freedom to grow

Resourcing

Door Openers



Empowering of individuals to allow full expression of self

# Empowering

## Authors:

### **J. Lee Grady, *The Truth Sets Women Free.***

*Theological(including Genesis account) and practical advice around gender roles and men and women working well together.*

### **Lisa Bevere, *Lioness Arising: Wake up and Change your World.***

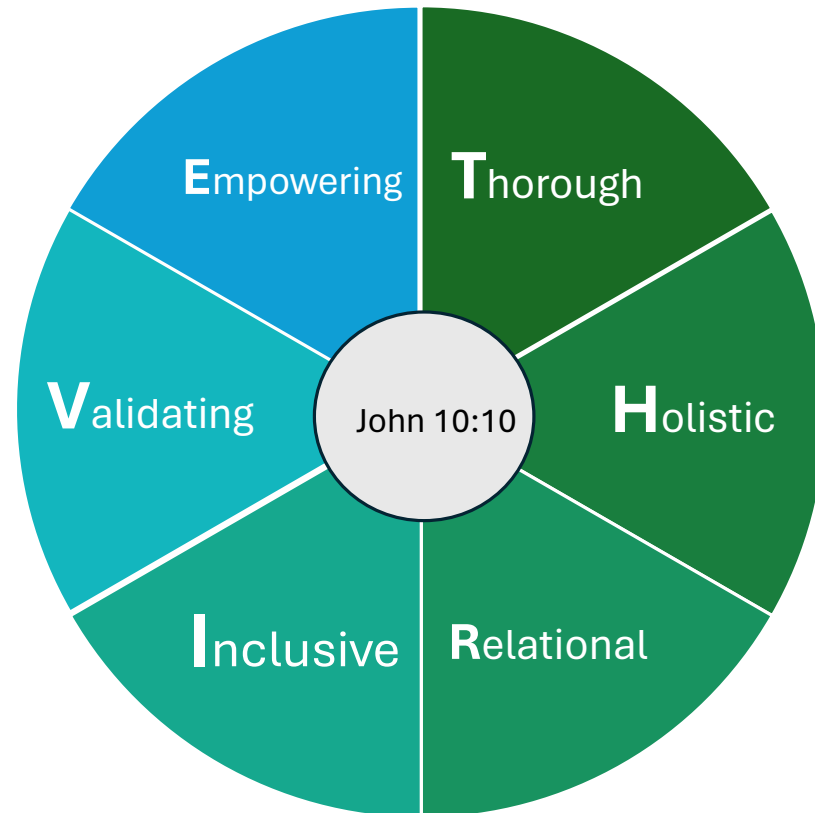
*Practical and inspiration ways to empower women to 'rise up' and embrace their God-given calling to bring solutions to the world's problems. A focus on mutual submission of both genders to flourish in the way they were created.*

### **Derek and Dianne Tidball, *The Message of Women: Creation, Grace and Gender.***

*A biblical approach Focussing on foundations about women in creation, in the new and old covenant, in the Kingdom of God and in the new community of the Early Church.*

## Results

- ★ **Lifting the value** of mutual encouragement of the sexes
- ★ **A Model** that can be adopted by any Christian leader
- ★ A predictive framework for **implementing a culture** of thriving in churches and organisations







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## Literary Sources/Bibliography

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