

THE JOURNAL FOR BIBLICAL
JB MW
MANHOOD & WOMANHOOD

ARTICLES INCLUDE:

Pursuing Manhood

Ray Van Neste

Young vs. Old Complementarians

Mark Dever

Why "Together for the Gospel" Embraces Complementarianism

J. Ligon Duncan III

Reconsidering the Maleness of Jesus

Micah Daniel Carter

The Beautiful Faith of Fearless Submission (1 Peter 3:1-7)

John Piper

**JOURNAL FOR
BIBLICAL MANHOOD
AND WOMANHOOD**

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The purpose of The Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood is to set forth the teachings of the Bible about the complementary differences between men and women, created equal in the image of God, because these teachings are essential for obedience to Scripture and for the health of the family and the Church.

CBMW is a member of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability and the National Association of Evangelicals

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Editorial

Denny Burk

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This is a new day for *The Journal for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood (JBMW)*. Not only does it mark the beginning of my tenure as editor, but it also marks a significant departure in the form of the journal. The new format reflects CBMW's concern that the noble biblical vision of sexual complementarity may win the mind and heart of Christ's church. We aim to provide a forum for complementarians to publish both scholarly and popular materials representing this view. We also hope to encourage the considered and sensitive application of this biblical view in all spheres of life.

To that end, *JBMW* intends not only to address technical issues of exegesis, history, and theology, but also to explore how the Bible's total message of manhood and womanhood should intersect the lives of Christ's followers. This new format should engage not only the technicians of the scholarly guild, but also the church more broadly. In other words, the new format reflects our effort to address a broad range of issues and people with content that promotes the complementarian perspective on gender roles.

So beginning with the issue that you are now reading, *JBMW* will include five regular sections:

Section 1: "Standard Fare" – This section will contain items that appear in every issue of *JBMW*: the editorial, letters from readers, and "odds & ends" from recent developments in the world of Christianity and from the culture that affect the editorial concerns of *JBMW*. We are pleased to begin our new "letters" section because of the forum it will open up with our readers. Not only do we welcome feedback from those who agree with the theological position of the journal, we also welcome direct engagement with non-complementarians. When non-complementarian works are cited or reviewed in *JBMW*, we hope to use the "letters" section as a forum for feedback and rejoinders. In the current issue, Kevin Giles contributes an extended response to a review of his book that appeared in a previous issue of *JBMW*. Chris Cowan follows with a brief response for the editors.

Section 2: "Essays & Perspectives" – This section will include short essays from writers who can effectively communicate the complementarian perspective and relate it to relevant areas of life and culture. The topics covered in this section will be as wide and varied as are the theological and practical implications of the complementarian view. The

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articles will be non-technical, compelling affirmations of the complementarian viewpoint. Endnotes in this section will be minimal, and articles will be accessible to any theologically astute reader.

We have several fine contributions to this section in the current issue. Ray Van Neste's "Pursuing Manhood" was originally an address to young collegians at Union University. But despite its original audience, the article will be of interest to anyone who is concerned to see a clear vision of manhood articulated for the next generation of young Christian men. In "Women in Ministry: Practical Application of Biblical Teaching," our own Randy Stinson and Chris Cowan flesh out how a complementarian view of gender roles might come to bear upon the various ministry contexts that are available in the local church and beyond. In "Young vs. Old Complementarians," Mark Dever explains why he thinks younger complementarians tend to be more earnest about the issue than older complementarians. In the final essay, Ligon Duncan explains "Why 'Together for the Gospel' Embraces Complementarianism."

Section 3: "Studies" – This section will only include articles that are contributions to scholarship on the complementarian view of gender. The journal welcomes contributions representing the interests of all the theological disciplines (biblical, systematic, historical, and pastoral theology). Both short and long studies will be considered. This section will be refereed by external readers.

This issue includes two scholarly papers that were presented at the 2007 annual meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society. In "Reconsidering the Maleness" of Jesus, Micah Carter offers a defense of the maleness of Jesus in light of feminist critics who have tried to refute the same. Ben Phillips's "Method Mistake: An Analysis of the Charge of Arianism in Complementarian Discussions of Trinity" defends against recent egalitarian charges that complementarians hold an Arian (and thus heretical) view of the Trinity. Phillips's work is very much related to the conversation that Kevin Giles himself addresses in the "Letters" section of this journal.

Section 4: "From the Sacred Desk" – *JBMW* has often published excellent sermon manuscripts

that advocate the complementarian view. That tradition will continue in the "From the Sacred Desk" section. In this issue, John Piper offers a sermon on 1 Peter 3:1-7 from his 2007 series on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood. The sermon is titled "The Beautiful Faith of Fearless Submission," and it is to be included in a forthcoming book on marriage.

Section 5: "Gender Studies in Review" – This section will include critical reviews of gender studies and a regular annotated bibliography of recent publications on gender issues. In the current issue, James Hamilton's "Pastors Are Not Elders: A Middle Way?" responds to a novel interpretation of Ephesians 4:11 that Harold Hoehner advanced in a recent issue of the *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*. In "Reassessing Junia," Mike Burer responds to Eldon Epp's book *Junia: The First Woman Apostle* and argues that Epp has in fact not proved that the Junia of Romans 16:7 was a woman. Finally, Barak Tjader has compiled an annotated bibliography of gender-related articles for 2007.

Thanks are due to my outstanding predecessor, Dr. Peter R. Schemm Jr. I appreciate Dr. Schemm's distinguished service to this journal and all the talent that he brought to the task. We are happy that he will remain as a senior contributing editor to *JBMW*. I stand on his shoulders and on others' as I launch out into this new and stimulating journey as editor.

Odds & Ends

Will There Be Sex in Heaven?

In February 2007, Catholic theologian Peter Kreeft delivered a lecture at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, North Carolina. The title of his address was “Will There Be Sex in Heaven?” The short answer he gives to the question in the title is “yes.” The answer is “yes” mainly because of his view that gender distinctions continue in the new creation. He argues that the resurrection of the body is a restoration project, not an obliteration of something so deep as our maleness or femaleness. Thus gender complementarity will always be a part of us, even in the age to come.

In any case, you can listen to the entire lecture for yourself at Southeastern’s chapel audio page (www.sebts.edu/chapel) under the date February 3, 2007. The lecture comprises the gist of a chapter in Kreeft’s book about heaven, *Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Heaven, but Never Dreamed of Asking* (Ignatius, 1990). A text version of “Is There Sex in Heaven?” is available at Kreeft’s own website, www.peterkreeft.com.

– Denny Burk

The Gospel Coalition

Last Spring, D. A. Carson and Tim Keller launched a renewal movement called “The Gospel Coalition.” According to Mark Driscoll (theresurgence.com), “The Gospel Coalition” began as a theological colloquium led by Carson and Keller. The colloquium met for a few years with a special focus on drafting “a new evangelical reformed confession of faith.” Members of this colloquium included Alistair Begg, Kent Hughes, Philip Ryken, Mark Dever, Ray Ortlund, Ligon Duncan, and representatives from organizations such as The Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, Desiring God, Together for the Gospel, 9Marks, Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Sovereign Grace Ministries, and Acts 29.

The final version of the “confession” was drafted

by Carson with a preamble composed by Keller. Driscoll writes, “The colloquium was arranged in order to help hone the statements into an agreeable final draft. The hope was to redefine a clear center for evangelicalism more akin to that previously articulated by men such as Francis Schaeffer, John Stott, and Billy Graham.”

Of interest to our readers is The Gospel Coalition’s confessional statement on Gender and the Family:

We believe that God created human beings, male and female, in his own image. Adam and Eve belonged to the created order that God himself declared to be very good, serving as God’s agents to care for, manage, and govern creation, living in holy and devoted fellowship with their Maker. Men and women, equally made in the image of God, enjoy equal access to God by faith in Christ Jesus and are both called to move beyond passive self-indulgence to significant private and public engagement in family, church, and civic life. Adam and Eve were made to complement each other in a one-flesh union that establishes the only normative pattern of sexual relations for men and women, such that marriage ultimately serves as a type of the union between Christ and his church. In God’s wise purposes, men and women are not simply interchangeable, but rather they complement each other in mutually enriching ways. God ordains that they assume distinctive roles which reflect the loving relationship between Christ and the church, the husband exercising headship in a way that displays the caring, sacrificial love of Christ, and the wife submitting to her husband in a way that models the love of the church for her Lord. In the ministry of the church, both men and women are encouraged to serve Christ and to be developed to their full potential

in the manifold ministries of the people of God. The distinctive leadership role within the church given to qualified men is grounded in creation, fall, and redemption and must not be sidelined by appeals to cultural developments.

For more on The Gospel Coalition and its foundational documents, visit the website: www.thegospelcoalition.org.

– Denny Burk

“We Reject the Commands of Scripture”

One of the primary goals of the Danvers Statement on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood was to define the complementary roles of men and women. In the evangelical gender debate this statement has delineated a defensible complementarian position based on biblical authority. Twenty years later, people on both sides of the issue at least recognize that the battle lines are clearly drawn.

Luke Timothy Johnson is a distinguished New Testament scholar and explained his position in an article on homosexuality and the church (“Homosexuality & the Church: Two Views” *Commonweal* 134 [2007]). He teaches at Emory University, a theological school of the United Methodist Church, which has the mission to train church leaders “grounded in the Christian faith and shaped by the Wesleyan tradition of evangelical piety, ecumenical openness, and social concern.” Unfortunately, Emory rejects biblical authority, supports the ordination of women, and seeks to be at the forefront of institutions valuing lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students.

In the article, it is clear that Johnson understands his opponents: “For them, the authority of Scripture and tradition resides in a set of commands, and loyalty as a matter of obedience. If the Church has always taught that same-sex relations are wrong, and the Bible consistently forbids it, then the question is closed.” He clearly understands the biblical text: “Accepting covenanted love between persons of the same sex represents the same downward spiral with respect to Scripture, since the Bible nowhere speaks positively or even neutrally about same-sex love.”

Johnson is straightforward about why he supports same-sex marriage:

I think it is important to state clearly that we do, in fact, reject the straightforward commands of Scripture, and appeal instead to another authority when we declare that same-sex unions can be holy and good. And what exactly is that authority? We appeal explicitly to the weight of our own experience and the experience thousands of others have witnessed to, which tells us that to claim our own sexual orientation is in fact to accept the way in which God has created us.

He is also realistic about the basis for his position: “We are fully aware of the weight of Scriptural evidence for pointing away from our position, yet place our trust in the power of the living God to reveal as powerfully through personal experience and testimony as through written texts.”

I respect Dr. Johnson for his specificity in articulating the foundation of his position in favor of same-sex marriage, but I fundamentally disagree with his conclusion. I am grieved for the church and am alarmed by the deteriorating definition of marriage in our culture. Nevertheless, I am grateful for God’s sovereign control over history, for the pastors and scholars who labored to provide the Danvers statement to the church, and for the partners who are standing with CBMW for biblical manhood and womanhood.

– David Kotter

When History Trumps Scripture

Mimi Haddad is the president of Christians for Biblical Equality, and I was pleased to be present for the paper that she presented at the 2007 meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society. There is much that could be said in response to her presentation, but I will only offer two brief reflections here—one positive and the other negative.

First, I appreciated being reminded of God’s remarkable work in the nineteenth century. The 1800s were a period of incredible growth and activity among evangelicals in America and Britain. Mis-

sions agencies—both domestic and foreign—and benevolence societies of all sorts grew, prospered, and dramatically impacted the world. We should praise God for this advance of the gospel. Among other things, we should thank the Lord that he chose to use many remarkable women to accomplish some of these things. Haddad's paper was a helpful reminder of this fact.

Nevertheless, I think there was a severe weakness to Haddad's "Since A, then B" argument. She attempted to prove that since women led in some important ways in the evangelical movement in the past, we should encourage women to assume leadership in our churches and ministries today. Without nit-picking about the details of the nineteenth century (What were the relative numbers of women leaders vs. men leaders anyway? Lottie Moon impacted Southern Baptists without ever being placed in a position of leadership on their missions agency, right?), here is my major concern with Haddad's argument.

We must remember that the Bible is authoritative; history isn't. We must always eschew the fallacy of looking back in time to follow the doctrine that our favorite theologian formulated or to adopt a methodology that "worked" at some previous time. As a church historian, I remind my students of this all the time, for this is the danger of those who love and value history. "John Owen said it, so it has to be right." "William Carey did it, so it must be biblical." Right? No. We must humbly learn from sisters and brothers who loved Christ before us. That is, in my opinion, one of the great reasons to study history. But the only touchstone of our faith and practice is God's inspired word, the Bible.

All evangelicals should agree that the Bible alone (*sola scriptura*) is the only inerrant guide for our beliefs and church practices. Haddad argues, though, that we should seek to base our ministries on the example of women's roles in the nineteenth century (which is not as strong an example as Haddad implies), rather than tackling the teaching of texts like 1 Tim 2:11-15. This is a dangerous course. If we follow it, we are in danger of abandoning the Protestant principle of *sola scriptura*

in favor of Roman Catholicism's view that God guides us through both Scripture and as the Holy Spirit leads the church to fuller revelation in her tradition. Protestants should value and learn from the tradition of the church. But we must always critique that tradition biblically. On the basis of the Bible's teaching on women's roles, I don't think that Haddad's arguments from the history of the nineteenth century are valid.

– Shawn Wright

Gender Confusion in California, Clarity in the Scriptures

Last Fall, California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed into law the California Student Civil Rights Act, which adds "sexual orientation" and "gender identity" to the class of groups to be protected from "educational discrimination."

Teachers and school districts have been prohibited from "giving instruction . . . [and] sponsoring any activity that reflects adversely upon persons because of their race, sex, creed, handicap, national origin or ancestry." Educators are also prohibited from "sponsoring any activity that reflects adversely upon persons because of their gender identity."

The law leaves undefined precisely what sort of events or curricula might qualify as "educational discrimination" on the basis of "gender identity" or "sexual orientation."

Such fuzzy-headed thinking on human sexuality and gender has been introduced into school districts in California by groups such as the Gender Public Advocacy Coalition (GPAC), an organization that was profiled in a four-part series on CBMW's Gender Blog.

While the California legislation is troubling even on its surface, Jennifer Roback Morse of the conservative monthly *National Review* and author of *Smart Sex: Finding Life-long Love in a Hook-up World*, gets right to the heart of the sad fallout for students in California and in other states where similar laws will surely be attempted in the future.

"Most disturbing," she writes, "is that such legislation will cause struggles in the development of a healthy sense of gender in the vast majority of young people. Due to the flexible language

employed, anything that looks remotely like gender stereotyping will run afoul of this law.” Further, she points out the reality that growing up as boys and girls is difficult enough without such “thinly-disguised thought-control laws” adding another layer of confusion from feminism and gay/transgender rights advocates.

Most young people have questions about how to express their gender. What does it mean to be a man? What should a good woman do? These are questions with which all young people must grapple, and they are entitled to have some substantial guidance from adults. For far too long, we’ve been avoiding these questions out of fear of offending sensibilities. With this new law, California school teachers and school boards will have to fear the gay lobby, as well as the feminist establishment.

Indeed, all young people do grapple with the appropriate ways to express and understand their gender and stand in need of substantial guidance. However, they are not going to find it in a culture entranced by postmodernity’s siren song of gender and sexual obfuscation.

Young people, indeed all people, will find such knowledge—what Francis Schaeffer famously called “true truth”—only in the Word of God, the storehouse of wisdom, wisdom that brings clarity such as “God created them male and female,” wisdom that demands that the only legitimate union between a man and a woman is a covenant union sealed by a holy God for a lifetime.

Scripture knows no such ambiguous language with regard to issues of gender and sexuality and again, God’s Word proves that its wisdom brings to nothing the so-called “knowledge” of the philosopher of this age.

– Jeff Robinson

Letters

The Editor:

Thank you for publishing a review of my book, *Jesus and the Father*, by Jason Hall that I read with interest (*JBMW*, 12/1, 2007, 32–39). Because I am primarily interested in establishing what is the biblical and historically developed orthodox doctrine of the Trinity, I would like to make a reply to him.

I respond to his work in the order I have found comments that I cannot accept.

P. 31 col. 1. Jason says I accuse a “wide swath of evangelicals” of falling into heresy. The truth is I accuse *a very small number of evangelicals* for publishing in error on the Trinity. The evangelicals who have written on the eternal subordination of the Son can be counted on one hand. Not one Roman Catholic, not one mainline contemporary Protestant, and many informed evangelicals oppose this doctrine, including Millard Erickson, Roger Nicole, Cornelius Plantinga, and Philip Cary in the USA.

P. 32 col. 2. I do not speak at anytime as far as I am aware of an “egalitarian Trinity”. What I endorse, taking up exactly the words of the Athanasian Creed, is a “co-equal” Trinity, where “none is before or after greater or lesser”, and all three are “Lord” and “Almighty.” Can I be in error if I exactly quote the creeds?

P. 33 col. 1. I do not oppose the subordination of the Son *in any way*. I endorse wholeheartedly, following scripture and the interpretative tradition, the voluntary and temporal (and if you like “functional”) subordination of the Son for our salvation. What I oppose is the *eternal* subordination of the Son in being, work, or authority.

P. 33 col. 1. I do not call my debating opponents “Arians.” (This claim is made repeatedly) What I accuse my debating opponents of is embracing in ignorance key elements of the Arian heresy. If one key element of the “neo-Arian” (i.e. Eunomian) position, opposed by the Cappadocians, was the subordination of the Son in author-

ity—and it certainly it was—then Grudem, Ware et al have embraced a key element in the neo-Arian position.

P. 33 col. 2. I do not simply equate the terms “eternal” and “ontological.” What I argue is that the minute it is claimed that the Son’s subordination is *eternal* then his subordination is what defines his person. He functions subordinately because he *is* the subordinated Son.

P. 33 col. 2 last few lines. Jason very badly misrepresents what I say on the word “inferior.” I completely agree that an inferior in role is not necessarily a personal inferior. What I argue is that someone who is *permanently* or *eternally* subordinated cannot be considered an equal in any substantive way. He or she *is* inferior in some way.

P. 34 col. 1. Jason suggests that I am mistaken to claim that the Church Fathers and Calvin consider the “functional subordination of the Son a heresy.” It is true that none of them speak of “functional” or “role” subordination, but it is not *functional subordination* that I consider an error. The *voluntary, temporal functional* subordination of the Son can be accepted as pristine orthodoxy. This is what the incarnation is all about (c.f. Phil 2:4–11). What I oppose is the *eternal* subordination of the Son in being or function/work, arguing that the Church Fathers and Calvin deem this idea to be “heresy”.

P. 34 col. 2. Jason claims that I do “not quote the church fathers” to substantiate my argument from “logic” that to deny the absolute authority and power (omnipotence) of the Son is to fall into error but I do and in great detail (See *Jesus and the Father*, pp. 185–190), especially in reference to the Cappadocians.

P. 35. In a major section entitled “Distinction of person and nature,” Jason accuses me of “not making the necessary distinction between persons and nature in the doctrine of the Trinity. In trinitarian grammar the terms—substance, being,

nature, essence—are exact theological synonyms. They are used interchangeably of what is one in God. The terms—person, hypostasis, subsistence—likewise are exact theological synonyms. They are used interchangeably of what is three in God. So the exact definition of the Trinity in the West is “one substance three persons”, and in the East, “one being three hypostases”. Jason and my debating opponents may be unaware of these exact terminological distinctions and get them confused, I do not.

P. 36 col. 1. Following this Jason Hall asserts that my “claim that eternal subordination in person is the same as eternal subordination in *being* is untrue.” If the Father and the Son are *one in being* (*homoousios*), how can this be untrue? To confess that the Father and the Son are one in being is to believe that *the three persons have the one substance-nature-being-essence both in unity and in distinction as the person of the Father, Son and Spirit*. There can be no distinguishing at any point in substance-nature-being-essence in the divine three yet there is an eternal difference in the persons—one is Father, one is Son, and one is the Holy Spirit. How this difference is defined by orthodoxy I explain in a whole chapter in my book (pp. 205–241). What orthodoxy can never allow is that the persons are differentiated or divided in substance-being-essence-nature, or differentiated or divided in power-authority.

P. 36 col. 36. Jason says he has no need to “delve” into my innumerable quotes from the Church Fathers and Calvin because firstly they are the same as in my earlier book, *The Trinity and Subordinationism*, and secondly, because others have fully and “skillfully” shown these to be a misreading of the sources. Neither assertion is true. In *Jesus and the Father* I multiply the evidence from the Church Fathers at least fourfold, and even more so in the case of the Cappadocians. In addition in my second book I add a whole chapter on Barth and on the immanent-economic Trinity relationship. And, it is simply not true that anyone has shown that my reading of the historic sources is substantially wrong. If I am to be refuted it has to be demonstrated that my reading of the Bible, the Church Fathers, Calvin and the creeds and confessions are

substantially mistaken. *Asserting* that I am wrong proves nothing.

P. 36 col. 2. The claim, common to the Grudem-Ware position, that “the Son can exercise his power under the submission of the Father” is an explicit parallel to the teaching of the Neo-Arian Eunomious. (See *Jesus and the Father*, 185ff). Gregory of Nyssa word for word rejects this argument (188). Orthodox teaching on the divine attributes predicated on the Bible also excludes this idea. Father, Son and Spirit are all omnipotent and this term is a superlative. The Father is not a bit more omnipotent than the Son! If he were he would be “more God” than the Son! Most importantly the primary New Testament confession, “Jesus is Lord” (more than 200 times) excludes this idea.

P. 37. Next Jason says that nowhere do I show or prove that the evangelicals I am debating against on the Trinity have a “deficient knowledge of the historical theology.” (The same stark claim is made in the conclusion). This is what the whole book of over 300 pages seeks to establish. If I am substantially right in what I say it proves that what my opponents are substantially wrong. Given that they are Christian men of good will then this must be explained in terms of ignorance of what the historic creeds and confessions define as orthodoxy.

What is most surprising is that in this part of the review, rejecting my claim that Grudem, Ware et al are ill-informed on the historic doctrine of the Trinity, your reviewer explicitly says he and they know that “the Arians subordinated the Son in authority.” What? Knowing this teaching is a key Arian error they endorse it? Did Jason mean to say, “we” were all ignorant of this fact (as well as many others you raise)?

P. 38 col. 2. Jason next claims that I teach the differences between the divine three are “relative.” This is completely false and a direct denial of my repeated assertions that divine unity and divine threeness are absolutes and eternal. I am not a modalist in any way. I emphatically and explicitly teach the eternal differentiation of the divine three in the ways historic orthodoxy endorses. *What I deny is that the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity eternally subordinates the Son in being, work/function, or*

authority. Difference and equality are not mutually exclusive ideas.

Following the suggestion that I am a modalist, relativising divine differentiation, your reviewer says he follows Grudem, Ware et al in endorsing the Arian practice of taking the divine titles “Father” and “Son” *literally*. Does he believe that the eternal Son gets old and one day dies? If not then he does not take the title “Son” literally. In the New Testament when Jesus is called the “Son” it most commonly alludes to his royal rule as I note John Frame teaches. This title never suggests his subordination in authority as those who draw on human experience rather than scripture hold.

I pray this response will encourage further debate and reflection on the primary doctrine of the Christian faith, our doctrine of God.

Kevin Giles
Melbourne, Australia

***JBMW* Response:**

We encourage readers to go back and read Hall’s review of Giles from *JBMW* 12, no. 1 (Spring 2007) for themselves, as well as Giles’s book, *Jesus and the Father*. Having considered Giles’s concerns, the editors continue to stand by Hall’s review and do not feel that a point-by-point reply to Giles’s response is necessary. However, some more important comments are in order:

(1) In response to Hall, Giles claims, “I accuse *a very small number of evangelicals* for publishing in error on the Trinity. The evangelicals who have written on the eternal subordination of the Son can be counted on one hand” (*italics his*). However, when one considers both the text of Giles’s book and the footnotes, the results yield *at least* the following contemporary evangelicals who have affirmed what Giles claims to be an erroneous teaching: George Knight III, Wayne Grudem, Bruce Ware, Norman Geisler, John Frame, Robert Letham, Robert Doyle, Werner Neuer, Peter Adam, James Hurley, John Piper, J. Scott Horrell, and Peter R. Schemm Jr. This list is neither small, nor able to be counted on one hand. Moreover, one could add to the list several other very significant evangelical scholars

(both complementarian *and* egalitarian) who have affirmed the idea of the eternal functional subordination of the Son to the Father in their writings, including D. A. Carson (*The Difficult Doctrine of the Love of God* [Crossway, 2000], 30–43, esp. 40; see also 86, n. 6), Andreas J. Köstenberger (*Encountering John* [Baker, 1999], 160), Thomas R. Schreiner (see *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* [ed. Piper and Grudem; Crossway, 1991], 127–30), and Craig S. Keener (“Is Subordination within the Trinity Really Heresy? A Study of John 5:18 in Context” *Trinity Journal* n.s. 20, no. 1 [1999]: 47–49).

(2) Giles is astonished that Hall and the scholars he defends admit to knowing that “the Arians subordinated the Son in authority.” Giles then asks, “What? Knowing this teaching is a key Arian error they endorse it?” But what Hall and others endorse is the eternal *functional* subordination of the Son to the Father. As Hall observes, according to Giles, these scholars are then guilty by association, since Arians *also* believed in the eternal functional subordination of the Son. But this is misleading, as Hall notes:

The most fundamental characteristic of the Arian heresy, the one that the Nicene Creed was crafted to dismiss, is the notion that the Son is a creature and therefore unlike the Divine Father in substantial ways. . . . The total subordination of the Son was a necessary corollary of this view, to be sure, but it *was not* the starting point. To boil Arianism down to make subordination as such its central tenet is misleading. No one in this debate is saying that the Son is a creature, and no one is arguing for the eternal functional submission of the Son on that basis. Thus, there is a great difference between classical Arian arguments for the subordination of the Son and contemporary arguments for the submission of the Son (37–38).

(3) Last, we encourage readers to consider the arguments of several recent authors who have interacted with Giles, including Bruce A. Ware,

“Christ’s Atonement: A Work of the Trinity,” in *Jesus in Trinitarian Perspective* (ed. Fred Sanders and Klaus Issler; Nashville: B&H, 2007), 156–88; Robert Letham, *The Holy Trinity: In Scripture, History, Theology and Worship* (P&R, 2005); Peter R. Schemm Jr., “‘The Subordination of Christ and the Subordination of Women’ (Ch 19) by Kevin Giles,” *JBMW* 10, no. 1 (Spring 2005): 81–87; and Wayne Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth: An Analysis of More Than 100 Disputed Questions* (Multnomah, 2004).

– Christopher W. Cowan for the Editors

Pursuing Manhood¹

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What follows is an address that I gave to some young men at my college who asked me to speak to them about the issue of pursuing manhood. This is an important topic not least because of the confusion that seems to reign in the minds of so many about what manhood is and how one progresses well in this journey. I have seen Garrison Keilor quoted as saying, "Manhood was once seen as an opportunity for achievement, but now seems like a problem to overcome." So though my comments are directed at college-aged young men, they may find application to men of other ages as well.

I know some have told you that the way to take leadership, step up, and progress in manhood is to get married. However, I must differ. Marriage is the last thing some of you need to be thinking of just now. You need to grow up first. I affirm what I think these others are trying to say—start preparing yourself for marriage. Move “Halo” down your list of priorities in order to begin thinking about what sort of vocation you will pursue, how you’re going to pay your bills, etc. But much progress in this may be needed before you really start looking for a wife. If you are not right now getting your class work done, and fulfilling your comparatively light responsibilities as a single student, then don’t even consider the prospects of marriage. Instead start working on growing up.

Our culture is infatuated with youth and encourages you not to grow up. After all, it says, the glory is in the youth. If you would be men, you must reject this siren song and swim against the tide. You

must diligently seek to throw off immaturity and to grow up. Remember the one boy who never grew up was Peter Pan—and in case you haven’t noticed, his role has typically been played by a woman. The chase for perpetual youth is never manly. The other example of avoiding the effects of growing up is the medieval boys choirs. To maintain the high voices of the boys as they aged, the boys might be castrated. Again, avoiding maturity is emasculating.

So my main point to you is work on growing up. It does not “just happen.” Examples abound of physically mature males who have never truly attained manhood because they failed to mature in any way other than physically. So, what does it look like to grow up in manliness? No doubt this could be discussed in many ways. I’ll just take a stab at several that I think are important based on my own reflections on scripture and my observations of the young collegiate men whom I teach.

Take Responsibility/ Reject Passivity

With our modern invention of “adolescence” (which now includes the college-aged male) you can be encouraged to float along without much real responsibility, just get by in classes, major in play, be a goof-off, sample the girls to whatever extent you can, and not really consider responsibility.

However, if you would be a man you must shake off the doldrums. I enjoy life, like to laugh and to joke (even if not everyone appreciates puns!), but that is different from being a total goof-off. It is not until there is a weightiness in your core that

you really have the opportunity and the privilege to engage in playfulness, too. When I was in Scotland, there were a number of good guys who were there studying at the same time I was. We would get together at various times and have an ongoing conversation about the man of *gravitas* (Latin for “weightiness”). The word refers to a certain “bearing” or dignity. The man of *gravitas* is not one who cannot joke, but one who has a weightiness in what he says, one who has an opinion that matters based on his proven character. We must establish that. If we are not moving in that direction, then we are not maturing. Laugh when it is appropriate, but if you can’t be serious at the proper times you are immature. You don’t need to jeopardize any woman by talking about a serious relationship with her.

Find ways now to discipline yourself in being responsible. Here are some ways:

Do Your Work

Take seriously your current obligations. Learn and discipline yourself to complete your school assignments and to do them well. Be on time at work and in class. This may seem pretty basic, but it is an essential starting place. I challenge your manhood, right here, right now, if you are not, on a regular basis, getting your work done and turning it in on time. We say we want to take on the responsibility of leading a family or assuming leadership at a job, but we can’t do an assignment and turn it in? It starts with the small things. If we are faithful in little, we will be faithful in much.

Own Your Failures

Reject the blame game. When the buck is passed, it is always done with a limp wrist. If you did not get your assignment done on time, own up to it and drop the lame excuses. Refusing to own your failures—playing the blame game—is an abandonment of manhood. You cannot lead and avoid responsibility at the same time. Face it like a man. If you simply did not discipline your time sufficiently to accomplish the task, don’t spin it with some religious sounding excuse. If your roommate was in a crisis, I am glad you were willing to stay up all night last night to talk with him. But your paper

is still due today. You should not have waited until the last day to complete it.

We see this at the Fall (Genesis 3). When God comes, he calls Adam to account, but Adam passes the blame to Eve. However, Paul makes it clear that the ultimate responsibility for the sin rested on Adam (Rom 5:12–21). Avoidance of responsibility is an old and pernicious sin which will neuter you. Fight it!

Expect to Work

God made you to work. Reject laziness. See laziness not merely as a foible but as damnable sin, a dangerous cancer that can eat away your soul. Laziness and avoidance of work is a typical sin for men, so wage a particularly diligent and merciless war against it in your own soul.

Yes, work-aholism is another error that affects men, but the answer is not laziness. In fact work-aholism is often a way of avoiding the really challenging work of caring for and leading one’s wife and children.

Work is good and ennobling. If this is not the way you think, change your thinking to adopt this biblical view (Col 3:23). Reject the “live for the weekend” mentality. Instead, begin asking God and godly leaders what work He has for you to do. Find your calling. Yes, I know He created you for His glory, to be in relationship with Him and with others. But He also made you to work, and that work will be one main way in which you glorify God. For what task were you created? To what work will you commit yourself? You need to have some clear thoughts about this (not a full blueprint) before you can seriously consider marriage. Before you should take a wife you need to know *where* you’re taking her. You need to know what you intend to do in life. Of course, God sometimes shifts things, and things change. But you need to have a goal. You need to know, to the best of your ability, under God, and in concert with godly, wise counsel, where you are headed.

Reject the Temptation to Whine and Complain

One of the most “un-manly” things you can do is whine. I am not saying, “Don’t admit weaknesses,

and don't seek help." No. Do that. But I am talking about whining about how things are wrong for you instead of making the most of your situation. Part of manhood is initiative; so begin to practice this by seeking solutions rather than sniping and complaining. This produces leadership.

Embrace Commitment

The world will tell you life is found in freedom from any constraints, obligations, or commitments. It is a lie. What this leads to is purposelessness. We are often given the picture of manliness in the lone wandering hero. This is false.

This aversion to commitment and obligations is actually just a form of cowardice. It is easy to play games and go through motions. In isolation you can keep your sins hidden, deceive yourself with an exalted view of yourself, and live in fantasy. The real work is in settling into specific situations, working out issues, helping people, having to face your own sins, deficiencies, and failures, and staying at it over the long haul. And, this is where real life is found. You are not a drifter born to walk alone. You were made for community. Of course, part of what I have in mind here is to begin thinking not of various women to entertain but of the prospect of settling down with a specific woman. They call it "playing the field." Typically it's just sin. Don't toy with women. They were not created for your amusement. You know the stories of guys dating various girls, or at least keeping a number of girls "on the line," giving them just enough interest to keep them close for whenever he wants to hang out with them. Guys like this need other guys to rebuke them and run them off.

But, how do you begin this? How do you prepare? First, invest yourself in a local church. Learn there to live in community with other people, to build significant relationships, to work through problems, to express your needs and to meet the needs of others. The church is the training ground for life in general. Then learn the fact that commitment costs. Stand by your word. Realize that every decision to do one thing is a decision not to do several others. So do not simply clutter your life with miscellaneous things. Take responsibility and com-

mitment to bring some focus to your life. What are you about?

Sacrifice

All these issues are inter-related so you will see some overlap here. But Ephesians 5 shows clearly that masculine leadership involves the willingness to sacrifice. The self-centered environment we live in will not encourage you in this direction. We must crucify the idea that says, "I deserve it all, and it should not hurt me to get it." This is stupid as well as sinful. But it is common. I see it when a student says, "Surely you won't penalize me for my paper being late (or work hurriedly done) because I did not have enough time. You know I have to have a social life." My answer to such a student is, "No, I do not understand; and, no, you do not have to have a social life every day. It would not hurt you to shut yourself away for a few weekends and learn to work hard on something, to learn to pay the price to succeed."

If you are going to invest your life into something that matters, you will have to make sacrifices. In the future, that will involve laying aside some things you would like to do in order to work around the house, to help your wife with some things that, in themselves, don't particularly interest you, to lead your family.

Elisabeth Elliot put this well:

There is no getting around the fact that to give yourselves wholeheartedly to the rearing of children will eliminate you from a lot of activities your friends are enjoying and often from activities that seem to be obligations—not merely social, but perhaps church, family, business and civic ones. You will have to ask God for wisdom to choose and the guts to stick to the choice. (Don't pay attention to you-owe-it-to-yourself talk. You owe nothing to yourself, everything to God.)²

But that is in the future. For now, learn to live out of principle and not out of unbridled desire. Learn to say no to yourself.

Also on this point, it is true that masculinity involves the idea that men protect women and children. I know this is terribly non-“PC” and, to many people, passé. That does not change the truthfulness of it, however. Nor does it change the fact that most women deeply appreciate this unless they have trained themselves not to.

“Women and Children First”

Although Hollywood perverted the story of the *Titanic* into class warfare and peepshow thrills, the real story of the doomed ocean-liner includes the cry, “Women and children first,” as the men on board, with only few exceptions, yielded their seats on lifeboats so that women and children could be rescued. Men looked into the eyes of their wives and children to speak tender words of comfort and encouragement before sending them out to safety knowing full well that they, the men, would die in those waters and never see their loved ones again. In the end, nine men died for every one woman who died in that disaster. The then-current First Lady of the United States, Mrs. Taft, honored this spirit of manhood by mounting a national campaign to raise private funds for a monument that would carry the inscription: “To the brave men who gave their lives that women and children might be saved.” Mrs. Taft explained, “I am grateful to do this in gratitude to the chivalry of American manhood.”³

This spirit of “Women and children first” came from an earlier disaster, the sinking of the HMS *Birkenhead*:

In 1852, the British troopship H.M.S. *Birkenhead* was traveling to South Africa when she hit a ledge and foundered. On board were more than seven hundred men, women, and children. With only twenty minutes left before she would sink, the decision was made to place all women and children aboard the few life boats. The men would remain behind and face the man-eating sharks circling the disaster. Hundreds of men drowned or were eaten alive in full view of their children, but not a single woman or child perished that day. In past years, this story was known by every schoolboy and girl.⁴

What does this kind of heroic sacrifice look like right now in the day-to-day life of young men in college? We will likely not face situations like the *Titanic* or the *Birkenhead* (though those men probably did not anticipate facing these situations either). It is worthwhile considering these grand examples, though, because the big picture effects how we act in the small things of life. Here are some ways we can live this out. Guys, take the risk in relationships. You initiate and make the approach. That way, she can be safe and does not have to take the risk of stepping out first. Also if she feels the need to break it off, she is free to do so even without explanation. You take the brunt of it and let her go unscathed.

In a small way, you could include here opening the door for ladies, waiting for her to enter a door first, walking on the traffic side of the street, placing yourself between her and any potential danger, etc.

Conclusion

I’ll close with this story. Just this last weekend my family and I had gone to the mall (which I sometimes consider part of my sacrifice). We have six children, two of whom are under two years old. As we left, in the cold, dark and drizzling rain, we realized we had two dirty diapers. So, as we told our four older children to file into the vehicle, my wife and I were side by side using the back of the vehicle as a diaper changing station. Instead of dueling banjos we had dueling diapers, working quickly in the cold and rain.

I began to think, “Just one week ago I was at a professional conference in San Diego. I was in a number of settings with very important people. I was sitting next to a very well respected pastor who was saying something appreciative about a paper I had just presented. I talked to several prominent people in my professional world. I was hobnobbing. I was talking about future writing projects and the like. But now here I am in the dark, cold, drizzly rain changing a diaper. This is where in the movies they say, ‘Well, you didn’t think you would end up here, did you?’ When you were young everything seemed great and you had big plans, but here you

are bogged down with a wife and six kids.”

But I thought, “No, that couldn’t be any further from the truth!” I was glad to get to go to the conference, but this is real life. The everyday labor with my family is far more heartening and joyful to me than any of those other things. This will have far more impact in God’s Kingdom. The everyday, inglorious work I do, the tasks of teaching, training, and changing diapers—that matters far more. For those of you who will marry, this is where you are headed. Manhood is embracing everyday responsibilities, living out commitment, being willing to sacrifice, so that your cultural engagement really happens in your family. The most significant culture you are involved in is your own home, your own church, living out practical godliness . . . with dirt and other items under your fingernails, so to speak. It is godliness in the everyday sphere of life. This is real manhood being lived out.

ENDNOTES

¹This essay grew out of an address given for a “Month of Man” event at Union University. Kudos to Union students, Neil Brown, Patrick Brown, Stephen Capps, and Blake Stannard who initiated and organized this event.

²Elisabeth Elliot, *The Mark of a Man* (Grand Rapids: Revell, 1981), 160–61.

³Douglas Phillips, “Titanic Chivalry,” *World*, 28 May 1998, 28–29.

⁴From VisionForum.com. I commend to the reader Douglas Phillips’s excellent book on this event, *The Birkenhead Drill* (San Antonio: Vision Forum, 2002).

Women in Ministry: Practical Application of Biblical Teaching

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Introduction

It is not uncommon for churches and individual believers who hold to a complementarian view of gender roles to be unsure how to apply these principles in specific cases. Given this need, we offer the following application-oriented suggestions for consideration. Not all complementarians will necessarily agree with every aspect of this essay. However, we believe there is a need for this kind of practical outworking of the biblical teachings on manhood and womanhood and, thus, submit to you our own understanding of how this teaching applies to various ministry contexts. What follows is obviously *not* intended as hard and fast rules to be accepted on the level of Scripture, nor do we expect that this will address every possible ministry position or scenario. Yet, as with any text of Scripture, while correct *interpretation* is necessary, it must be joined with biblically faithful *application*.¹

By God's grace, all men and women who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ receive spiritual gifts to equip them to serve together in Christ's body—the church. God grants these gifts through his Spirit to all believers without distinction and for the edification of all (1 Cor 12:4–11). No member of Christ's church is unneeded; each is gifted by God's will so that the church, though many parts,

may be one body (1 Cor 12:12–26).

In particular, the Bible affirms the valuable and necessary role of women serving in Christian ministry.² A church in which women are not encouraged and granted opportunity to serve as vital members of the Christian community is both disobedient and unhealthy. Yet, while every believer is equipped by the Holy Spirit indiscriminate of gender, how each man or woman serves the church falls under the framework of Scripture. God's word is clear in its affirmation of women in ministry, yet it also gives specific instruction regarding the roles of men and women in the church. In 1 Tim 2:11–15, Paul writes,

Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness. I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet. For Adam was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. Yet she will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith and love and holiness, with self-control (ESV).

Thus, according to Scripture, Christian women are called by God to serve the church, with the

exception of teaching or having authority over men in the church.³

However, it is not always clear how this biblical teaching applies in a given ministry context. The first century church did not have the various ministry positions, both inside and outside of the local church, that are present in our Christian communities today. The early church had no Sunday school teachers, music ministers, or seminary professors, so the Bible does not address these ministries as such. But this does not mean we can simply ignore what Scripture *does* say about men and women serving together in the body of Christ. Rather, we must relate the unchanging truths of Scripture to our contemporary ministry circumstances. We hope the following will serve as practical advice for specific ministry positions to assist believers, churches, and other Christian organizations in applying God's word for the good of his church and the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Teaching and Leading

The church of the Lord Jesus Christ is designed to function via the gifts of all of God's people—men and women. These include specific gifts that involve the functions of *teaching* and *leading*. Here we want to briefly distinguish between two general meanings of the term *leading*. By the use of the word *leading*, we primarily have in mind gifts that God grants that enable believers to serve in particular positions of authority, providing spiritual direction to other believers in a local church (for example, the position of pastor/elder/overseer).

However, people may also use the term *leading* to speak of having primary responsibility for coordinating group efforts in a particular ministry area. In this latter case, one need not necessarily exercise authority over individuals in order to be designated the “leader” of a specific ministry. It is more of an administrative responsibility for a program rather than an authoritative relationship over people's specific conduct in the church (though we recognize that there can be situations where those two distinct kinds of activities would merge into each other, situations that would require prayer and mature Christian wisdom to decide). For example,

we believe a woman can serve as a “children's ministry leader” (see further below). This may require her to coordinate the efforts of men who serve as teachers of children. But this appears to be consistent with Scripture, provided that her position does not require her to teach or exercise authority over these men.

Each local church should ensure that women have the opportunity to exercise their spiritual gifts for the edification of the body—including teaching and leadership gifts.⁴ However, as already noted, all things must be done inside the parameters that God's word establishes for his people. We must submit to the authority of Scripture as we minister to one another. Many opportunities and needs exist for women to teach and lead other women, which would be a faithful application of Titus 2:3–5:

Older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine. They are to teach what is good, and so train the young women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled (ESV).

Regardless of the specific context, believers ought to be careful to avoid a situation that would result in a violation of the principles of 1 Tim 2:11–15. In this passage, Paul restricts women from engaging in two activities: teaching men and having authority over men. Since these are the primary responsibility of those who hold the office of elder/overseer/pastor (see 1 Tim 3:2–5, 5:17; Titus 1:9; 1 Pet 5:1–3), a woman should not function in this office because this would require her to exercise these two prohibited activities. But, we should also recognize that these activities—especially that of teaching men—are not limited to those who hold the office of elder/overseer/pastor. Thus, we believe a woman is prohibited from holding any office or position in the church that would require her either to teach Scripture/Christian doctrine to men or to exercise authority over men. This does not prohibit informal guidance and explanation such as that

communicated from Priscilla and Aquila to Apollos in Acts 18:26. Rather, what is prohibited is the kind of formal teaching and exercising of governing authority envisioned in 1 Tim 2:12. Therefore, churches should evaluate any given ministry position based on whether or not it would require a woman to perform such functions.

Some have suggested that it is consistent for a woman to teach men as long as she herself is under the authority of her husband and/or the pastoral leadership of the church, but Scripture does not support this position. Paul restricts women from exercising two distinct functions: “I do not permit a woman *to teach or to exercise authority over a man*” (1 Tim 2:12).⁵ Though a woman may not be in a position of exercising authority over men, if she teaches them Scripture/biblical doctrine, she is functioning in a way that conflicts with Paul’s instructions. The Bible does not indicate that these activities are acceptable as long as a woman is “under authority.” The pastor(s)/elder(s) of a church cannot give a woman (or a man!) permission to disobey Scripture. As Wayne Grudem writes, “Would we say that the elders of a church could tell people ‘under their authority’ that they have permission to disobey *other* passages of Scripture?”⁶ Of course not. We would assume (and hope) that *any* church member—man or woman—who serves in an official ministry capacity in a local church is functioning under the authority of the pastoral leadership of that church. But submitting to the leadership of the church does not grant one the freedom to disobey clear biblical teachings.

Specific Ministry Positions

The specific ministry positions considered below have been chosen because, in our experience, these are the particular ministries about which individuals and churches most frequently ask when it comes to questions of gender roles. So, with the foregoing discussion in mind, how should we apply the teachings of Scripture regarding women in ministry to the following ministry contexts?

Sunday School Teacher/Leader or Small Group Bible Study Teacher/Leader

For a woman to function in one of these roles in a mixed group of men and women would place her in a position of providing biblical instruction publicly to men, and oftentimes also place her in an authoritative “pastoral” role over the members of the group. This would be inconsistent with the teaching of 1 Tim 2:11–15.

We believe a woman co-teaching a mixed class with a man (for example, a husband and wife, where the husband would teach sometimes and the wife would teach sometimes) would also be problematic. Certainly, if a man is teaching a Sunday school class, his wife could be a helper to him in a way that does not violate 1 Tim 2:11–15. But to promote a team-teaching concept would presumably involve the wife in providing Bible instruction to men. In addition, individuals may very well understand such a husband and wife “team-teaching” setting as promoting an egalitarian view of “mutual submission.”⁷

Church Worship Leader/Music Minister

For a woman to serve as a worship leader or music minister in a church is a more difficult issue. Part of the difficulty in making application here lies in the lack of uniform agreement among various church traditions regarding the role and function of one who serves in such a ministry. It is certainly possible for a woman to serve in a position in which she leads in congregational singing during a church worship service. However, it would depend on how that particular church understands the degree of authority that she holds over the assembled congregation and the extent to which she provides instruction. Is her position understood as one of authority over the congregation similar to a pastor/elder? Does she provide doctrinal commentary between songs or other doctrinal instruction to the choir or congregation? Does her “leading” involve the exercising of authority over others or, rather, providing leadership regarding timing, tempo, music, etc.? Does she direct the church to a particular song in a hymnal and invite those assembled to praise the Lord, or does she engage in more biblical exhortation like a pastor/

elder? Churches ought to take these kinds of questions into consideration when attempting to apply biblical principles to this ministry position.

Children's Ministry Teacher/Leader

If a woman serves in a position of essentially overseeing and coordinating the children's ministry of the church, this does not seem to present any conflict with Scripture. Neither should it be regarded as inappropriate for women to teach children. We note that Scripture not only permits women to teach children, but in certain cases expects it. A son is commanded to heed the instructions of both his father and mother (Prov 1:8). Paul speaks commendably of Timothy's mother and grandmother who taught him the Scriptures and passed their faith on to him (2 Tim 1:5; 3:14–15). This does not conflict with the biblical prohibition against a woman teaching doctrine to men or exercising authority over them in the church, because young boys do not relate to women teachers as man to woman. Thus, there is nothing inappropriate with women teaching or exercising authority over young boys who are under their mother's authority at home.

What churches should seek to avoid is designating a woman in such a position as the "Children's Pastor." For her to hold this title is problematic, since women are biblically restricted from functioning as pastors/elders/overseers, and applying the title "pastor" to her would blur that category. Thus, it seems inconsistent to give her this title even if her teaching is limited to children.

If her position is not understood as one of authority over the congregation similar to a pastor/elder, but, rather, her position is that of a "children's coordinator," "children's ministry leader," etc., who plans and coordinates the children's ministry of the church and perhaps teaches children as well, this would appear to be consistent with biblical teaching.

Youth Ministry Leader

We believe it is wisest to place teenage boys under the spiritual leadership and instruction of men. Given the fact that they themselves are on the brink of manhood, this is the most appropriate time

for them to be led and instructed by men who can model godly, biblical manhood for them. It would also serve as a transition for them, so that they begin to expect to sit under the doctrinal instruction of God-called men in the church. This would not mean that men should be solely responsible for teaching and leading all of the youth. Teenage girls are just as much in need of godly women who can disciple them and model biblical womanhood for them. So, there is a genuine need for women to minister to them.

While we believe men teaching and leading teenage boys would be the wisest arrangement, we do not intend to make an absolute rule here. Since, in general, teenage boys are still under the authority and instruction of their mother as well as their father, it would not necessarily be inconsistent for them to receive doctrinal teaching from a woman teacher or youth ministry leader. Each specific situation would require mature Christian wisdom to decide the most appropriate arrangement.

Teaching in a Theological Seminary or College

It is sometimes argued that the prohibitions of 1 Tim 2:12 do not apply to those who teach in a theological college or seminary. Since the context of Paul's prohibition is the church and the content of the teaching is Christian doctrine, some argue the academic content and context make the prohibition irrelevant to formal theological education. We disagree with this assessment for two reasons. First, in both the church and the theological school, the content of the teaching is often the same—the authoritative apostolic deposit of Christian doctrine.⁸ Second, seminaries are hardly serving their church constituencies well if they are permitting what 1 Tim 2:12 expressly prohibits—women teaching Christian doctrine over men. Therefore, consistency requires that instructors of Bible or theology also adhere to the requirements of 1 Tim 2:11–15.

Christians may debate all of the specific areas of study that would be included under the heading "Christian doctrine." But certainly "Christian doctrine" would include New Testament Studies, Old Testament Studies, Bible interpretation, sys-

tematic theology, Christian ethics, Christian philosophy, and church history. In seminary, Greek and Hebrew courses are taught with attention to exegesis and interpretation of the biblical text, and in this sense would be relevant to the prohibitions of 1 Tim 2:12. Thus, we would encourage seminaries and colleges to carefully consider the content of these courses so that they may avoid a situation that involves women providing doctrinal instruction to men.

Having acknowledged this, we would strongly affirm the pursuit of a theological education by women who have been called by God into Christian ministry and had their giftedness affirmed by a local church. The church of the Lord Jesus Christ is in need of both men and women who have been trained and equipped for service. In addition, a growing number of evangelical seminaries, colleges, and denominational agencies are creating women-specific programs and ministries, and many of these teaching and ministry positions require theological education.

Parachurch Ministry Teacher/Leader

The same biblical principles about teaching men and exercising authority over men apply in the context of a parachurch ministry. It is not sufficient for a parachurch organization to claim that it is distinct from the church. While this may be true, it does not provide an adequate answer to the question of gender roles in such an organization. If a parachurch ministry is engaging in an activity for which we have biblical instruction, then it seems clear that it should be obeying that instruction. In his very helpful discussion on this issue, Wayne Grudem writes, "Some New Testament commands do not apply to parachurch organizations not because they are not churches, but because they are not performing the activity mentioned in those commands. . . . Parachurch organizations should follow New Testament commands written to churches when those organizations are doing the same activities that the command is talking about."⁹ Thus, we believe women should not be appointed to serve in specific roles in parachurch ministries that would require them to teach or exercise authority over men.

Parachurch Board of Directors

We believe there is nothing to prevent women from serving alongside of men as members of a board of directors for a Christian parachurch organization. While the board as a whole exercises governance over the ministry, individual members of the board usually do not exercise individual authority over one another or over individuals in the ministry. Thus, it does not involve the direct authority of a woman over a man, but is the collective authority of a group. Board members reach group decisions that provide direction for the organization. This would be similar to women voting as a part of a church congregation.

Having said this, we believe the chairman of the board of directors should be a man, since (in most organizations) this person is expected to exercise a leadership role over the other board members and in his relationship with the organization's president/executive director.

Bible Conference Preacher/Teacher

A significant number of women have ministries that involve them in speaking and teaching at Bible conferences. We are very grateful for the wonderful work many of these women have done in advancing sound biblical knowledge among women and helping them to apply it to their lives. If they also provide doctrinal instruction to men during their conferences, though, this seems to conflict with Scripture. Again, we are grateful to God for the teaching ministries of many gifted women. Gender-specific conferences allow female speakers to address gender-specific issues of a woman's life that pastors will not be able to do from the pulpit. Such forums can serve as faithful applications of Titus 2:3–5 on a large scale. As a general rule, though, we would simply encourage the speakers, as well as conference coordinators, to limit attendance at the events to women.

Conclusion

We are encouraged by the need to write this essay, for two reasons. First, that these questions are being asked indicates that many Christians and churches are seriously engaging God's word for

guidance about how we are to serve one another in ministry, rather than merely resorting to pragmatic answers. Second, the need to address these issues demonstrates that many Christian women are zealous to serve the Lord and his church. Thus, the abundance of questions being asked about appropriate ministries is not a problem, but reflects a healthy desire of many women to use their spiritual gifts to build up the body of Christ.¹⁰ As John Piper asserts, “If I were to put my finger on one devastating sin today, it would not be the so-called women’s movement, but the lack of spiritual leadership by men at home and in the church. . . . The spiritual aimlessness and weakness and lethargy and loss of nerve among men is the major issue, not the upsurge of interest in women’s ministries.”¹¹ Likewise, we believe that the problems the church is experiencing today through the influence of feminist ideology is primarily a result of men failing to assume responsibility for leadership and carrying out that responsibility through selfless servanthood of Christ’s church. May the Lord grant that all of us—men and women—would be faithful in our calling to serve him and to serve one another in love.

ENDNOTES

¹We want to thank the following individuals for their very helpful input and feedback on this essay: Heather Moore, Wayne Grudem, Peter R. Schemm Jr., Jack Cottrell, Russell D. Moore, and Denny Burk.

²For a helpful, biblical survey, see Thomas R. Schreiner, “The Valuable Ministries of Women in the Context of Male Leadership: A Survey of Old and New Testament Examples and Teaching,” in *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* (ed. John Piper and Wayne Grudem; Wheaton: Crossway, 1991), 209–24.

³The following are some helpful works that address this biblical teaching and its application: Andreas J. Köstenberger and Thomas R. Schreiner, eds., *Women in the Church: An Analysis and Application of 1 Timothy 2:9–15* (2d ed.; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005); Wayne Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth: An Analysis of More Than 100 Disputed Questions* (Sisters, OR: Multnomah, 2004); Dan Doriani, *Women and Ministry* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2003); Douglas Moo, “What Does it Mean Not to Teach or Have Authority Over Men? 1 Timothy 2:11–15,” in *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, 179–93; H. Wayne House, *The Role of Women in Ministry Today* (H. Wayne House, 1990); George W. Knight, *The Role Relationship of Men and Women: New Testament Teaching* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1985); and Jack Cottrell, *Gender Roles and The Bible: Creation, the Fall, and Redemption* (Joplin, MO: College Press, 1994).

⁴For helpful resources that address women’s ministry in the local church, see J. Ligon Duncan and Susan Hunt, *Women’s Ministry in*

the Local Church (Wheaton: Crossway, 2006); Susan Hunt and Peggy Hutcheson, *Leadership for Women in the Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1991); Mary A. Kassian, *Women, Creation, and the Fall* (Wheaton: Crossway, 1990); Susan Hunt and Barbara Thomson, *The Legacy of Biblical Womanhood* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2003); Elizabeth Inrig, *Release Your Potential: Using Your Gifts in a Thriving Women’s Ministry* (Chicago: Moody, 2001); and Susan Hunt, *Spiritual Mothering: The Titus 2 Model for Women Mentoring Women* (Wheaton: Crossway, 1992).

⁵See, especially, the chapter by Andreas Köstenberger (“A Complex Sentence: The Syntax of 1 Timothy 2:12”) in *Women in the Church*, 53–84.

⁶Wayne Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism: A New Path to Liberalism?* (Crossway: Wheaton, 2006), 104.

⁷For a critique of “mutual submission,” see Wayne Grudem, “The Myth of Mutual Submission as an Interpretation of Ephesians 5:21,” in *Biblical Foundation for Manhood and Womanhood* (ed. Wayne Grudem; Wheaton: Crossway, 2002), 221–31.

⁸We agree with Douglas Moo that “teach” in 1 Tim 2:12 occurs in a specialized sense to denote the teaching of Christian doctrine: “In the pastoral epistles, teaching always has this restricted sense of authoritative doctrinal instruction” (Moo, “What Does It Mean Not to Teach or Have Authority over Men? 1 Timothy 2:11–15,” 185).

⁹See Wayne Grudem, “Is Evangelical Feminism the New Path to Liberalism?” *Journal for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* 9, no. 1 (2004): 56, 57. See also Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism: A New Path to Liberalism?*, 107–14.

¹⁰Countless opportunities exist for women to serve in ministry roles that are deeply needed. For a sample list of ministries, see John Piper, “A Vision of Biblical Complementarity: Manhood and Womanhood Defined according to the Bible,” in *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, 58. This chapter has been reprinted separately as John Piper, *What’s the Difference? Manhood and Womanhood Defined according to the Bible* (Wheaton: Crossway, 1990).

¹¹Piper, “A Vision of Biblical Complementarity,” 53.

Young vs. Old Complementarians¹

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Ligon Duncan and I were recently at a gathering of forty or so pastors. We had a great time there. Wonderful fellowship. Much theological agreement. However, when the question of complementarianism came up, though there was large agreement on theological substance, there was dramatic disagreement on strategy for presentation.

The core of this essay is simply this—it is my observation that those older than me who are complementarian generally want to downplay this issue, and those younger than me want to lead with it, or at least be very up front about it.

Why is this? Is it because the older group is theologically unfaithful, or the younger group culturally insensitive? I don't think so. I don't know, but my guess is that there are at least a couple of factors playing into this difference. The two groups have different personal experiences, and the two groups have different theological assessments.

First, the two groups have different personal experiences. Normal for the older group is evangelicals as upstanding members of the society. They are mayors and bankers and respected persons in the community. The tendency is natural to do what would be culturally acceptable, as much as is possible (parallel to John Rawls and his idea of publicly accessible reasons). Normal for the younger group is being shouted at publicly, being told that they're narrow, intolerant hate-mongers because of their opposition to homosexuality or abortion or false religions. The tendency is to advocate biblical mandates in an unvarnished, open fashion, and yet to do this with an eye to explaining and demonstrating them as winsomely as possible. Both groups want to be faithful to Scripture and sensitive to culture, and yet their ideas of where the right balance is, differ.

Second, the two groups have different theological assessments. The older group is among peers who see women's ordination as an extension of civil rights for people of different races. The younger group is among peers who see women's ordination as a precursor for creating legal categories of gay rights. But having a certain skin pigmentation is to the glory of God; having a sexual partner of the same gender is sin. The younger group is more alarmed, not simply by the egalitarian position, but by what it is assumed that will eventually entail, either in those who allow it, or in those who come after them.

There are, of course, many evangelical feminists. Some Christians whom I most love and respect and have learned from are in this category. Just to take one example, I think of my beloved professor at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, Roger Nicole, who is a father in the faith to me. My respect for him is huge. My debt to him is great. I was his teaching assistant for two years at Gordon-Conwell. He and his wife were and have been incredibly kind to me and my family. He prayed for me publicly at my installation at Capitol Hill Baptist Church. I got a letter from him just last week! However, on this issue, after years of being taught feminism at Duke, then at Gordon-Conwell, I had come to disagree.

"Well then," you might say, "why don't you leave this issue of complementarianism at the level of baptism or church polity? Surely you cooperate with those who disagree with you on such matters." Because, though I could be wrong, it is my best and most sober judgment that this position is effectively an undermining of—a breach in—the authority of Scripture. As my friend Ligon Dun-

can, the paedo-baptist, has often said, “If there were a verse in 1 Timothy saying, ‘I do not permit an infant to be baptized,’ we wouldn’t be having this conversation about baptism! There is such a verse about women serving as teachers/elders!”

Dear reader, you may not agree with me on this. And I don’t desire to be right in my fears. But it seems to me and others (many who are younger than myself) that this issue of egalitarianism and complementarianism is increasingly acting as the watershed distinguishing those who will accommodate Scripture to culture, and those who will attempt to shape culture by Scripture. You may disagree, but this is our honest concern before God. It is no lack of charity, nor honesty. It is no desire for power or tradition for tradition’s sake. It is our sober conclusion from observing the last fifty years.

Paedobaptism is not novel (sadly). But, on the good side, evangelicals who have taught such a doctrine have continued to be otherwise faithful to Scripture for five centuries now. And many times their faithfulnesses have put those of us who may have a better doctrine of baptism to shame! Egalitarianism is novel. Its theological tendencies have not had such a long track record. And the track record they have had so far is not encouraging.

Of course, there are issues more central to the gospel than gender issues. However, there may be no way the authority of Scripture is being undermined more quickly or more thoroughly in our day than through the hermeneutics of egalitarian readings of the Bible. And when the authority of Scripture is undermined, the gospel will not long be acknowledged. Therefore, love for God, the gospel, and future generations demands the careful presentation and pressing of the complementarian position.

ENDNOTES

¹An earlier version of this article appeared on the website of “Together for the Gospel,” www.T4G.org.

Why “Together for the Gospel” Embraces Complementarianism¹

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“Together for the Gospel” (T4G) is a consortium of Reformed evangelicals who are committed to a comprehensive recovery and reaffirmation of the biblical Gospel. I am signer of T4G’s initial doctrinal statement of affirmation and denials. Article 16 of our statement consists of a plain affirmation of a complementarian understanding of gender. It reads:

We affirm that the Scripture reveals a pattern of complementary order between men and women, and that this order is itself a testimony to the Gospel, even as it is the gift of our Creator and Redeemer. We also affirm that all Christians are called to service within the body of Christ, and that God has given to both men and women important and strategic roles within the home, the church, and the society. We further affirm that the teaching office of the church is assigned only to those men who are called of God in fulfillment of the biblical teachings and that men are to lead in their homes as husbands and fathers who fear and love God.

We deny that the distinction of roles between men and women revealed in the Bible is evidence of mere cultural conditioning or a manifestation of male oppression or prejudice against women. We also deny that this biblical distinction of roles excludes women from meaningful ministry in Christ’s kingdom. We further deny that any church can confuse these issues without damaging its witness to the Gospel.

Why did I and the others signers of this document include this statement in our doctrinal statement? There are several reasons.

One, the denial of complementarianism undermines the church’s practical embrace of the authority of Scripture (thus eventually and inevitably harming the church’s witness to the Gospel). The gymnastics required to get from “I *do not* allow a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man,” in the Bible, to “I *do* allow a woman to teach and to exercise authority over a man” in the actual practice of the local church, are devastating to the functional authority of the Scripture in the life of the people of God.

By the way, this is one reason why I think we just don’t see many strongly inerrantist-egalitarians (meaning: those who hold unwaveringly to inerrancy and also to egalitarianism) in the younger generation of evangelicalism. Many if not most evangelical egalitarians today have significant qualms about inerrancy, and are embracing things like trajectory hermeneutics, etc., to justify their positions. Inerrancy or egalitarianism, one or the other, eventually wins out.

Two, and following on the first point, the church’s confidence in the clarity of Scripture is undermined, because if you can get egalitarianism from the Bible, you can get anything from the Bible. Paul may be excruciating to read aloud and hear read in a dominant feminist culture, but he’s not obscure in his position! In 1 Tim 2:11–12 he says, “A woman must quietly receive instruction with entire submissiveness. I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to

remain quiet.” Elsewhere, in 1 Cor 14:34–35, we find the confirming parallel to this previous pronouncement: “The women are to keep silent in the churches; for they are not permitted to speak, but are to subject themselves, just as the Law also says. If they desire to learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is improper for a woman to speak in church.” These verses (and many others) are uncomfortably clear and certainly politically incorrect, and though some of us may be consoled by “exegesis” that shows that they don’t really mean that women can’t preach, teach, rule in the church, yet there remains this nagging feeling that such interpretive moves are the victory of present opinion over clear but unpopular biblical teaching. Cultural cooption of the church’s reading of the Bible robs the church’s ability to speak prophetically to the culture and to live distinctively in the culture, which in turns undermines the church’s Gospel witness.

Three, because the very ideal of equality championed by egalitarianism (whether secular or Christian) is a permutation of a particular strand of Enlightenment thought, and because this particular ideal of equality is actually alien to the biblical anthropology and ethic, whenever and wherever it is read into the text of Scripture and its principles are worked out consistently, there is a competition with a biblical view of manhood and womanhood. For instance, try to find this view of equality in Genesis 1—it’s just not there. Consequently, commitment to evangelical egalitarianism opens the door for two competing but incompatible ethical norms and ideals within the individual, family and church. If the egalitarian impulse wins out, the church is compromised precisely at the point where paganism is assaulting the church today. For, as Peter Jones has brilliantly demonstrated, paganism wants to get rid of Christian monotheism by getting rid of the Creator-creature distinction. And one way paganism likes to do that is through gender confusion—hence, the bi-sexual shaman, the sacred feminine, goddess worship, etc. Paganism understands that one of the best ways to prepare the way for pagan polytheistic monism over against the transcendent Creator God of the Bible is to

undermine that God’s image in the distinctiveness of male and female, and in the picture of Christ and the church in marital role distinctions, and in the male eldership of the church. Egalitarianism is just not equipped for that fight, and in fact simply capitulates to it.

Four, when the biblical distinctions of maleness and femaleness are denied, Christian discipleship is seriously damaged because there can be no talk of cultivating distinctively masculine Christian virtue or feminine Christian virtue. Yes, there are many Christian ethical norms that are equally directed and applicable to male and female disciples, but there are also many ethical directives in the NT enjoined distinctly upon Christian men as men and Christian women as women. Furthermore, the NT (and the Bible as a whole) recognizes that men and women are uniquely vulnerable to different kinds of temptations, and thus need gender-specific encouragement in battling against them in the course of Christian discipleship. Evangelical egalitarianism, fearful as it is that any acknowledged difference between men and women could set the stage for inequality of role or status, is utterly unprepared to help the believer with these distinctive commands or temptations. Egalitarian discipleship of Christian men and women has, then, an inherent androgynous bias. But that is not how God made us. He made us male and female. Thus, Paul warns Christian men against the soul-peril of “effeminacy” without in any way criticizing (and, indeed, admiring and encouraging) the “femininity” of women. We need masculine male Christians and feminine female Christians, and that kind of discipleship requires an understanding of and commitment to complementarianism. Hence, denial of complementarianism compromises Gospel discipleship.

For these reasons and more, I think we were right to “deny that any church can confuse these issues without damaging its witness to the Gospel.”

ENDNOTES

¹An earlier version of this article appeared on the website of “Together for the Gospel,” www.T4G.org.

Reconsidering the Maleness of Jesus

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Introduction

Today a Christology which elevates Jesus' maleness to ontologically necessary significance suggests that Jesus' humanity does not represent women at all. Incarnation solely into the male sex does not include women and so women are not redeemed.¹

Against several erroneous Christological proposals, the orthodox definition for Christology found in the statement of the Council of Chalcedon (451) provides a careful defense for the assertion that Jesus Christ was both God and man.² The deity *and* humanity of Jesus, Chalcedon demonstrates, must be affirmed simultaneously without the devaluation of either fact related to the person of Jesus Christ. Although such an important affirmation has been retained in orthodox Christology over the centuries, neither the language nor the concepts of the Chalcedonian definition have gone unchallenged.

One such challenge in contemporary Christology arises from feminist theologians.³ As feminists reflect on the person of Christ in light of their gendered experience, new insights and theological explorations into the meaning of Jesus the Christ for the lives of twentieth-century women and men are emerging.⁴ In Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen's estimation, the questions posed by feminist theologians with regard to Christology are illuminating: How can a "Son of God" be a Savior and representative of God's sons *and* daughters? How does Jesus'

"maleness" relate to the other half of humankind? Is God the Son masculine or feminine or beyond? Kärkkäinen states, "The image of Christ is ambiguous for many contemporary women because it has served both as the source of life and as the legitimator of oppression."⁵

For feminists, the inevitable stumbling block for a Christology inclusive of women is Jesus the *man*, God incarnate in a *male* persona.⁶ Kathryn Greene-McCreight recognizes that orthodox Christology, which maintains the biblical fact of the maleness of Jesus, "poses difficulties for feminist theology insofar as feminist theology shares in modern theology's difficulty with the 'scandal of particularity.'" She adds, "The notion that the one eternal God, creator of heaven and earth, could come to dwell with humanity in the person of a [male] Jewish carpenter is often offensive to modern sensibilities, which are drawn instead to the universal and the general."⁷ Thus, since the Christian tradition maintains that God particularly became *man*, feminist theologians allege that such an incarnation alienates one-half of humanity.

The point is that the doctrine of the incarnation does not directly address the female sex.⁸ Yet according to feminist theologians, church history actually reveals the inclination for the use of the incarnation *against* the female sex. Lisa Isherwood claims, "As the early proponents of feminist theology strove to understand the exclusion of women and women's experience in church practice and theological reflection, even in churches that had a

strong social gospel, they were increasingly faced with the realization that it may be the very fabric of Christianity that caused the exclusion.”⁹ Consequently, feminist theological analysis began to reveal “that the maleness of Christ himself may be part of the difficulty. . . . If Christ could not experience being female then the question was raised as to whether the female state could be redeemed.”¹⁰

Feminists reiterate that Chalcedon, in its historical context, “make[s] clear that it is not Jesus’ maleness that is doctrinally important but his humanity in solidarity with the whole suffering human race.”¹¹ While the claim related to Jesus’ solidarity with all of humanity is true, of course, feminists want to go beyond Chalcedon to say much more about the nature of the incarnation. In face of this, assert feminists, orthodox Christology introduces incredible trivialization into the doctrine of the incarnation by the “androcentric stress on the maleness of Jesus’ humanity.” Such emphasis on Jesus’ maleness “fully warrants the charge of heresy and even blasphemy currently being leveled against it.”¹²

Is it possible, then, for feminists to accept traditional Christology, with its retention of the maleness of Jesus? Julie Hopkins argues that “it is only possible to bring women into the centre of an incarnational christology if the traditional categories are gender reversible; if, in other words, we may speak of the Divine incarnated in a female body, ‘truly God and truly female’.”¹³ Hopkins wants a full inclusion of the female into Christology, so that (as the Dutch feminist theologian Anne-Claire Mulder argues) Christian theology may speak of the female flesh becoming Word/Logos.¹⁴ For Hopkins (and feminist theology in general), if this proves to be impossible on Christian theological or moral grounds, then Mary Daly’s famous dictum was correct when she observed, “If God is male then the male is God.”¹⁵

This article will argue that feminist Christological exploration and subsequent reconstruction should be rejected and deemed unacceptable for evangelical Christian theology. In so doing, the approach of this article will be to demonstrate both the feminist arguments against the maleness

of Jesus Christ, as well as their alternative proposals for a Christology inclusive of feminist concerns. Finally, this article will conclude with an evaluation and critique of the contours of feminist Christology presented here, plus an affirmation of the necessity of the maleness of Christ.

Feminist Arguments against the Maleness of Jesus

Feminists advance numerous arguments against the maleness of Jesus. Feminist concerns touch various aspects of Christian theology as it relates to Christology—namely, anthropology, soteriology, and ecclesiology. The main arguments against the maleness of Jesus, with these broad theological areas in mind, are as follows.

A Tool for the Subordination of Women

Elizabeth Johnson argues that within the worldview of traditional Christology, the historical Jesus,

who was indisputably a male human being, is interpreted as the incarnation of the Logos, an ontological symbol connected with rationality and thus, according to Greek philosophy, with maleness. The Word made flesh is then related to human beings defined according to an androcentric anthropology that sees men as normative and women as derivative.¹⁶

What results is a Christology that functions as a sacred justification for the superiority of men over women. Because of this theological justification, Johnson surmises, “Women are inevitably relegated to a marginal role both in theory and practice, given the priority of the male savior figure within a patriarchal framework.”¹⁷ If the maleness of Jesus is maintained, given such a pronounced anthropological dualism, as feminists argue it has been in the history of the church, then Christology *must* move in “an increasingly misogynist direction that not only excludes woman as representative of Christ in ministry but makes her a second-class citizen in both creation and redemption.”¹⁸

The crux of the issue related to the use of

Jesus' masculinity as a tool for the subordination of women surfaces in the ecclesial reality of a male-dominated ministerial leadership. Although she overstates her case a bit by claiming that "much of the history of the doctrine of Christ clearly denies the relevance of Jesus' maleness, uplifting only that Jesus is a human being," Sondra Stalcup divulges a (perhaps *the*) critically important objection on behalf of feminist theologians:

[I]t is in fact the *maleness* of Jesus that has been used by the official church to continue the subordination of women by limiting their roles—most obviously, by denying women ordination to the priesthood or representative ministry. Feminists did not create the problem of Jesus' maleness, the official church did by using it inappropriately as a barrier, as a dividing line against women.¹⁹

The rejection of women from representative ministry as priest or pastor is evidence of the social location of this problematic usage of Jesus' masculinity against women. That is, feminists argue, in "an ecclesial community where official voice, vote and visibility belong by law only to men,"²⁰ women's subordination grounded in "the maleness of Christ as imaged through the centuries has damaged women's self-esteem by relegating [them] to second-class citizens."²¹ Thus, "[t]he belief that the Word became flesh and dwelt among us as a male indicates that thanks to their natural bodily resemblance, men enjoy a closer identification with Christ than do women. Men are not only theomorphic but, by virtue of their sex, also christomorphic in a way that goes beyond what is possible for women."²²

This male-dominated theology, that relegates woman to inferior status in both creation and redemption, has enjoyed considerable revival in recent years as the keystone of the conservative reaction to the movements for women's ordination (primarily in the Roman Catholic, Anglican, and Orthodox traditions),²³ but finds particular historical support from the theology of Thomas Aquinas.²⁴ Rosemary Radford Ruether argues that

Aquinas's position that the male is the normative or generic sex of the human species places women in an inferior status. Aquinas argues that women were inferior to men, and in essence, defective. Thus, for Aquinas, "it follows that the incarnation of the Logos of God into the male is not a historical accident, but an ontological necessity."²⁵ We might argue, however, that the problem with Aquinas is not his Christology, but rather his anthropology. Anne Carr clarifies Ruether's problem with Aquinas's Christology:

Little of this argument occurs in Aquinas' treatise on Christology but is derived from his discussions of human nature and sacramental priesthood. Like the rest of the tradition, his Christological statements are general, and emphasize the fullness of the divine and human natures in Christ. Yet when Aquinas' anthropology is incorporated with his Christology, the distortion is clear: the Christological emphasis on the truly human is skewed by androcentric bias.²⁶

So, the fact that Jesus was a *man* is used to legitimize men's superiority over women in the belief that a particular honor, dignity, and normativity accrues to the male sex because it was chosen by the Son of God "himself" in the incarnation. Indeed, Johnson sharply avers, thanks to their sex, men are said to be more conformed to the image of Christ than are women. In the end, "women's physical embodiment thus becomes a prison that shuts them off from full identification with Christ, except as mediated through the christic male. For this mentality, the idea that the Word might have become female flesh is not even seriously imaginable."²⁷

Inadequate Metaphor/Symbol

As seen above, the claim has been made by feminist theologians that the "maleness" of Jesus validates the oppression of women. Mary Daly's scathing insight cuts to the heart of the issue for feminist Christological exploration: "If the symbol [of a masculine Christ] can be 'used' [to oppress

women] and in fact has a long history of being 'used' that way, isn't this an indication of some inherent deficiency of the symbol itself?"²⁸ Since the Christ symbol (as masculine) has been used against women, Daly is not alone in asserting that the symbol should be changed to become more amenable to women.

The biblical referents for Jesus as "Son" and God as "Father" must not be taken to reflect any reality about who God is, it is argued, but should be taken metaphorically to help us understand God in the terms of our own language. Thus, feminists say, the maleness of the historical Jesus has nothing to do with manifesting a male "Son" who, in turn, images a male "Father." Since the symbol is merely metaphorical, feminists posit that the divine "Father" is equally "Mother," and the "Son" is equally "Daughter." Yet even the parental metaphor is lacking according to Ruether: "Perhaps the parental language for transcendence and immanence itself should be relativized by some metaphor other than parent and child to better state this relationship between God transcendent and God manifest in creation and history."²⁹ Further, the title "Son of God" is an inadequate metaphor for divine immanence, since it has been taken literally and seen as further indication that the Logos is male. These notions of the maleness of God, in turn, affect the Christian interpretation of the *imago dei*.³⁰

Barbara Darling-Smith presents a metaphorical Christology as a solution to this problem. "Through metaphors we make connections between unlike things; metaphors undercut literalism because a metaphor, as a new and unconventional interpretation of reality, means that the two objects both *are* and *are not* like each other."³¹ Sallie McFague also prefers a metaphorical theology, since "all talk of God is indirect: no words or phrases refer directly to God, for God-language can refer only through the detour of a description that properly belongs elsewhere.... The point that metaphor underscores is that in certain matters there can be no direct description."³²

So, through metaphorical theology feminists are able to perceive Jesus as a "parable of God." Darling-Smith says, "As opposed to incarnational

Christology, which sees Jesus as 'the Godhead, veiled in flesh,' parabolic Christology is *not* Jesusolatry.... It rejects any idolatry or any identification of a finite creature with God, including Jesus of Nazareth, who both *is* and *is not* God."³³ Since a parabolic approach says Jesus is and is not God, it relativizes Jesus' particularity, viz., his maleness, at the same time that it universalizes the God whom Jesus metaphorically represents.³⁴

The feminist move toward a metaphorical Christology is a strategy against the traditional Christological commitment to a patriarchal worldview. The masculine Christ symbol is part and parcel of the androcentric perspective offered in the Bible. Feminists claim that "since the records about Jesus gathered in the New Testament were written and collected by men for men (so it is claimed), and the canon ratified by hierarchical androcentric political maneuvering, women's voices were excluded from the canon."³⁵ For this reason the Christ symbol is deficient and needs revision. Johnson contends, "Given the intrinsic link between the patriarchal imagination in language and in structures, to liberate Christological language from a monopoly of male images and concepts is to create a necessary, even if not sufficient, condition for further change in the church's consciousness and social order."³⁶

Another reason why the symbol is deficient is that traditional Christology is built upon an androcentric image of deity. Isherwood notes, "While Christianity has never claimed that God was literally male, the Hellenistic underpinning has led to many assumptions about the nature of God and normative humanity. There has been an unspoken, yet enacted, androcentric bias, which has reduced the place of women and men in the world, holding them as it does to very outmoded and reductive notions of humanness."³⁷ Since the *man* Jesus is confessed to be the revelation of God, the Christ symbol points to maleness as an essential characteristic of divine being itself. This is exacerbated by exclusive use of father and son metaphors to interpret Jesus' relationship to God.³⁸ Perhaps the only option for feminist Christology is to castrate Christianity and release it from its patriarchal trappings.³⁹

Jeopardy of Women's Salvation

Although the ecclesial subordination of women from representative ministry (assumed to be grounded in Jesus' maleness) is the most obvious location of feminist *angst*, Jesus' masculinity also raises important soteriological concerns for women. The concern for women's salvation related to the maleness of Jesus is drawn from several important historical affirmations. First, Johnson reminds us, "the Nicene Creed confesses, '*et homo factus est*' ('and was made man'). But if in fact what is meant is *et vir factus est*, if maleness is essential for the christic role, then women are cut out of the loop of salvation, for female sexuality was not assumed by the Word made flesh."⁴⁰ Indeed, the Chalcedonian affirmation that Jesus was "truly God and truly man" could raise this problem, whether or not the maleness of Jesus is a point of necessity "for us and for our salvation."

Second, given the anthropological dualism (i.e., Aquinas) that essentially divorces male from female humanity, feminists argue, the maleness of Christ puts the salvation of women in jeopardy. Thus, Gregory of Nazianzus's famous aphorism, "What is not assumed is not healed"⁴¹ takes on incredible significance for women. Since Jesus assumed a *male* human body, what does this mean for women? Johnson believes this has enormous ramifications for women and their inclusion in salvation:

In addition to casting both God and the human race in an androcentric mold, sexist Christology jeopardizes women's salvation, at least in theory.... The early Christian axiom "What is not assumed is not redeemed, but what is assumed is saved by union with God" sums up the insight that Christ's solidarity with all of humanity is what is crucial for salvation.... If maleness is constitutive for the incarnation and redemption, female humanity is not assumed and therefore not saved.⁴²

So, to Ruether's searching question, "Can a male savior save women?", interpretation of the maleness of Christ as essential must answer "No," despite

Christian belief in the universality of God's saving intent.⁴³

Relevant to this issue is the feminist allegation that Jesus, as a man, was unable to understand the experiences of women, since he did not *assume* a female human body. For this reason many have abandoned Christianity because of its patriarchal framework. Ruether questions whether Christology can be liberated from patriarchy at all because of its strong link with symbols of male-dominance. She states, "Certainly many feminists have already concluded that the maleness of Christ is so fundamental to Christianity that women cannot see themselves as liberated through him."⁴⁴

Radical feminists such as Mary Daly or members of the Women's Spirituality Movement have already declared that women must reject Christ as redeemer for women and seek instead a female divinity and messianic symbol.⁴⁵ So, if there is to be found or constructed a feminist Christology that includes woman as well as man in "the icon of God, the male hegemony must be deconstructed such that the image of God made Flesh is seen and experienced as female as well as male."⁴⁶

Feminists conclude that the maleness of Christ, as an essential component of the incarnation and revelation of God in human flesh, removes women as beneficiaries of salvation. In fact, "good news [of Jesus' redemption] is stifled when Jesus' maleness, which belongs to his historical identity, is interpreted as being essential to his redeeming christic function and identity. Then the Christ functions as a religious tool for marginalizing and excluding women."⁴⁷

Maleness as an Irrelevant Particularity

Aside from the fact that many feminists are willing to admit that the historicity of Jesus' maleness is important for his mission and ministry (to be discussed below), others deem "maleness" as an irrelevant particularity of Jesus. Ruether notes that feminists *could* accept Jesus' particularities, but must not confuse them—especially his maleness—with "the essence of Christ as God's Word incarnate." Unfortunately, she avers, "what we find in most Christology is an effort to dissolve most aspects of

Jesus' particularity (his Jewishness, as a first-century messianic Galilean) in order to make him the symbol of universal humanity; yet an insistence that the historical particularity of his maleness is essential to his ongoing representation."⁴⁸

Stalcup is willing to say much more, however. "Theologically, in the matter of understanding the redemptive experience of Jesus as the Christ, *there is no material significance in Jesus' biological makeup, or in any fact about him in the past*. As an event of God, as the eschatological event in every new present, *Jesus' sex—or Judaism or race or marital status or any fact of what he said or did in and of himself—is not relevant in confessing him as the Christ*."⁴⁹ Perhaps the only reason why any of these particularities are significant—Jesus' being male especially—or why they have revelatory importance is because of the meaning of maleness in patriarchal history and culture.⁵⁰ Nevertheless, even if feminists acknowledge that Jesus' maleness is theologically irrelevant, they still have a potential problem with the impact of male symbols. Stalcup is right: "In most churches today, the reliance on traditional and historical language and imagery makes it quite difficult to 'get around' the maleness issue," even if it is deemed to be irrelevant to who Jesus was and is.⁵¹

If Jesus' maleness was simply accidental, then feminists posit the *possibility* of a female incarnation. Johnson is surely not unique in her conclusion: "Could God have become a human being as a woman? The question strikes some people as silly or worse. Theologically, though, the answer is Yes. Why not? If women are genuinely human and if God is the deep mystery of holy love, then what is to prevent such an incarnation?"⁵²

Feminist Alternatives for an "Inclusive" Christology

There is, as yet, no universally agreed feminist Christology, at least one that addresses all of the critiques leveled at traditional Christology. What we do have, however, is a number of explorative possibilities that seek to open up traditional Christology to an inclusive, feminist perspective.⁵³ Feminist theologians have struggled to revise traditional Christology in a way that is "consonant with their own experience

and embraces the perceptions, values, aspirations and embodiedness of what it means to be a female in today's world."⁵⁴ Broadly speaking, much of feminist Christology shares with modern Christology a preference for a Christology from below.

The approaches considered here are not complete Christologies; rather, they are attempts to re-image Jesus in ways that take women's experiences seriously. Each of them seeks to "make room for the female within the male image."⁵⁵ The underlying impetus for feminist Christological reconstructions is due, in large part, to the arguments presented above, but another important factor spurs on feminist revision: the notion that Jesus may need women to redeem him, to free him from the chains of male arrogance and patriarchal abuses.⁵⁶

Jesus as Iconoclastic Prophet

One alternative proposal to guard against the maleness of Jesus in traditional Christology is to focus on Jesus' *message* and not his person. Ruether poses the question as to how we should understand the relationship of Jesus as a historical individual in all his particularity, and yet also make the particularities no longer limits on his representation as the embodiment of God's universal new Word? She then provides her answer: "We should do that, not by emphasizing biological particularities, but rather by emphasizing his message as expressed in his ministry.... In this perspective we see that the emphasis on Jesus' maleness as essential to his ongoing representation not only is not compatible but is contradictory to the essence of his message as good news to the marginalized *qua* women."⁵⁷

According to Ruether and other liberation theologians, what is most significant about Jesus is his message of good news to the poor and the marginalized. What is paradigmatic about Jesus is not his biological ontology, but rather *his person as a lived message and practice*. For Ruether, "that message is good news to the poor, a confrontation with systems of religion and society that incarnate oppressive privilege, and an affirmation of the despised as loved and liberated by God."⁵⁸

The prophetic iconoclastic Christ, represented primarily through liberation theologies (such as

feminist theology), shows that Jesus' significance "does not reside in his maleness, but, on the contrary, in the fact that he has renounced this system of [male] domination and seeks to embody in his person the new humanity of service and mutual empowerment."⁵⁹

Johnson concludes, "While Jesus was indeed a first-century Galilean Jewish man, and thus irredeemably particular, as we all are, what transpires in the Incarnation is inclusive of the humanity of all human beings of all races and historical conditions and both genders."⁶⁰ Jesus' ability to be Savior does not reside in his maleness but in his loving, liberating history lived in the midst of the powers of evil and oppression and male-domination.⁶¹

Envisioning Christ as a Female

A second alternative Christological exploration involves envisioning Christ's humanity in female terms, which Ellen Leonard claims has a long history in the Christian tradition.⁶² Leonard overstates her case, however, since her "long history" only includes obscure thinkers from medieval spirituality. Notwithstanding the (very) limited and ambiguous historical references for thinking of Jesus in female terms, some contemporary feminists are adopting this approach for Christological reconstruction.

Almost unbelievably, some feminists claim that Jesus was actually genetically female. Citing medical and scientific studies,⁶³ Letha Scanzoni and Nancy Hardesty argue that since Jesus was born of a virgin and had only one human parent, a female, he "was undoubtedly genetically female even though phenotypically male.... His genes must have been XX rather than XY.... Thus, [at the least] Jesus may well have been biologically both male and female."⁶⁴

Three objections are in order. First, this position is extremely rare. While many feminists downplay or reject the importance of Jesus' maleness, they at least recognize the historical fact that he was a human male. Second, Millard Erickson argues that it is possible that Mary did not contribute anything in the incarnation (not even an ovum), but that God could have implanted in her an already fertil-

ized ovum.⁶⁵ Third, Jack Cottrell notes that while a process such as this is possible (which he calls parthenogenesis), which will produce offspring that are of the same gender as the parent (like cloning), "the virgin birth, however, is not a purely natural event but an intensely supernatural act on the part of God.... The very fact that his maleness required a special miracle demonstrates the truth that the maleness of the Messiah was a deliberate choice on the part of God."⁶⁶

Although the proposal of Scanzoni and Hardesty is rare, they point to a more common feminist consideration for including the female into the incarnation, and that is the idea of Jesus as androgynous. The androgynous Christ, feminists claim, is represented in church history through people like Julian of Norwich, the Shakers, and some forms of Pietism. All androgynous Christologies exhibit a sense that a masculinist Christ is inadequate to express full human redemption, that Christ must in some way represent both male and female.⁶⁷

Not all feminists agree that an androgynous Christ is the way to take feminist Christology, however. Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza argues that androgynous Christologies do not challenge "the Western cultural sex/gender system and its androcentric language," and since it does not say enough, other alternatives should be offered from feminists.⁶⁸ Ruether is also critical of androgynous Christologies because they simply mask the real problem: "The very concept of androgyny presupposes a psychic dualism that identifies maleness with one-half of human capacities and femaleness with the other. As long as Christ is still presumed to be, normatively, a male person, androgynous Christologies will carry an androcentric bias."⁶⁹ Nevertheless, androgynous Christology is increasingly popular among feminists as an explanation for incarnation in light of Jesus' maleness.

Relocation of Christ to the Community

Perhaps the more radical solution for feminist Christological reconstruction is found in a complete definition of what "Christ" is supposed to be. Some feminists are willing to dislocate Christianity from the historical person Jesus Christ completely.

Rita Nakashima Brock asserts that “Jesus Christ need not be the authoritative center of a feminist Christian faith.”⁷⁰ Brock relocates Christ in the community of which Jesus is one historical part, such that it is the community, not Jesus that is the locus of redemption.⁷¹ Brock is clear that Jesus has been eclipsed by “Christa/Community”:

The feminist Christian commitment is not to a savior who redeems us by bringing God to us. Our commitment is to love ourselves and others into wholeness. Our commitment is to a divine presence with us here and now, a presence that works through the mystery of our deepest selves and our relationships, constantly healing us and nudging us toward a wholeness of existence we only fitfully know. That healed wholeness is not Christ; it is ourselves.⁷²

When feminists remove the exclusive, perfect God-man Jesus Christ from the center of Christology, women may reclaim themselves and, then, reclaim the historical Jesus. Brock states, “We may reclaim Jesus as a remarkable man for his time. De-divinizing him allows us to appreciate his remarkability without his humanity or theology being the measuring rod for our existence.”⁷³

Thus, feminists contend, Jesus’ historical identity is not significant for Christology. Jesus becomes irrelevant for Christology, save the prophetic message that he embodied. In this way, his particulars, especially maleness, “[do] not constitute the essence of Christ, but, in the Spirit, redeemed and redeeming humanity does,”⁷⁴ since the community of the baptized now embodies the same message. Feminists conclude, then, that Christ is quite accurately portrayed as black, old, Gentile, female, Asian or Polish, etc., or whatever the demographic of the community exhibits.⁷⁵ Ruether concurs, “Christ, as redemptive person and Word of God, is not to be encapsulated ‘once-for-all’ in the historical Jesus. The Christian community continues Christ’s identity. As vine and branches Christic personhood continues in our sisters and brothers.”⁷⁶

Closely aligned with this Christological recon-

struction is the argument that Jesus’ significance is tied to his iconoclastic prophetism. By prioritizing the message and not the gender of Jesus, Christians become a “redemptive community not by passively receiving a redemption ‘won’ by Christ alone, but rather by collectively embodying this path of liberation in a way that transforms people and social systems,” men and women alike.⁷⁷ Feminists resist separating this ongoing redemptive work from the Christian community. In as much as the community embodies the message of Jesus, then redemption is carried on and communicated through them. So, “Christ can take on the face of every person and group and their diverse liberation struggles. We must be able to encounter Christ as black, as Asian, as Aboriginal, as women. The coming Christ, then, the uncompleted future of redemption, is not the historical Jesus returned, but rather the fullness of all this human diversity gathered together in redemptive community.”⁷⁸

Jesus as the Incarnation of Female Divinity

A final alternative from feminist theologians for Christology explores the notion of Jesus as the incarnation of feminine divinity. This alternative is probably the most influential and substantive of the proposals offered by feminists. Although the subject of Jesus as the incarnation of *Sophia*, or wisdom, merits its own treatment, a brief examination will be presented here. Wisdom Christology provides a *textual* alternative to traditional Christology, which many religious and evangelical feminists find attractive. “Sophia” has become an important theological construct over the past ten years in feminist theology.⁷⁹ Greene-McCreight observes that this perspective cannot be passed off as mere flight of imaginative fancy. While creative feminist Christology makes much use of the imagination in theological reflection, the proposal of Jesus as Sophia incarnate is grounded in historical and biblical reconstructions of the feminine divine.⁸⁰

Some feminists prefer to see the biblical canon itself as the vehicle that allows for and encourages the reemergence of the feminine divine.⁸¹ Feminists appeal to biblical texts, such as Job 28, Proverbs 8, Luke 11:49, Matt 23:34, and 1 Cor 1:24, 30,

for evidence of a remaining Sophia tradition within the canon itself.⁸² Greene-McCreight declares, “It is thus the scriptures [*sic*] themselves which lean toward the emergence of Sophia, and the reemergence of Sophia can therefore be furthered by careful examination and rereading of biblical texts.”⁸³

When feminists interpret the incarnation in terms of the enfleshing of the *sophia*/wisdom of God, the woman-ness of God actually takes historical shape in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus in his embodied existence expresses the intimate, seeking, embracing, longing, passionate consummating lure of the divine Wisdom of God. As Johnson suggests, such a Christology has the potential not only to relativize traditional Christology, with its androcentric bias, but also to present a Jesus who is both male and female.⁸⁴

Johnson believes that using the female figure of personified Wisdom to speak about Jesus as the Christ facilitates an inclusive rather than exclusive interpretation of the incarnation. The foundational metaphor of “Jesus, the Wisdom of God” relieves the monopoly of the male metaphors of Logos and Son and destabilizes patriarchal imagination. “Whoever espouses a wisdom Christology,” Johnson states, “is asserting that Sophia in all her fullness was in Jesus so that in his historicity he embodies divine mystery in creative and saving involvement with the world.”⁸⁵

Here we seem to be getting at the heart of the matter, for the metaphor “Son” and the relation between Father and Son have been the controlling categories of classical Christology. Feminists insist that, when we release the symbol of Wisdom from subordination to Word or Son, different possibilities for Christology open up to us. So, according to this feminist explanation of the incarnation, Jesus is the human being Sophia became.⁸⁶

The importance of Jesus as Sophia incarnate becomes clear with reference to the subject of this article: Jesus as Sophia incarnate “breaks the stranglehold of androcentric thinking which fixates on the maleness of Jesus, the male metaphors of *Logos* and Son, and the relationship between Father and Son. This leads to the situation where gender is decentered, where it is not constitutive for the

Christian doctrine of incarnation or for speech about Christ.”⁸⁷ For feminists, Christ as incarnate wisdom has genuine possibilities for an inclusive Christology. They argue, however, since the Jewish understanding of Sophia and the Christian view of Jesus as Sophia developed within a patriarchal social structure, the resulting theology and Christology in the biblical record are not truly inclusive.⁸⁸ That is, “[t]he male human incarnation overwhelms the female divine persona of Sophia.”⁸⁹

Two objections to the feminist position of Wisdom Christology need to be raised. First, feminists are inconsistent on whether Sophia is actually the God of traditional theism. For example, Brock claims that “Wisdom, or Sophia, is not currently a feminine equivalent to Yahweh or logos, though we might work to make her so.”⁹⁰ But Fiorenza and Johnson both assert (in response to the allegation that their views are “pagan”) that “Wisdom theology does not posit a second divine power to compete with Yahweh but takes up the language of pagan goddesses to speak of Yahweh, thus, in effect, subverting paganism.”⁹¹ The latter case seems to say that Sophia is just another name for Yahweh, the God of the Bible. Ultimately, as discussed above, the term is metaphorical; so as long as Sophia, or the feminine is represented as divinity, feminists may conclude either way and still retain the force of their reconstruction.

Second, Douglas McCready clarifies that “Wisdom” in the Scriptures (i.e., Proverbs 8) is a personification and is a created entity.⁹² The Wisdom literature, particularly “Proverbs, the Wisdom of Solomon and Ecclesiasticus describe the wisdom of God in personified language, yet these personifications do not appear to be or to be intended to be persons or hypostases.”⁹³ Other New Testament scholars, such as F. F. Bruce, N. T. Wright, Ben Witherington, and Martin Hengel agree that Paul applied and modified everything previously attributed to Wisdom to Christ.⁹⁴ Thus, the feminist position that Jesus is Sophia incarnate is nothing but conjecture. There is no suggestion in the New Testament anywhere that Jesus is the incarnation of some female deity. While on the surface this alternative Christological proposal from feminist theo-

logians seems attractive because of their appeal to biblical texts, their proposal is unacceptable on the grounds that it cannot sustain itself under proper biblical exegesis and sound hermeneutics.

Evaluation and Critique

Although feminist arguments against the maleness of Jesus and their Christological reconstructions are extreme in response to traditional Christological claims, several important fundamental critiques from feminists deserve clarification. Feminists raise important questions related to the nature of God's essence, the nature of salvation, and the nature of the image of God in humanity.

The feminist anthropological concern may be summarized as such: "The basic problem identified from the feminist academic perspective is that Jesus Christ has been interpreted within a patriarchal framework, with the result that the good news of the gospel for all has been twisted into the bad news of masculine privilege."⁹⁵ Whereas feminists react negatively to the theological anthropology of Aquinas, evangelicals may also stand against such erroneous thinking. Aquinas was wrong on this issue. Women are not inferior to men biologically in any way, neither is the image of God lesser in and through them (Gen 1:27). Unfortunately, church and society have played a huge role in the subordination of women. However, Christian theology may affirm—even in a patriarchal, complementarian worldview—the biblical doctrine of the image of God as male *and* female, without distortion, neither in a chauvinistic nor a feminist interpretation.⁹⁶

Feminists also raise an important soteriological concern. When traditional Christology upholds the necessity of Jesus' maleness, feminists contend that the salvation of women is in jeopardy. Assuming complete egalitarianism, feminists cannot allow the traditional claim for the necessity of Jesus' maleness. Once the inappropriate anthropology lurking in the background of feminist concerns is met, there is no basis to allege that Jesus, as a male, cannot be the savior of all people, including women. Bruce Ware concurs,

Women need not fear that since Christ did not come as a woman he cannot understand them, because in coming as a man, he came as a human being and so understands the human natures common to men and women alike.... Christ the man shared our (common) human nature, so that men and women alike can have full confidence that he understands our plight (e.g., Heb 2:18; 4:15–16). So, while Scripture clearly indicates Christ came as a man ... we also realize that his coming as a man was therefore also as a human. As a man, he partook of our nature to live a human life and bear our sins. Christ the man, yes. But, Christ in the human nature of every man and woman, also, yes.⁹⁷

So in response to feminist soteriological concerns, "This means that there is no basis for the claim or the fear that if the identity of Christ is that of male, then in the incarnation he represents males only and is able to redeem males only. The common human nature of both sexes is fully represented by either sex."⁹⁸

Finally, feminists raise an important theological concern related to the ontology of God. Johnson states, "Jesus' historical maleness is used to reinforce an exclusively male image of God. If Jesus as a man is the revelation of God, so the usually implicit reasoning goes, then this points to maleness as an essential characteristic of divine being itself."⁹⁹ Feminists assume that since Jesus was male, and he was God incarnate, then God is male. The problem is not, then, the divinity of Jesus, nor even his humanity, but his very maleness.¹⁰⁰

Greene-McCreight clarifies,

Here is the problem: the maleness of Jesus "leaks" into the Godhead like an infectious disease, rendering unclear our understanding of God and therefore also our understanding of our own maleness and femaleness. Now, decades after Mary Daly's charge that "if God is male then male is God," as the result of its tacit acceptance across the denominational spectrum of American Christianity, we

have seen numerous revisions of prayer-books and hymnals, new “translations” and paraphrases of the scriptures, not to mention the reworkings of Christology such as we have seen here. This is done with the intent of plugging up and blocking the leaking masculinity of Jesus from infecting the Godhead, thus preventing the perception of the masculinity of God from deifying the human male.¹⁰¹

What is the answer to the charge that if Jesus was male, then God is male? Perhaps we should understand that God has chosen to reveal himself in a certain way, using certain language to define himself. Ware argues, “Now, it is true that God is not in essence male, so also is it true that neither the eternal Father nor the eternal Son is male; neither the divine essence, nor the eternal Persons of the Godhead are gendered, literally and really.” He continues, “So, why is the First Person of the Trinity the eternal ‘Father,’ and the Second Person, the eternal ‘Son’? Must this not be the language God has chosen to indicate the type of eternal relationship that exists between the first and second Persons?”¹⁰²

With feminist concerns presented, two major critiques will conclude this paper. First, much of feminist reconstruction may be attributed to a faulty starting point, namely, women’s experience. Second, as follows, is that the loss of a textual approach (with proper exegetical and hermeneutical issues included) to Christology results in wrong conclusions about the maleness of Jesus.

Faulty Starting Point: Women’s Experience

Given a “hermeneutic of suspicion” towards Scripture and the Christian tradition, feminist theologians see women’s experience as a new, legitimate focus of theological concern and inquiry.¹⁰³ The problem is, however, that it is very difficult to define what is meant by *women’s* experience. Nevertheless, feminists insist that women’s experience is normative for constructive Christian theology, and thus, is essential to the formulation of an inclusive Christology. Isherwood raises the critical feminist assumption here:

If [Jesus] was fully a man, to argue that he was fully human negates the place of female experience in humanness, and he did not know how it felt to be a woman. If he did somehow experience being both male and female, then he was either transgendered or not fully human. Being human is an experience and that experience is, in our day, and was in the time of Jesus, a gendered experience.¹⁰⁴

The error here is to assume that “someone who is fully male (and presumably, someone who is fully female) would not possess this common human nature.” Cottrell rightly argues that a “fully male (or female) individual possesses the common human nature but also possesses something *in addition to it*: maleness (or femaleness). Being male, as was Jesus, in no way subtracts from the fullness of humanity shared by males and females alike. Eliminating his maleness does not make him *more* human; it makes him *less* than human.”¹⁰⁵

Certainly we could take Isherwood’s contention to its logical conclusion. Since Jesus did not know *how it felt* to be a heroine addict, diabetic, a *white* male, homosexual, handicapped, geriatric, Albino, quadriplegic, deaf, etc., then are none of these able to be redeemed by Jesus? He did not “assume” any of these particularities in his flesh. It seems, contextually, then, if what Jesus “assumed” is saved, then only Jewish males will be redeemed. But the issue is much greater than simply the issues of *women’s* salvation in Jesus; the issue is whether or not Jesus is the Messiah at all, and the savior of the world.

This is exactly the point that feminists miss related to the *humanity* of Jesus, especially with reference to their reaction to historical statements related to Christology, such as Jesus was “truly God and truly man” and “what he has not assumed he has not healed.” The point they miss is that Jesus has taken upon himself in the incarnation a *common* human nature inclusive of all people, male and female alike.¹⁰⁶ This does not mean that Jesus was androgynous, however, since he was a *man*. What this does mean—and this would relieve many of the feminist arguments of their potency—is that

Jesus became a *human being* in order to represent our race, including women (Rom 5:12–21).

Loss of Textual Approach

In tandem with the normativeness of women's experience for theological construction is the propensity among feminists to jettison the Bible altogether. A common criticism of the Bible is that it is nothing more than an androcentric, patriarchal document, created by men and for men, and as a result it is not acceptable for women as a source of authority. In fact, many feminists who decry the masculine images for God and Christ suggest that for a genuine theology of liberation for women, the Bible and its Christ need to be left behind.¹⁰⁷

Not all feminists want to surrender the Bible to traditional Christianity, however. The Bible carries enormous political and social power that many feminists want to harness for their own theological agendas and explorations. Carter Heyward contends that feminists must “claim the authority to play freely with both Scripture and subsequent tradition” in order to re-image Jesus and validate their experiences as women.¹⁰⁸ She concludes, “To re-image Jesus [involves] letting go of old images.... It is to sketch images of Jesus within, and for the benefit of, our communities—of seminarians, women, gay people, black people, poor people, whoever our people are. Our images do not necessarily reflect Mark's image, or John's or Augustine's, or Luther's.”¹⁰⁹

The loss of a textually defined Christ opens up descriptors for who Jesus is, or ought to be, that are inappropriate for Christology. Yet some feminists argue that other cultures or demographics inculturate Jesus into their own language, etc. If this is the case, then why cannot women do the same thing? Teresa Berger notes, “It is worth thinking about why we have become so accustomed to a Black Christ figure or a Campesino on the cross or a Chinese Holy Family as legitimate forms of the inculturation of the Gospel—while a female Christ child in the manger or woman on the cross appear to many of us as incomprehensible or unacceptable.”¹¹⁰

The inculturation of a Black Christ or a Campesino Christ are illegitimate forms to rep-

resent the biblical Christ, though. Jesus was *not* Black, or Campesino, nor could he be as the Messiah; he was a Jew and that is how we must understand him biblically and theologically. So, this argument or question itself is misguided. The point is, for feminists, if Christian theologians allow or tolerate the image of Christ as a Black or Chinese man, then why is there no toleration or allowance for a female Christ?

Christology must be obtained from the canonical narrative of Scripture. Apart from this basic methodological and theological commitment, Christology will take the shape of whatever the “community” desires, including feminine reconstructions. For the purposes of this article, however, Greene-McCreight rightly targets the main issue: “the claim about the importance of Jesus' maleness is a specifically theological claim based on the logic of narrative reading of the scriptures. While it makes sense to say that Jesus' maleness is an accident in the technical philosophical sense, the narrative context, such as it is, would not allow a female savior.”¹¹¹

Few feminist theologians, as we have seen, want actually to deny Jesus' maleness. But they do want to deny that his being male is related to his soteriological significance. Greene-McCreight contends, “However, since Jesus was a Jew who fulfilled the promises to Israel and offered up once and for all the perfect sacrifice, he had to be male. If he were not male and a Jew—indeed, a free Jewish male—how could the baptismal promise of Galatians 3:27–29 have been granted?”¹¹²

Must Jesus, as the Christ, have been male? If Christian theology desires to place itself under the inspiration and authority of Scripture, then the answer must be yes. The maleness of Jesus must be understood in the context of a “thick text” narrative.¹¹³ That is, an “intratextual” reading of the reliable narrative of Scripture is necessary for Christology.¹¹⁴ The particularities of who Jesus was, and was meant to be, are not irrelevant to the story of Scripture related to the Messiah and his mission.

Ware's article, “Could Our Savior Have Been a Woman?” helpfully shows the relevance of Jesus'

maleness for his incarnational mission, as it arises from the narrative of Scripture. Ware offers twelve important reasons “for concluding that the male gender of Jesus was essential both to the reality of his incarnation identity and to the accomplishment of his incarnation mission.”¹¹⁵ His twelve reasons are (with scriptural references):

- (1) Jesus Christ’s pre-incarnate existence and identity is clearly revealed to be that of the *eternal Son* of the Father.
- (2) Jesus came as the Second Adam, the Man who stands as Head over his new and redeemed race (Rom 5:12–21; 1 Cor 15:21–22).
- (3) The Abrahamic covenant requires that the Savior who would come, as the promised descendant of Abraham, would be a man (Genesis 12; 15; 17; genealogies of Matthew 1 and Luke 3; Galatians 3).
- (4) The Davidic covenant explicitly requires that the One who will reign forever on the throne of David be a Son of David, and hence a man (2 Samuel 7; Ezek 34:23–24; 37:24–28; Luke 1:31–33).
- (5) The new covenant of Jer 31:31–34 requires that the Savior who comes will actually accomplish the forgiveness of sins it promises, and to do this, the Savior must be a man.
- (6) The Savior who would come must come as a prophet like unto Moses, as predicted by Moses and fulfilled in Jesus Christ, and so he must be a man (Deut 18:15; Acts 3:22).
- (7) Our new and permanent High Priest, whose office is secured as sins are atoned for and full pardon is pleaded on our behalf before the Father, must be a man.
- (8) Christ came also as the glorious King of Kings, reigning over the nations in splendor and righteousness, and to be this King, he must be a man (Isa 9:6–7; Heb 1:8 [reflecting Ps 45:6–7]; Matt 19:28; Rev 19:11–21).
- (9) The incarnate mission and ministry of Jesus required that he come as a man.
- (10) Because the risen Christ is now presented to the Church, not only as her

Lord and King, but also as her Bridegroom, the Savior to come must have been a man (Ephesians 5; Rev 18:23; 19:7; 21:2, 9; 22:17).

(11) Because our Savior came as the “Son of God” it is necessary that he come as a man.

(12) Because our Savior came as the “Son of Man” it is necessary that he come as a man.

These reasons, reflecting the messianic trajectory of the narrative of Scripture, present a strong case for the necessity of Jesus’ gender as a *male*.

Conclusion

Feminist arguments against the maleness of Jesus, as well as their Christological reconstructive proposals, have been demonstrated and found unacceptable. While feminists offer certain important critiques (albeit clouded by their worldview) related to traditional Christology, their reactions to certain *abuses* of biblical doctrine are unwarranted for a complete revision of the nature and purpose of Jesus the Christ.

McCready’s conclusion is fitting: “Rejection or reformulation of the doctrine of [Christ] would eviscerate Christianity. The result would be nothing like that which has grown and spread for nearly two thousand years.” He adds, “Every distinctive Christian belief would have to be discarded, from the doctrine of God and a realistic picture of human sinfulness to the ethical expectations and promise of divine grace. The modern attempt to make Christianity relevant by removing one of its more challenging teachings would end by making Christianity irrelevant and even destroying it.”¹¹⁶

ENDNOTES

¹Rosemary Radford Ruether, “The Liberation of Christology from Patriarchy,” in *Feminist Theology: A Reader* (ed. Ann Loades; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1990), 140.

²Namely, Apollinarianism, Nestorianism, and Monophysitism. See Edward R. Hardy, ed., *Christology of the Later Fathers* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1954), 15–38. For the actual text drafted at the Council, see pages 371–74.

³The term “feminist” is a convenient generalization for the perspective analyzed in this paper. There are, however, various streams of thought within the feminist movement. H. M. Conn helpfully categorizes feminist thinkers into three categories: (1) radical (post-

- Christian/secular), (2) reformist (religious/biblical), and (3) loyalist (evangelical); see H. M. Conn, "Feminist Theology," in *New Dictionary of Theology* (ed. Sinclair B. Ferguson, David F. Wright, and J. I. Packer; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1988), 255. In this paper, almost all of the feminist theologians cited represent the reformist (religious) perspective. Some, like Mary Daly and Carter Heyward, represent the radical (secular) perspective. For additional reference, see Rebecca S. Chopp, "Feminist and Womanist Theologies," in *The Modern Theologians* (2d ed.; ed. David F. Ford; Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1997): 389–404; and Ann Loades, "Feminist Theology," in *The Modern Theologians*, 575–84.
- ⁴Ellen Leonard, "Women and Christ: Toward Inclusive Christologies," in *Constructive Christian Theology in the Worldwide Church* (ed. William R. Barr; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 325.
- ⁵Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *Christology: A Global Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003), 197.
- ⁶Colin J. D. Greene, *Christology in Cultural Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 239.
- ⁷Kathryn Greene-McCreight, *Feminist Reconstructions of Christian Doctrine* (New York: Oxford University, 2000), 73.
- ⁸Julie M. Hopkins, *Towards a Feminist Christology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 83.
- ⁹Lisa Isherwood, *Introducing Feminist Christologies* (Cleveland: Pilgrim, 2002), 15.
- ¹⁰*Ibid.*
- ¹¹Elizabeth A. Johnson, "Redeeming the Name of Christ," in *Freeing Theology* (ed. Catherine Mowry LaCugna; San Francisco: Harper-San Francisco, 1993), 130.
- ¹²*Ibid.*, 131. For the charge of heresy upon those who emphasize Jesus' maleness, Johnson cites Patricia Wilson-Kastner, *Faith Feminism and the Christ* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983), 90; Sandra Schneiders, *Women and the Word* (New York: Paulist, 1986), 55; Anne Carr, *Transforming Grace: Christian Tradition and Women's Experience* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988), 178.
- ¹³Hopkins, *Towards a Feminist Christology*, 85.
- ¹⁴Anne-Claire Mulder, "Vrouw, lichaam, subjectiviteit en het 'imago Dei,'" *Mara* 7, no. 1 (1993): 3–13.
- ¹⁵Hopkins, *Towards a Feminist Christology*, 85. Daly's dictum comes from her book *Beyond God the Father: Towards a Philosophy of Women's Liberation* (London: The Women's Press, 1986), 19.
- ¹⁶Johnson, "Redeeming the Name of Christ," 118.
- ¹⁷*Ibid.*
- ¹⁸Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk* (Boston: Beacon, 1993), 135.
- ¹⁹Sondra Stalcup, "What About Jesus? Christology and the Challenges of Women," in *Setting the Table* (ed. Rita Nakashima Brock, Claudia Camp, and Serene Jones; St. Louis: Chalice, 1995), 126.
- ²⁰Elizabeth A. Johnson, "The Maleness of Christ," in *The Power of Naming* (ed. Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza; Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1996), 308.
- ²¹Isherwood, *Introducing Feminist Christologies*, 31.
- ²²Johnson, "The Maleness of Christ," 308.
- ²³Rosemary Radford Ruether, *To Change the World* (New York: Crossroad, 1981), 45–46.
- ²⁴See, e.g., *Summa Theologica*, I, 92, q. 1–2; III (supplement), 39, q. 1; III, q. 1–59; and especially III, 31, q. 4.
- ²⁵Ruether, *To Change the World*, 45.
- ²⁶Carr, *Transforming Grace*, 164.
- ²⁷Johnson, "Redeeming the Name of Christ," 119.
- ²⁸Daly, *Beyond God the Father*, 72.
- ²⁹Ruether, "The Liberation of Christology," 146–47.
- ³⁰*Ibid.*, 139.
- ³¹Barbara Darling-Smith, "A Feminist Christological Exploration," in *One Faith, Many Cultures* (ed. Ruy O. Costa; Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1988), 73 (emphasis in original).
- ³²Sallie McFague, *Models of God* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987), 34. See also Sallie McFague, *Metaphorical Theology: Models of God in Religious Language* (2d ed.; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985).
- ³³Darling-Smith, "A Feminist Christological Exploration," 73 (emphasis in original).
- ³⁴*Ibid.*, 74.
- ³⁵Greene-McCreight, *Feminist Reconstructions*, 71.
- ³⁶Elizabeth A. Johnson, "Wisdom Was Made Flesh and Pitched Her Tent Among Us," in *Reconstructing the Christ Symbol* (ed. Maryanne Stevens; New York: Paulist, 1993), 109.
- ³⁷Isherwood, *Introducing Feminist Christologies*, 16.
- ³⁸Johnson, "The Maleness of Christ," 307.
- ³⁹Daly, *Beyond God the Father*, 71–72.
- ⁴⁰Johnson, "The Maleness of Christ," 308.
- ⁴¹Gregory of Nazianzus, "To Cledonius Against Apollinarus (Epistle 101)," in *Christology of the Later Fathers* (ed. Edward R. Hardy; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1954), 218.
- ⁴²Johnson, "Redeeming the Name of Christ," 119–20.
- ⁴³Johnson, "The Maleness of Christ," 308.
- ⁴⁴Ruether, *To Change the World*, 47.
- ⁴⁵See, e.g., Naomi Goldenberg, *Changing of the Gods: Feminism and the End of Traditional Religion* (Boston: Beacon, 1979), ch.1.
- ⁴⁶Eleanor McLaughlin, "Feminist Christologies: Re-Dressing the Tradition," in *Reconstructing the Christ Symbol*, 121.
- ⁴⁷Johnson, "The Maleness of Christ," 307.
- ⁴⁸Ruether, "The Liberation of Christology," 147.
- ⁴⁹Stalcup, "What About Jesus?," 127 (emphasis added).
- ⁵⁰Ellen K. Wondra, *Humanity Has Been a Holy Thing: Toward a Contemporary Feminist Christology* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1994), 304.
- ⁵¹Stalcup, "What About Jesus?," 127.
- ⁵²Elizabeth A. Johnson, *Consider Jesus: Waves of Renewal in Christology* (New York: Crossroad, 1990), 197.
- ⁵³Greene, *Christology in Cultural Perspective*, 236.
- ⁵⁴*Ibid.*, 239.
- ⁵⁵Leonard, "Women and Christ," 334.
- ⁵⁶Isherwood, *Introducing Feminist Christologies*, 24–25.
- ⁵⁷Ruether, "The Liberation of Christology," 147.
- ⁵⁸Rosemary Radford Ruether, "Can Christology Be Liberated From Patriarchy?," in *Reconstructing the Christ Symbol*, 23.
- ⁵⁹Ruether, *To Change the World*, 56.
- ⁶⁰Johnson, "Redeeming the Name of Christ," 131.
- ⁶¹*Ibid.*
- ⁶²Leonard, "Women and Christ," 326. She offers these sources for support to this claim: André Cabassut, "Une dévotion médiévale peu connue. La dévotion à Jésus notre mère," *Revue d'ascétique et de mystique* 25 (1949): 234–45; Eleanor McLaughlin, "Christ My Mother: Feminine Naming and Metaphor in Medieval Spirituality," *Nashotah Review* 15 (1975): 228–48; and Caroline Walker Bynum, "Jesus as Mother and Abbot as Mother: Some Themes in the Twelfth Century Cisterian Writing," in *Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages* (Los Angeles: University of California, 1982): 110–69. Although Leonard asserts that such important thinkers such as Origen, Irenaeus, Augustine, and Anselm refer to Christ as "mother," she provides no source for justification. Julian of Norwich, however, is typically held up as a representative historical source for this position, since she developed the image of mother to describe Jesus' nurturing love for all humanity.

- ⁶³E.g., Edward L. Kessel, "A Proposed Biological Interpretation of the Virgin Birth," *Journal of the American Scientific Affiliation* (September 1983): 129–36.
- ⁶⁴Letha Dawson Scanzoni and Nancy A. Hardesty, *All We're Meant to Be: A Biblical Approach to Women's Liberation* (Waco: Word, 1974), 71.
- ⁶⁵Millard J. Erickson, *The Word Became Flesh* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991), 546. This speculation has problems as well, viz., if this was the case, then in what way is Jesus a human like us?
- ⁶⁶Jack Cottrell, "The Gender of Jesus and the Incarnation: A Case Study in Feminist Hermeneutics," 7 [cited 11 April 2006]. Online: http://www.cbmw.org/images/articles_pdf/cottrell_jack/gender_ofjesus.pdf. Originally published in *Stone-Campbell Journal* 3 (Fall 2000): 171–94.
- ⁶⁷Ruether, *To Change the World*, 49, 53.
- ⁶⁸Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *Jesus: Miriam's Child, Sophia's Prophet* (New York: Continuum, 1994), 47.
- ⁶⁹Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk*, 130. See also Greene's discussion, *Christology in Cultural Perspective*, 234–36.
- ⁷⁰Rita Nakashima Brock, "The Feminist Redemption of Christ," in *Christian Feminism: Visions of a New Humanity* (ed. Judith L. Weidman; New York: Harper & Row, 1984), 68. See also Tom Driver, *Christ in a Changing World: Toward a Ethical Christology* (New York: Crossroad, 1981).
- ⁷¹Leonard, "Women and Christ," 333.
- ⁷²Brock, "The Feminist Redemption of Christ," 69.
- ⁷³*Ibid.*
- ⁷⁴Johnson, "Redeeming the Name of Christ," 129.
- ⁷⁵Schneiders, *Women and the Word*, 54.
- ⁷⁶Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk*, 138.
- ⁷⁷Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Introducing Redemption in Christian Feminism* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1998), 93. Cf. Isherwood, *Introducing Feminist Christologies*, 23.
- ⁷⁸Ruether, "Can Christology Be Liberated?," 23–24.
- ⁷⁹Greene-McCreight, *Feminist Reconstructions*, 86–87. Greene-McCreight traces the development and inclusion of Sophia on the popular and academic levels. Of course, it was not feminists who first "discovered" a Sophia-Christology in the New Testament. See M. Jack Suggs, *Wisdom, Christology and Law in Matthew's Gospel* (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1970); Felix Christ, *Jesus Sophia: Die Sophia Christologie bei Den Synoptikern* (Zurich: Zwingli-Verlag, 1970); and James Robinson, "Jesus as Sophos and Sophia," in *Aspects of Wisdom in Judaism and Early Christianity* (ed. Robert L. Wilken; Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1975).
- ⁸⁰*Ibid.*, 87.
- ⁸¹See, e.g., Gail Paterson Corrington, *Her Image of Salvation: Female Saviors and Formative Christianity* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1992). Note also the work of Schüssler Fiorenza here.
- ⁸²Many feminists include John 1 in this list by arguing that the Logos is actually Sophia.
- ⁸³Greene-McCreight, *Feminist Reconstructions*, 91–92.
- ⁸⁴Johnson, "Wisdom Was Made Flesh," 108. See also Elizabeth A. Johnson, "Jesus, the Wisdom of God: A Biblical Basis for a Non-Androcentric Christology," *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovaniensis* 61 (1985): 261–94.
- ⁸⁵Johnson, "Redeeming the Name of Christ," 127.
- ⁸⁶Johnson, "Wisdom Was Made Flesh," 107–08.
- ⁸⁷*Ibid.*, 108 (emphasis in original).
- ⁸⁸Leonard, "Women and Christ," 329–30.
- ⁸⁹*Ibid.*
- ⁹⁰Rita Nakashima Brock, *Journeys by Heart: A Christology of Erotic Power* (New York: Crossroad, 1988), 61.
- ⁹¹Greene-McCreight, *Feminist Reconstructions*, 93. See Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her* (New York: Crossroad, 1983), 134; and Elizabeth A. Johnson, *She Who Is: The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse* (New York: Crossroad, 1992), 92–93.
- ⁹²Douglas McCready, *He Came Down From Heaven* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2005), 145–46, 176–78.
- ⁹³*Ibid.*, 61. Cf. Cottrell, "The Gender of Jesus," 8.
- ⁹⁴*Ibid.*, 82–85.
- ⁹⁵Johnson, "Redeeming the Name of Christ," 118.
- ⁹⁶For further consideration on this issue of gender distinctions and roles related to the image of God, see Anthony A. Hoekema, *Created in God's Image* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986); John M. Frame, "Men and Women in the Image of God," in *Recovering Biblical Manhood & Womanhood* (ed. John Piper and Wayne Grudem; Wheaton: Crossway, 1991): 225–32; and Bruce A. Ware, "Male and Female Complementarity and the Image of God," in *Biblical Foundations for Manhood and Womanhood* (ed. Wayne Grudem; Wheaton: Crossway, 2002), 71–92.
- ⁹⁷Bruce A. Ware, "Could Our Savior Have Been a Woman?," *Journal for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* 8, no. 1 (2003): 38.
- ⁹⁸Cottrell, "The Gender of Jesus," 9.
- ⁹⁹Johnson, "Redeeming the Name of Christ," 119.
- ¹⁰⁰Greene-McCreight, *Feminist Reconstructions*, 73.
- ¹⁰¹*Ibid.*
- ¹⁰²Ware, "Could Our Savior Have Been a Woman?," 33. See also Kärkkäinen, *Christology*, 197.
- ¹⁰³Greene, *Christology in Cultural Perspective*, 225.
- ¹⁰⁴Isherwood, *Introducing Feminist Christologies*, 21.
- ¹⁰⁵Cottrell, "The Gender of Jesus," 9.
- ¹⁰⁶Note Thomas Morris's discussion of the distinctions between individual-essence and kind-essence, as well as the distinction between common properties and essential properties. See Thomas V. Morris, *The Logic of God Incarnate* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2001), ch. 3.
- ¹⁰⁷Goldenberg, *Changing of the Gods*, 22.
- ¹⁰⁸Isabel Carter Heyward, *The Redemption of God: A Theology of Mutual Relation* (New York: University Press of America, 1980), 30.
- ¹⁰⁹*Ibid.*
- ¹¹⁰Teresa Berger, "A Female Christ Child in the Manger and a Woman on the Cross, Or: The Historicity of the Jesus Event and the Inculturation of the Gospel," trans. Mary Deasey Collins, *Feminist Theology* 11 (1996): 33.
- ¹¹¹Greene-McCreight, *Feminist Reconstructions*, 109.
- ¹¹²*Ibid.*
- ¹¹³C. Stephen Evans, *The Historical Christ & The Jesus of Faith* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1996), ch. 1.
- ¹¹⁴We should say more than Evans, however, and argue that the reliable narrative of Scripture is inspired by God and, thus, inerrant. Without inerrancy, a thick text narrative reading does not make sense.
- ¹¹⁵Ware, "Could Our Savior Have Been a Woman?," 33.
- ¹¹⁶McCready, *He Came Down*, 317. McCready's contention specifically relates to preexistence, but given Ware's argument, we may also apply this contention to Jesus' maleness.

Method Mistake: An Analysis of the Charge of Arianism in Complementarian Discussions of the Trinity

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The debate between complementarians and egalitarians over the intra-Trinitarian relations between the Father and the Son has intensified significantly. In 2006, at the National Meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society (ETS), Kevin Giles presented a paper in which he alleged that certain complementarian expressions of the Trinity have degenerated into Arianism.¹ Bruce A. Ware also read a paper in which he defended his own complementarian view against Giles's accusation of Arianism.² The charge of Arianism is a weighty accusation primarily because of the church's traditional condemnation of it as a fundamental heresy—Arianism betrays a core teaching of Scripture. The allegation also has an immediate impact within the ETS. As Giles pointedly notes, “In the Evangelical Theological Society Doctrinal Basis only two matters are made fundamental to the evangelical faith: belief in the inerrancy of the Bible in its original autographs and belief in a Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, three ‘uncreated’ persons, who are ‘one in essence, equal in power and glory.’”³

The charge of Arianism hinges on a philosophical intuition about the nature of being. The defenses for this philosophical position offered by Gilbert Bilezikian and Kevin Giles, however, are incompatible with Scripture because they undercut the very possibility of Trinitarian theology. The failure of these arguments calls into question the validity of the position they defend. Because of these problems, current versions of the egalitarian

case that the complementarian view of the Trinity constitutes Arianism are seriously flawed. This article provides an analysis of the flaw in the egalitarian accusation and suggests how the debate over the Trinity should proceed.

The Core of the Debate Concerning the Trinity

Many complementarians argue that the Son is eternally functionally submissive to the Father while still possessing absolute ontological equality with Him. The thesis of Ware's 2006 ETS paper was,

The Father and Son are fully equal in their deity as each possesses the identically same divine nature, yet the eternal and inner-Trinitarian Father-Son relationship is marked, among other things by an authority and submission structure in which the Father is eternally in authority over the Son and the Son eternally in submission to the Father. There is, then, an eternal and immutable equality of essence between the Father and the Son, while there is also an eternal and immutable authority-submission structure that marks the relationship of the Father and the Son.⁴

Wayne Grudem⁵ and Robert Letham⁶ each express views in keeping with Ware's thesis, as the 1999 Sydney Anglican Diocesan Doctrine Commission Report, “The Doctrine of the Trinity and Its

Bearing on the Relationship of Men and Women,” also clearly intends to do.⁷ The view of the Trinity expressed by Ware posits an ontology in which “one can possess a different function and still be equal in essence and worth.”⁸

Most egalitarians assert that the view held by Ware, Grudem, *et al.* is essentially the Arian heresy in a new guise.⁹ In his magisterial work, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God: The Arian Controversy 318–381*, R. P. C. Hanson provides the definitive description of the ideas central to what came to be known as “Arianism.” Arian theologians held that the nature of divine transcendence requires a being of lesser divinity in order to accomplish revelation and redemption through the incarnation.¹⁰ According to the Arians, the distinction between Father and Son must be made in terms of different natures, not merely different relations.¹¹ The Arian ontology served a soteriology in which God (albeit a lesser god, Christ) suffered on behalf of humanity.¹²

When egalitarians charge complementarians with Arianism, they are clearly not suggesting that complementarians affirm an Arian soteriology. Rather, they are claiming that the Arian ontology of God has resurfaced in modern complementarian expressions of the Trinity. In his 1997 article, “Hermeneutical-Bungee Jumping,” Gilbert Bilezikian alleges that Robert Letham’s “view of an ontologically stratified, split-level Trinity lead[s] him straight into the trap of Arianism.”¹³ More broadly, Giles has stated that,

To argue that the Son is eternally subordinate in authority, set under the Father, denies both that he is one in power with the Father and the Spirit and by implication, that he is one in essence/being with the Father and the Spirit. To deny, explicitly or implicitly that Jesus is one in being/essence with the Father is of course the Arian heresy.¹⁴

The Egalitarian Ontological Axiom

At its core, the charge of Arianism against complementarians is grounded on a philosophical position concerning the nature of being, a position

that plays a determinative hermeneutical role for egalitarians. Millard Erickson suggests that “a temporal, functional subordination without inferiority of essence seems possible, but not an eternal subordination.”¹⁵ Giles hardens this view into a direct assertion: “It is my case that once the word *eternal* is added to the word *subordination*, you have ontological subordination.”¹⁶ In short, the view seems to be something like this: *eternal functional subordination entails ontological subordination*.

Bilezikian defends this view, which we shall call the “egalitarian ontological axiom,” in his “Bungee-Jumping” essay,

A subordination that extends into eternity cannot remain only functional but . . . it also becomes *ipso facto* an ontological reality. . . . Since the attribute of eternity inheres in the divine essence, any reality that is eternal is by necessity ontologically grounded. Eternity is a quality of existence. Therefore if Christ’s subordination is eternal, as both Grudem and Letham claim, it is also ontological.¹⁷

Unfortunately, if it is valid, Bilezikian’s argument seems to present us with a Faustian choice. Any distinction between the Trinitarian Persons in eternity, being eternal, would also be ontological. Thus any distinction between Persons, not merely functional subordination, results in them being ontologically different. To make any distinction between the divine Persons in eternity would be to succumb to either Arianism or tri-theism. If, on the other hand, we make no distinctions between the Persons in eternity, we in effect abandon immanent Trinity and run the risk of conceiving God in eternity as a monad. Christians would be able to think of God as Triune only in relation to creation. In other words, the argument seems to render futile any attempt to talk of the immanent Trinity; it is an argument that proves too much.¹⁸ If Bilezikian’s argument being valid leaves us with such a choice, it is better to conclude that the argument itself is not valid.

Giles offers a more developed and nuanced defense of the egalitarian ontological axiom when

he ties it to the unity of God’s being and God’s acts.

Whatever words are used to permanently set the Son under the Father in work divides who God is (his being) from what God does (his works). This division breaches divine unity, equality, and “simplicity.” It suggests that in the immanent Trinity the divine three do not work as one. To speak of the *voluntary* and *temporal* “functional or role subordination” of the Son in the work of salvation is acceptable, but the minute the word *eternal* is introduced, a profound theological error is embraced. The word *eternal* indicates that the Son does not merely function subordinately in the incarnation; he is eternally subordinated to the Father. His subordination defines his person. As the Son he is subordinated to the Father—subordinated in his person or *being*.¹⁹

Though more sophisticated than Bilezikian’s case, this argument also has fatal difficulties. Giles’s case here seems to rest on a view of God’s work that requires God to be, and function as, a monad—“If God is a monad (ultimately unitary), he must be one in being, work, and authority.”²⁰ This assertion is not quite in line with the Christian tradition, which conceived of God as ultimately triune (ultimately one *and* three) rather than ultimately unitary.²¹ The view of God as a monad is one that modern philosophical theologians such as Alvin Plantinga have rejected on the grounds that it yields a God who is either non-relational or non-personal.²² Furthermore, if Giles is correct that how God works *ad intra* indicates who God is *ad intra* (and I believe he is correct on this point!), then the view that God’s work *ad intra* is absolutely unitary and not susceptible to distinction would yield a God who is not and cannot be triune *ad intra*. In short, Giles’s argument kills off immanent Trinity. In this way, Giles’s argument, as Bilezikian’s, proves too much.

Giles’s argument also raises a specter of category-confusion. Just prior to his argument for the idea that eternal functional subordination entails

ontological subordination (quoted above), Giles provides a helpful table (see below) in order to clarify the different terms used in discussing the unity and differentiation within God. Giles complains, “These two sets of terms should not be confused, as they invariably are in evangelical literature.” He then correctly notes that,

No progress can be made in this painful debate among evangelicals until there is agreement on the meaning and force of the technical terms being used. To use terms incorrectly . . . does not further the cause of meaningful communication.²³

Terminology for the Divine Unity and Divine Differentiation ²⁴			
	Greek	Latin	English
One	<i>ousia</i>	<i>substantia</i>	being/substance
		<i>essentia</i>	essence
	<i>physis</i>	<i>natura</i>	nature
Three	<i>prosopa</i>	<i>peronae</i>	persons
	<i>hypostases</i>	<i>subsistentiae</i>	subsistences, modes of subsistence
	<i>tropos hyparxeos</i>		modes of ways of being/existing

Giles’s own argument, however, seems to conflate “person” and “being.” He states that eternal subordination “defines his [Christ’s] person;” it is “subordination in his person or *being*” (emphasis in the original).²⁵ Given the context, the charge of Arianism, it seems that Giles means “subordination in his person, *i.e., in his being*.” This would appear to be a confusion of a term referring to the way in which God is one (being), and a term referring to the way in which God is three (person).

Both Bilezikian’s and Giles’s defense of the egalitarian ontological axiom are fundamentally flawed. Both prove too much in that they both make either Unitarianism or Arianism an inescapable result—they undercut the very possibility of Trinitarian theology. Neither of these results are ones that either Bilezikian or Giles (nor any other evangelical!) would wish to affirm. As such, they are unsuccessful as a defense for the philosophical idea that eternal functional subordination entails ontological subordination.

The egalitarian ontological axiom is the key move upon which the charge of Arianism in the complementarian view of the Trinity depends. In the absence of an adequate philosophical defense of the axiom, the charge of Arianism over-reaches the evidence. The failure of the two philosophical arguments for the axiom also suggests that the egalitarian ontological axiom itself is incompatible with Scripture, though it does not prove conclusively that the egalitarian ontological axiom is indefensible. At best, we should view the axiom as an intuition about the nature of being which stands in need of further explanation and defense.

Theological Method: Moving the Trinity Debate Forward

One of the oldest and most widely-accepted understandings of the theological task is “faith seeking understanding.”²⁶ This means that the faith is a given; its truths are the axioms that cannot be challenged but that instead must be accepted in order to be understood. The evangelical theological task, then, is a response to the Word that delivers to us the Faith.²⁷ On this view, theology becomes “a second-order discipline pursued ‘from within.’ The enterprise is a critical, reflective activity that presupposes the beliefs and practices of the Christian community.”²⁸

It is critical for evangelicals that in this method, Scripture is the *norma normans non normata*, the norming norm which is not itself normed. For Stanley Grenz, the Bible’s place as the supreme authority “forms the ongoing legacy of the Reformation within the evangelical tradition.”²⁹ The deliverance of any source in theology—tradition, culture, reason, experience, even the creeds—must be judged by Scripture.³⁰

Philosophy is one such source that theologians must judge in light of Scripture. Scripture itself warns of the danger of deceptive philosophy (Col 2:8). Tertullian accused philosophy of being the instigator of heresy.³¹ Luther warned that whoever would use philosophy (Aristotle in particular) without danger to his soul must first be a fool for Christ.³² These somewhat hyperbolic warnings by Tertullian and Luther point to the danger of using

philosophical speculation that is incompatible with Scripture as the hermeneutical lens through which one reads Scripture.

Historical theology provides ample examples of the failure against which Col 2:8, Tertullian, and Luther warn. Meister Eckhart attempted to integrate the Plotinian concept of the One without division with the orthodox concept of the Trinity. He first posited a distinction between God (the Trinity) and the Godhead (the absolutely one “God beyond God”). Unfortunately, this made the Trinity less than ultimate. To avoid this problem, Eckhart identified the Godhead with the Father, but this only served to compromise the equality of the three divine persons.³³

The Arians also allowed a philosophical position incompatible with Scripture to control their reading of Scripture when they assumed an ontology in which a simple divine nature could not be simultaneously shared (i.e., fully possessed) by three divine persons. The result for the Arians was that to admit the consubstantiality of the Son with the Father would be to affirm that something is more ontologically basic than God is, or to affirm the mutability of God.³⁴ The failure of Trinitarian theology in both Eckhart and the Arians indicates the danger to orthodox theology of importing biblically incompatible philosophical intuitions into theology as hermeneutical rules—no matter how obvious those intuitions may seem.

Modern theologians have reiterated much the same kind of concern. For example, Pannenberg warns that,

Christian theology can effect a link-up with the philosophical concept of God only when it undertakes a penetrating transformation of the philosophical concept right down to its roots. Wherever philosophical concepts are taken over, they must be remolded in the light of the history-shaping freedom of the Biblical God.³⁵

The point here is neither that all philosophy is deceptive, nor that Christian theologians must abandon it as an unhelpful tool. Rather, evangelical

theology must judge any philosophical claim in light of the biblical evidence, rejecting what is—contrary to the faith, affirming that which is compatible with it.³⁶

The application of this theological method to the current Trinity debates among complementarians and egalitarians means that the egalitarian ontological axiom may not serve as an untested presupposition in the reading of Scripture. Presuppositionless reading of Scripture is not possible, of course. However, the fact is that our presuppositions “tend to determine what we take from Scripture” and other texts.³⁷ As long as the compatibility of the egalitarian ontological axiom with Scripture is in question, that axiom may not also be used as a hermeneutical presupposition in reading the Scripture or the tradition.³⁸

The supremacy of Scripture also determines the way in which the egalitarian ontological axiom can be decisively invalidated. If complementarians can show that the Scripture requires us to affirm the functional/role/relational subordination of the Son to the Father alongside the ontological equality of the Son and the Father, then functional subordination cannot entail ontological subordination no matter how well reasoned the philosophical case for it. This does not render useless a well-reasoned philosophical defense of the egalitarian axiom; such a defense would serve to require a much stronger and clear case for the functional subordination of the Son from Scripture than would otherwise be necessary.

The way in which complementarians are making their case attempts to paint egalitarians into precisely this corner. Kovach and Schemm have offered a brief two-pronged argument from Scripture. The first is that Scripture describes the Son as being eternally the Son of the Father, indicating a subordinate relation to the Father. The second is that the Son is the “agent” *through whom* the Father works.³⁹ Ware has argued that the Scripture indicates the eternal functional subordination of the Son to the Father through the names “Father” and “Son,” the Father’s authority over all things, and the submission of Son to the Father in the Son’s mission.⁴⁰ He has also argued that Scripture pro-

vides evidence of the submission of the Son to the Father in eternity-past and eternity-future.⁴¹ Additionally, Ware and Grudem have made a broad case from the Church Fathers that a reading of Scripture that affirms some sense of *monarchia* unique to the Father is consistent with the Nicene faith, specifically, and the tradition, generally.⁴²

Complementarians can strengthen their case further by taking greater care to be both precise and consistent in their use of technical Trinitarian terms. Giles’s concern here should be a point well taken. Complementarians would benefit by providing a well-developed, coherent philosophical description of the ontology required by their position, and a rigorous philosophical critique of the egalitarian ontological axiom using the tools of analytic philosophy. A more explicit defense of the Augustinian category of “relations” as a Trinitarian category that does not make the Son less a person or possessed of a lesser being than the Father, would serve to round out the categories of technical Trinitarian language described by Giles.⁴³ Complementarians also need to provide a more explicit defense of their own key presupposition, “the economic Trinity reveals the immanent Trinity,” and the way this principle functions in their own reading of Scripture.⁴⁴

Finally, it seems likely that egalitarians will be unable to provide direct biblical warrant for their position that eternal functional subordination entails ontological subordination. However, under the theological method described in this essay, it should be clear that it is not necessary for them to do so! While a stronger and more coherent defense of the egalitarian ontological axiom would strengthen their case, they need only show that the Scripture does not require us to affirm that the Son is eternally functionally subordinate to the Father. A reading of the Fathers and the rest of the tradition, which accounts for all of the relevant data, including language about the *monarchia* of the Father and other counter-indicators, would also strengthen the egalitarian case that their reading of Scripture is consistent with the tradition. In short, all that egalitarians lose by not presupposing their ontological axiom is the ability to rule out other-

wise superior readings of Scripture and the ability to utilize the charge of Arianism as an *ad hominem* attack against complementarians.

ENDNOTES

- ¹Kevin Giles, "Father and Son: Divided or Undivided in Power and Authority?" (paper presented at the annual meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society, Washington, D.C., 16 November 2006).
- ²Bruce A. Ware, "Equal in Essence, Distinct in Roles: Eternal Functional Authority and Submission Among the Essentially Equal Divine Persons of the Godhead" (paper presented at the annual meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society, Washington, D.C., 16 November 2006).
- ³Giles, "Father and Son," 1.
- ⁴Ware, "Equal in Essence, Distinct in Roles," 1.
- ⁵Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 454–70.
- ⁶Robert Letham, "The Man-Woman Debate: Theological Comment," *Westminster Journal of Theology* 52 (1990): 65.
- ⁷The clarity and success of the Sydney Report is, however, another matter.
- ⁸Thomas Schreiner, "Head Coverings, Prophecies and the Trinity: 1 Corinthians 11:2–16," in *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood: A Response to Evangelical Feminism* (ed. John Piper and Wayne Grudem; Wheaton: Crossway, 1991), 128.
- ⁹One notable exception to this is the egalitarian author Craig Keener. See his "Is Subordination within the Trinity Really Heresy? A Study of John 5:18 in Context," *Trinity Journal* n.s. 20, no. 1 (1999): 39–52.
- ¹⁰R. P. C. Hanson, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God: The Arian Controversy 318–381* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005), 100.
- ¹¹*Ibid.*, 103–04.
- ¹²*Ibid.*, 122–23.
- ¹³Gilbert Bilezikian, "Hermeneutical Bungee-Jumping: Subordination in the Godhead," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 40, no. 1 (1997): 64.
- ¹⁴Giles, "Father and Son," 1.
- ¹⁵Millard Erickson, *God in Three Persons: A Contemporary Interpretation of the Trinity* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995), 309.
- ¹⁶Kevin Giles, *Jesus and the Father: Modern Evangelicals Reinvent the Doctrine of the Trinity* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006), 28.
- ¹⁷Bilezikian, "Hermeneutical Bungee-Jumping," 63–64.
- ¹⁸My thanks go to Justin Grace, a doctoral candidate in philosophy at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, for the conversations that helped me to refine my analysis of Bilezikian's argument. Any flaws in the analysis are mine alone.
- ¹⁹Giles, *Jesus and the Father*, 58–59 (emphasis in original).
- ²⁰*Ibid.*, 53.
- ²¹Stephen Holmes, *Listening to the Past: The Place of Tradition in Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003), 53. Holmes notes that the idea of divine simplicity in the Fathers is not that of an ontologically basic monad. See also Hanson (*The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God*, 87) on the characterization of God as an indivisible monad as a core conviction of Arianism!
- ²²Alvin Plantinga, *Does God Have a Nature?* (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University, 1980), 42, 53.
- ²³Giles, *Jesus and the Father*, 54.
- ²⁴Reproduced from *ibid.*
- ²⁵*Ibid.*, 59.
- ²⁶Augustine, *Sermon* 43.7, 9; and Anselm, *Proslogion* 1.
- ²⁷Kevin Vanhoozer, "Exploring the World; Following the Word: The Credibility of Evangelical Theology in an Incredulous Age," *Trinity Journal* 16, no. 1 (1995): 18.
- ²⁸Stanley Grenz, *Revisioning Evangelical Theology: A Fresh Agenda for the 21st Century* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1993), 75.
- ²⁹*Ibid.*, 93.
- ³⁰*Ibid.*, 97.
- ³¹Tertullian, *Against Heretics* 7.
- ³²Martin Luther, *Career of the Reformer I* (vol. 31 of *Luther's Works*; ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1999), 41.
- ³³David Clark, *To Know and Love God* (Wheaton: Crossway, 1995), 306.
- ³⁴Hanson, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God*, 92.
- ³⁵Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Basic Questions in Theology* (3 vols.; trans. George H. Kehm; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971), 2:139.
- ³⁶See Clark, *To Know and Love God*, 296, 302.
- ³⁷Giles, *Jesus and the Father*, 74.
- ³⁸That the egalitarian ontological axiom functions as the kind of filter Giles warns against is most evident in Giles's own use of the Fathers. See esp. Ware, "Equal in Essence, Distinct in Roles," 11–12, 15–16.
- ³⁹Stephen D. Kovach and Peter R. Schemm, "A Defense of the Doctrine of the Eternal Subordination of the Son," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 42, no. 3 (1990): 461–76.
- ⁴⁰Ware, "Equal in Essence, Distinct in Roles," 2–5. These instances are representative, not exhaustive of the number of complementarian authors who have argued such a case. Though it is not the point of this article, I do find their case to be quite strong.
- ⁴¹*Ibid.*, 5–9.
- ⁴²Wayne Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth: An Analysis of More Than 100 Disputed Questions* (Sisters, OR: Multnomah, 2004), 415–22; Ware, "Equal in Essence, Distinct in Roles," 9–12. These are but representative instances of complementarians arguing that their view is not incompatible with the Church Fathers, and indeed is supported by them. Once again, though it is not the point of this paper, I find their case to be quite strong.
- ⁴³Ware touches on this in his discussion of Augustine, but does not develop it as an ontological category. Ware, "Equal in Essence, Distinct in Roles," 10.
- ⁴⁴Though this principle is a critical part of the traditional Trinitarian argument against modalism, a fresh and clear exposition of the warrant for it and how it can and cannot be used to speak of the immanent Trinity would be very helpful. I also believe that it might have the potential to turn a common egalitarian admission against their own view. Egalitarians readily acknowledge that the Son was functionally subordinate to the Father *in the incarnate mission of the Son*. If the principle of "economic reveals immanent" applies to the relations of the Trinitarian persons, then the evidence of functional subordination already admitted by the egalitarians would become evidence against their position on the Trinity.

The Beautiful Faith of Fearless Submission (1 Peter 3:1–7)¹

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Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands, so that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives, when they see your respectful and pure conduct. Do not let your adorning be external—the braiding of hair and the putting on of gold jewelry, or the clothing you wear—but let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God’s sight is very precious. For this is how the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves, by submitting to their own husbands, as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord. And you are her children, if you do good and do not fear anything that is frightening (1 Pet 3:1–7).

We continue in our series on marriage, and today we focus on what it means for a wife to be submissive to her husband. I am very eager that men and women, single and married, old and young (including children) hear this as a call to something strong and noble and beautiful and dignified and worthy of a woman’s highest spiritual and moral efforts.

To set the stage for that impact, notice two phrases in 1 Pet 3:1: “Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands.” Notice the word *own* in “your *own* husbands.” That means that there is a uniquely fitting submission to your own husband

that is not fitting in relation to other men. You are not called to submit to all men the way you do to your husband. Then notice the phrase at the beginning: “Likewise, wives.” This means that the call for a wife’s submission is part of a larger call for submission from all Christians in different ways.

First Peter 2:13–3:12

In 1 Pet 2:13–17, Peter admonishes us *all* to be subject, for the Lord’s sake, to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme, or to governors as set by him. In other words, keep the speed limits, pay your taxes, and be respectful toward policemen and senators.

Then in 2:18–25, Peter addresses the household servants (*oiketai*) in the church and admonishes them to be submissive to their masters with all respect, both to the kind and to the overbearing.

Then, in 3:1–6, Peter instructs the wives to be submissive to their husbands, including the husbands who are unbelieving. This is the part we are focusing on as part of our series on marriage.

Then, in verse 7, he instructs husbands to live considerately with their wives as fellow heirs of the grace of life.

Finally, in 3:8–12, Peter tells the whole church to have unity and sympathy and love and tenderheartedness and humility toward one another, and not to return evil for evil. In other words, submit to each other and serve each other. So, as we saw in

Ephesians 5, submission is a wider Christian virtue for all of us to pursue, and it has its unique and fitting expressions in various relationships. Today we are focusing on the relationship of a wife to her husband. What does submission look like there?

Peter's Powerful Portrait of Womanhood

Before I describe what submission isn't and what it is, let's gaze for a few minutes at the powerful portrait of womanhood that Peter paints for us in these words. What we see is deep strong roots of womanhood underneath the fruit of submission. It's the roots that make submission the strong and beautiful thing that it is.

Start with verse 5: "This is how the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves, by submitting to their own husbands."

The Deepest Root of Womanhood: Hope in God

The deepest root of Christian womanhood mentioned in this text is hope in God. "Holy women who *hoped in God*." A Christian woman does not put her hope in her husband, or in getting a husband. She does not put her hope in her looks. She puts her hope in the promises of God. She is described in Prov 31:25: "Strength and dignity are her clothing, and she laughs at the time to come." She laughs at everything the future will bring and might bring, because she hopes in God.

She looks away from the troubles and miseries and obstacles of life that seem to make the future bleak, and she focuses her attention on the sovereign power and love of God who rules in heaven and does on earth whatever he pleases. She knows her Bible, and she knows her theology of the sovereignty of God, and she knows his promise that he will be with her, help her, and strengthen her no matter what. This is the deep, unshakable root of Christian womanhood. And Peter makes it explicit in verse 5. He is not talking about just any women. He is talking about women with unshakable biblical roots in the sovereign goodness of God—holy women who hope in God.

Fearlessness

The next thing to see about Christian womanhood after hope in God is the fearlessness that it produces in these women. So verse 5 said that the holy women of old hoped in God. And then verse 6 gives Sarah, Abraham's wife, as an example and then refers to all other Christian women as her daughters. Verse 6b: "And you are her children, if you do good and do not fear anything that is frightening."

So this portrait of Christian womanhood is marked first by hope in God and then what grows out of that hope, namely, fearlessness. She does not fear the future; she laughs at the future. The presence of hope in the invincible sovereignty of God drives out fear. Or to say it more carefully and realistically, the daughters of Sarah fight the anxiety that rises in their hearts. They wage war on fear, and they defeat it with hope in the promises of God.

Mature Christian women know that following Christ will mean suffering. But they believe the promises like 1 Pet 3:14, "But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled," and 1 Pet 4:19, "Therefore let those who suffer according to God's will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good."

That is what Christian women do: They entrust their souls to a faithful Creator. They hope in God. And they triumph over fear.

A Focus on Internal Adornment

And this leads to a third feature of Peter's portrait of womanhood, a focus on internal adornment, rather than external. First Peter 3:5 begins, "This is how the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves." This adornment refers back to what is described in verses 3–4:

Do not let your adorning be external—the braiding of hair and the putting on of gold jewelry, or the clothing you wear—but let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God's sight is very precious.

We know this does not mean that all jewelry and all hair styling is excluded because then all clothing would be excluded as well, because it says, “Don’t let your adorning be external . . . the clothing you wear.” What he means is: Don’t focus your main attention and effort on how you look on the outside; focus it on the beauty that is inside. Exert more effort and be more concerned with inner beauty than outer beauty.

And he is specific in verse 4. When a woman puts her hope in God and not her husband and not in her looks, and when she overcomes fear by the promises of God, this will have an effect on her heart: It will give her an inner tranquility. That’s what Peter means in verse 4 by “the imperishable beauty of a *gentle and quiet spirit*, which in God’s sight is very precious.”

A Unique Kind of Submissiveness

That leaves one more feature of this portrait of womanhood to see. First, there was hope in God. That leads then to fearlessness in the face of whatever the future may bring. Then that leads to an inner tranquility and meekness. And, finally, that spirit expresses itself in a unique kind of submissiveness to her husband. Verse 1: “Likewise, wives, *be subject to your own husbands*.” Verse 5: “This is how the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves, by *submitting to their own husbands*.”

That is a brief look at the portrait of the kind of woman Peter has in mind when he calls a woman to be submissive to her husband. Unshakable hope in God. Courage and fearlessness in the face of any future. Quiet tranquility of soul. Humble submission to her husband’s leadership.

It is a great sadness that in our modern society—even in the church—the different and complementary roles of biblical headship for the husband and biblical submission for the wife are despised or simply passed over. Some people just write them off as sub-Christian cultural leftovers from the first century. Others distort and misuse them—I actually sat in my office once with a husband who believed that submission meant his wife should not go from one room to the other in the house without asking his permission. That kind of

pathological distortion makes it easier for people to dispense with texts like these in the Bible.

But the truth of headship and submission is really here and really beautiful. When you see it lived out with the mark of Christ’s majesty on it—the mutuality of servanthood without canceling the reality of headship and submission—it is a wonderful and deeply satisfying drama. So let’s ponder from this text first what submission is not, and then what it is.

What Submission Is Not

Here are six things it is not, based on 1 Pet 3:1–6.

(1) *Submission does not mean agreeing with everything your husband says.* You can see that in verse one: she is a Christian and he is not. He has one set of ideas about ultimate reality. She has another. Peter calls her to be submissive while assuming she will not submit to his view of the most important thing in the world—God. So submission can’t mean submitting to agree with all her husband thinks.

(2) *Submission does not mean leaving your brain or your will at the wedding altar.* It is not the inability or the unwillingness to think for yourself. Here is a woman who heard the gospel of Jesus Christ. She thought about it. She assessed the truth claims of Jesus. She apprehended in her heart the beauty and worth of Christ and his work, and she chose him. Her husband heard it also. Otherwise, Peter probably wouldn’t say he “disobeyed the word.” He has heard the word, and he has thought about it. And he has not chosen Christ. She thought for herself and she acted. And Peter does not tell her to retreat from that commitment.

(3) *Submission does not mean avoiding every effort to change a husband.* The whole point of this text is to tell a wife how to “win” her husband. Verse 1 says, “Be subject to your own husbands, so that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives.” If you didn’t care about the Bible you might say, “Submission has to mean taking a husband the way he is and not trying to change him.” But if you believe what the Bible says, you conclude that

submission, paradoxically, is sometimes a strategy for changing him.

(4) *Submission does not mean putting the will of the husband before the will of Christ.* The text clearly teaches that the wife is a follower of Jesus before and above being a follower of her husband. Submission to Jesus relativizes submission to husbands—and governments and employers and parents. When Sarah called Abraham “lord” in verse 6, it was *lord* with a lowercase *l*. It’s like “sir” or “m’lord.” And the obedience she rendered is qualified obedience because her supreme allegiance is to the Lord with a capital *L*.

(5) *Submission does not mean that a wife gets her personal, spiritual strength primarily through her husband.* A good husband should indeed strengthen and build up and sustain his wife. He should be a source of strength. But what this text shows is that when a husband’s spiritual leadership is lacking, a Christian wife is not bereft of strength. Submission does not mean she is dependent on him to supply her strength of faith and virtue and character. The text, in fact, assumes just the opposite. She is summoned to develop depth and strength and character not *from* her husband but *for* her husband. Verse five says that her hope is in God in the hope that her husband will join her there.

(6) *Finally submission does not mean that a wife is to act out of fear.* Verse 6b says, “You are her [Sarah’s] children, if you do good and do not fear anything that is frightening.” In other words, submission is free, not coerced by fear. The Christian woman is a free woman. When she submits to her husband—whether he is a believer or unbeliever—she does it in freedom, not out of fear.

What Submission Is

If that’s what submission is not, then what is it? I suggested a couple of weeks ago from Ephesians 5 what is true here as well: *Submission* is the divine calling of a wife to honor and affirm her husband’s leadership and help carry it through according to her gifts. It’s the disposition to follow a husband’s authority and an inclination to yield to his leadership. It is an attitude that says, “I delight for you to take the initiative in our family. I am glad when you

take responsibility for things and lead with love. I don’t flourish in the relationship when you are passive and I have to make sure the family works.”

But submission does not follow a husband into sin. What then does submission say in such a situation? It says, “It grieves me when you venture into sinful acts and want to take me with you. You know I can’t do that. I have no desire to resist you. On the contrary, I flourish most when I can respond joyfully to your lead; but I can’t follow you into sin, as much as I love to honor your leadership in our marriage. Christ is my King.”

The reason I say that submission is a *disposition* and an *inclination* to follow a husband’s lead is because there will be times in a Christian marriage when the most submissive wife, with good reason, will hesitate at a husband’s decision. It may look unwise to her. Suppose it’s Noël and I. I am about to decide something for the family that looks foolish to her. At that moment, Noël could express her submission like this: “Johnny, I know you’ve thought a lot about this, and I love it when you take the initiative to plan for us and take the responsibility like this, but I really don’t have peace about this decision, and I think we need to talk about it some more. Could we? Maybe tonight sometime?”

The reason that is a kind of biblical submission is (1) because husbands, unlike Christ, are fallible and ought to admit it; (2) because husbands ought to want their wives to be excited about the family decisions, since Christ wants the church to be excited about following his decisions and not just follow begrudgingly; (3) because the way Noël expressed her misgivings communicated clearly that she endorses my leadership and affirms me in my role as head; and (4) because she has made it clear to me from the beginning of our marriage that if, when we have done all the talking we should, we still disagree, she will defer to her husband’s decision.

The Goal: Everlasting Holy Joy

So I end with the reminder that marriage is not mainly about staying in love. It’s about covenant keeping. And the main reason it is about covenant keeping is that God designed the relationship

between a husband and his wife to represent the relationship between Christ and the church. This is the deepest meaning of marriage. And that is why ultimately the roles of headship and submission are so important. If our marriages are going to tell the truth about Christ and his church, we cannot be indifferent to the meaning of headship and submission. And let it not go without saying that God's purpose for the church—and for the Christian wife who represents it—is her everlasting holy joy. Christ died for them to bring that about.

ENDNOTES

¹This sermon was delivered on April 15, 2007, at Bethlehem Baptist Church in Minneapolis, Minnesota. It is reproduced here with permission. For more resources by John Piper, visit www.desiring-god.org.

Pastors Are Not Elders: A Middle Way?

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At the November 2006 meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society, Harold Hoehner presented a paper asking, “Can a Woman Be a Pastor-Teacher?” Hoehner argued that Eph 4:11 indicates that pastor-teacher is a spiritual gift and not an office in the church. This is consistent with what he had earlier written in his commentary on Ephesians, and his paper has now been published in *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society (JETS)*.¹

The main thrust of Hoehner’s *JETS* essay “is to assert clearly that a woman can be a pastor-teacher because it is a gift and *not* an office.” Hoehner then makes an astonishing statement: “By distinguishing between office and gift, 85–90% of the problems raised about women’s ministry would be resolved.” Suggesting that 1 Tim 2:12 applies to the context of a local church, Hoehner goes on to state that “women who have the gift of pastor-teacher could utilize their gifts in parachurch situations such as mission organizations, colleges, or seminaries.”²

One major problem with the distinction between gift and office is that in Eph 4:11 Paul seems to be saying that Christ has given *people* as apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastor-teachers. In other words, Paul’s language does not seem to communicate the idea that the Lord gave apostleship as a gift, prophecy as a gift, evangelism as a gift, and the skill set of pastor-teacher as a gift. Rather, Paul states that Christ “gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastor-teachers” (Eph 4:11). The question would then be whether

the Lord gave any people of the female gender to the church as pastor-teachers. Hoehner answers this question in the affirmative, but consideration of what the New Testament says elsewhere about pastors might lead to another conclusion—more on this below.

Hoehner’s views, especially the suggestion that distinguishing between gift and office would resolve “85–90% of the problems raised about women’s ministry,” betray little concern for the deep significance of humanity’s gendered state. If gender is only a superficial accident, then a distinction between gift and office might resolve artificial tensions. But the reality is that gender is at the core of who we are as human beings, and our distinct purpose as humans is directly related to the gender God has assigned to us. God put the man in the garden to work and keep it (Gen 2:15), and he put the woman in the garden to help the man (Gen 2:18). Paul interprets the Genesis account to mean that the woman was created for the man (1 Cor 11:9), and Paul appears to think these realities should influence how men and women conduct themselves (cf. 1 Cor 11:3–16). A questionable distinction between gift and office will have a hard time resolving any of the problems that arise when gendered people fail to understand what their gender entails, or worse, reject biblical teaching on the roles appropriate to their gender.

These considerations also speak against Hoehner’s suggestion that women can be pastor-teachers over men outside the church context. First

Timothy 2:12 is not some arbitrary, pharisaic piece of red-tape. The prohibition on women teaching men is grounded in the created order and in what took place at the fall (1 Tim 2:13–15). This prohibition is given because of what we were created to be and do as males and females. It is good for us. By heeding it we experience life, joy, and freedom.

One implication Hoehner draws from his questionable distinction between gift and office—that women can teach men in seminary settings—reduces 1 Tim 2:12 to an unnecessary legislation that does not reflect what people really need. In fact, if we read 1 Tim 2:12 the way Hoehner would have us read it, the order of creation in 1 Tim 2:13 becomes something we have to obey in church, but otherwise are free to ignore. In other words, it is a meaningless formality. But Paul does not indicate that his prohibition in 1 Tim 2:12 is a meaningless formality. He grounds the role distinctions between male and female on an appeal to the created order (see 1 Tim 2:13–15).

In his commentary on Ephesians, Hoehner writes,

Some may question the validity of women pastors or pastor-teachers, but it must be remembered that these are gifts and not offices. Surely, women who pastor-shepherd among women should cause no problem at all (Titus 2:3–4). But in fact, Priscilla, along with Aquila, taught Apollos the way of God more accurately (Acts 18:25–26) which would indicate that a woman may not be limited to teaching only women (*Ephesians*, 546).

Hoehner here suggests that women can do what Paul forbids them from doing in 1 Tim 2:12. On the basis of an example recorded in the narrative of Acts, Hoehner is prepared to disregard a prohibition in an epistle written so that its recipient will know how to conduct church life (1 Tim 3:14–15).

Aside from the hermeneutical issue of reading the narrative in a way that contradicts an apostolic prohibition, does this example “indicate that a woman may not be limited to teaching only

women”? For all we know, this conversation with Priscilla, Aquila, and Apollos happened only once, whereas there are clear statements in the New Testament about gender roles that refer to the way life is to be conducted all the time (cf. 1 Cor 11:3–16; 14:29–35; 1 Tim 2:9–15, etc.). The incident with Priscilla, Aquila, and Apollos happened in private, and Luke doesn’t tell us who did the instructing in Acts 18:25–26. Priscilla’s husband may have done most—or even all—of the talking. The incident described in Acts 18:25–26 is a slight, fraying thread holding up the huge weight of Hoehner’s conclusion that “a woman may not be limited to teaching only women.”

As for the distinction between gift and office, pastors and elders, there may be a word study fallacy in Hoehner’s interpretation, which seems to limit its consideration of “pastors” to the noun that means “shepherd” rather than also considering the related verbal forms that refer to the act of shepherding. If the verbal forms are considered, the texts that indicate that “elders” are “to shepherd” incline the interpretation away from Hoehner’s conclusion. Hoehner can only maintain that “pastor-teacher” is a spiritual gift and not an office if a pastor is not the same thing as an elder, since “elder” is an office in the church and not just a spiritual gift.

But are elders distinct from pastors? In Acts 20:17 Paul summons the “elders” of the church in Ephesus. He then tells them, “the Holy Spirit has made you *overseers*, to *shepherd* the church of God” in Acts 20:28. The word “overseers” can also be rendered “bishops,” and the infinitive “to shepherd” is the verbal form of the noun translated “pastor.” Thus, in Acts 20, Paul tells the “elders” that they are “bishops/overseers,” and he tells them that they are “to pastor.”

Similarly, in 1 Pet 5:1–2, Peter exhorts the “elders” that they are to “shepherd the flock of God” by “exercising oversight.” Here again, an *elder* is to do what a shepherd (pastor) does, *shepherd*, and he is to do what an overseer does, *exercise oversight*.

Hoehner’s novel conclusion that “pastor-teacher” is a spiritual gift to the exclusion of it being an office can only be maintained by committing what looks like a word study fallacy of focusing on

the noun, “pastor,” to the exclusion of the cognate verbal forms, “to pastor,” which are used to describe what elders do. Add to this the strong sense that in Eph 4:11 Paul is describing *people* as gifts rather than *roles* or *skill-sets* as gifts, the weak appeal to Priscilla and Aquila, the apparent lack of concern for the realities 1 Tim 2:12 reflects, and Hoehner’s argument begins to look like special pleading for a middle way that will ultimately satisfy neither complementarians nor egalitarians. Neither egalitarians nor complementarians will appreciate the sacrifice of their fundamental concerns about gender roles on the altar of a technical distinction between gift and role that allows women to teach men as long as they do not do so in church.

ENDNOTES

¹Harold W. Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002), and “Can a Woman Be a Pastor-Teacher?,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 50, no. 4 (2007): 761–71.

²Hoehner, “Can a Woman Be a Pastor-Teacher?,” 771.

Reassessing Junia: A Review of Eldon Epp's *Junia: The First Woman Apostle*

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Epp, Eldon Jay. *Junia: The First Woman Apostle*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005.

Often my friends tease me about my academic work, usually making the argument that scholars tend to think too much about minor details. I would agree that scholars as a whole regularly make “mountains out of molehills.” (Indeed, anyone who has written a doctoral dissertation recognizes this as a professional necessity!) There are many times, however, when extreme depth of investigation is important and even vital for proper interpretation and appropriate application of the biblical text. My response to this critique changes the metaphor slightly in order to drive this point home: Instead of a molehill, think of an anthill. It is not very big, but ignore it and you can be in a world of hurt if you misstep. (With fire ants, common in the region of Texas where I live, a misstep can even be dangerous.) Certain issues or texts that on first blush may appear to be quite ancillary or tangential become very important upon closer investigation and have an impact far beyond that which one might initially suppose. Such is the case with Rom 16:7.

To begin, allow me to cite this verse in two different English versions: (1) “Greet Andronicus and Junia, my compatriots and my fellow prisoners. They are well known to the apostles, and they were in Christ before me” (NET Bible). (2) “Greet Andronicus and Junias, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners; they are men of note among the apostles, and they were in Christ before me” (RSV). A quick comparison reveals two of the “anthills” under the surface of this verse: the gender of the name Ἰουνίαν (the spelling given in both NA²⁷ and UBS⁴,

the current standard critical editions of the Greek New Testament); and the relationship of the two named individuals to the larger group called “apostles.” A review of technical literature on this verse reveals two more issues: the identification of this person vis-à-vis Andronicus, the other person mentioned in the verse, and the identity and function of the larger group. These interpretive issues could very well remain esoteric and out of sight except for the way this passage has been used in discussions of the role of women in the church. Many scholars have argued that the best interpretation of this verse is that Junia was a woman and that she was considered to be an esteemed apostle, and that this interpretation provides support for the egalitarian viewpoint and a justification for leadership roles for women in the ministry of the church. Understandably, then, this verse has received a great deal of attention in scholarly literature.

Because of the multiple issues which come into play in determining the proper interpretation of Rom 16:7, it is rare to find works which are exhaustive and discuss all of the issues at length. The majority of the scholarly work has been done on the gender of the name in the biblical text, usually with the attendant assumption that the named individuals in the text are counted among the apostolic group. Next in line for attention would be the nature of the apostolic ministry referred to by the term “apostle.” My own contribution in an article coauthored with Daniel B. Wallace (“Was Junia Really an Apostle? A Re-Examination of Rom 16.7,” *New Testament Studies* 47 [2001]: 76–91) addressed the question of whether the named

individuals were to be considered as part of the apostolic group; our conclusion was that the most likely meaning of the construction ἐπίσημος + (ἐν) + dative was “well-known to,” not “outstanding among.” When investigating this issue, then, one must recognize that there are multiple issues at play and a fair handling will take as many of these issues into consideration as possible.

This broad contribution is what Eldon Jay Epp attempts in his work *Junia: The First Woman Apostle*. For many years Epp has been one of America’s premier New Testament textual critics. His writings have guided a host of students, the present author included, as they have learned the discipline, and he continues to add to our knowledge of the field. In 2002 he contributed a chapter discussing Rom 16:7 in the light of textual criticism to a *Festschrift* for Joël Delobel (“Text-Critical, Exegetical, and Socio-Cultural Factors Affecting the Junia/Junias Variation in Romans 16,7,” in *New Testament Textual Criticism and Exegesis: Festschrift J. Delobel* [ed. A. Denaux; Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologiarum Lavaniensium 161; Leuven: Leuven University Press/Peeters, 2002], 227–91), and this scholarly work has been revised into the present work under consideration. In this present work Epp discusses the interpretation of Rom 16:7 in light of textual criticism, specifically how textual criticism often acts as a window to social and cultural issues at play in and around a text.

The text is divided into two parts: “Contemporary Textual Criticism” and “Junia/Junias in Rom 16:7.” The first part sets the stage by discussing the role of textual criticism in exegesis (chapter 1) and, then, a particular textual problem related to Rom 16:7 by virtue of the fact that it impinges upon gender issues (chapter 2). The first chapter is largely a useful discussion of all the various ways textual criticism can affect exegesis. Epp in essence argues for a mature understanding of the method of textual criticism and appropriate caution concerning the certainty of results. The difficulty of this chapter is two-fold: Epp shows a tendency to elevate social-cultural issues to primacy of place in consideration of variant readings, and he weds this to a troubling agnosticism toward the success of

the entire enterprise. Epp draws a sound conclusion about the practice of textual criticism which takes into account the broad environment which produces variant readings: “Rather, the immediate and larger context of the writing itself and of the historical-theological setting from which it arose and in which it later functioned may all be relevant factors in deciding between/among variant readings” (9). This focus upon the setting in which variants arose is nothing new, as textual critics have always considered the factors which gave rise to variant readings, whether they were historical, cultural, or theological. Epp unfortunately weds this emphasis to the aforementioned agnosticism of many textual critics, specifically that of David C. Parker, whose work *The Living Text of the Gospels* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1997) he refers to with approbation. As a result Epp advocates a method that gives socio-cultural factors primacy of place over traditional canons of criticism in the determination of the text, as evidenced by his conclusion to the chapter under the heading “A Loss of Innocence.”

The second chapter in part one continues to set the stage for the discussion of Rom 16:7 by demonstrating the role of gender issues in another well-known textual problem, that of 1 Cor 14:34–35 as a possible interpolation. The introduction to the chapter is more important for my evaluation, rather than the particular problem, because of the way Epp uses it to create a new criterion for evaluation. He writes,

Because of this kind of text-critical situation, exegetes now are able to view and to interpret—through the several differing and competing variants—the ways in which one issue of special concern to women was being debated and was exerting pressure in the early centuries of Christianity. This result may not be as “clean” or as satisfying as seizing upon a single variant as “original,” but it is both more realistic and more practical, that is, more likely consonant with the real-life situations of the early Christian community and therefore more easily applicable to present-day Christianity,

in which varying approaches to divorce and remarriage have surfaced and been applied across the array of our Christian communities (14–15).

In essence this is very similar to the argument currently made by many scholars concerning orthodoxy and heresy in the early church: If one can demonstrate that a variety of interpretations and viewpoints existed in the early church and that no one view had primacy, then the claim to a single orthodoxy vanishes. Compare this to the closing statement of the chapter, and my concern hopefully will become clearer:

I turn now to a crucial passage that has been the focus of discussion and controversy, especially in the last decade or two, and one that reveals—perhaps surprisingly, perhaps not—a pervasive socio-cultural bias that has operated in New Testament textual criticism and exegesis for an entire century of what we might have regarded as the period of our most modern, liberal, and detached scholarly inquiry (20).

In my opinion Epp is loosing the traditional moorings of the text critical discipline, grounded primarily in the history of the transmission of the text as scholars could best understand and reconstruct it, and replacing it with something more tenuous—namely, the resonance of socio-cultural issues between our present day and the ancient Christian world. It is certainly fair to agree with Epp when he states that the discipline of textual criticism has been stagnant for over a century and needs to move beyond the impasse created by Westcott and Hort when they overthrew the *Textus Receptus*. But the presence of an impasse in reaching a clear determination of the original text does not vacate the truth that an original at one time existed and that the variants which presently exist in our manuscript evidence are evidence of a transmission from that original. The method Epp advances is, in my opinion, close to throwing the baby out with the bath water.

The second part of the book deals directly

with the issue of Junia in Rom 16:7 and can essentially be divided into two parts: Chapters 3–10 deal with the name itself, and chapter 11 deals with the relationship of Junia to the apostolic group. (The final unnumbered chapter serves as a conclusion to the entire book.) Topics covered in the first part include the name itself as it existed in Greek and Latin, the name in ancient commentary on the text, the name in past and present editions of the Greek New Testament, the name in standard reference works, and the name in English translations. Despite the fact that some of the arguments and data presented in this second section are quite detailed, the essential argument can be summarized easily: There is little to no evidence that the name Ἰουνίαν in current editions of the Greek New Testament should be understood to refer to a man; the evidence strongly supports the conclusion that the named person is a woman. The name Ἰουνίαν can potentially be accented two ways: Ἰουνίαν with an acute accent on the penult, which is feminine (the assertion that this could be a masculine accentuation is largely unfounded), or Ἰουνιᾶν with a circumflex accent on the ultima, which is masculine. The clear preponderance of the linguistic evidence is that the feminine form was widely attested, the masculine not at all. The most ancient commentators almost uniformly regard the name as feminine, and this could be considered the consensus up until the modern period. Various editions of the New Testament, reference works, and English translations all show movement from regarding the name as masculine to the current, more recent consensus that the name was feminine. In short, there is little to no evidence to support a masculine name here, either from the data itself or from the history of interpretation, and scholarship has practically reached a consensus that when Paul wrote Ἰουνίαν he was referring to a woman.

Chapter 11 discusses two related issues, that of the nature of what it means to be an apostle and the relationship of Junia to the larger apostolic group. Epp spends some space demonstrating that all of these issues—the gender of the name, the nature of “apostle,” and the relationship of this person to the apostolic group—are intertwined in the

history of interpretation and create something of a domino effect, depending upon the point of view of the interpreter. Then the majority of the chapter is spent in a refutation of the aforementioned article that I coauthored with Wallace, “Was Junia Really an Apostle?” Important to mention are two other critiques of our work, which Epp refers to often: Richard Bauckham, *Gospel Women: Studies of the Named Women in the Gospels* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 165–80; and Linda L. Belleville, “Ιουνιαν ... ἐπίσημοι ἐν τοῖς ἀποστόλοις: A Re-Examination of Romans 16.7 in Light of Primary Source Materials,” *New Testament Studies* 51, no. 2 (April 2005): 231–39. My schedule has not permitted me time to develop an in-depth response to any of these reviews. What I can say at this point is that I have not read anything in any of them that has dissuaded me from the viewpoint Wallace and I advanced in the original article. (In the next few years I hope to develop a suitable response to these critiques.)

There is much to commend about Epp’s book: It is broad, thorough, and well documented with endnotes and bibliography (although I generally find footnotes more serviceable). He discusses issues of fine detail related to language and history as well as philosophical issues related to hermeneutics and the bias of the interpreter. It is a useful, sustained treatment that serves to advance the discussion surrounding Rom 16:7 in particular and gender issues in general. There are notable problems, however, with Epp’s argument. As mentioned above, Epp appears to be replacing a traditional understanding of the goal of textual criticism as a discipline—that of recovering the wording of the original text—with that of using textual variations as a window into socio-cultural concerns that mirror those of our own day. What I infer from this is that Epp would then argue that our contemporary take on these same socio-cultural issues should be read back into our understanding of the text, a step I am not willing to prescribe as part of either text-critical, exegetical, or hermeneutical method. (I acknowledge that interpreters regularly do this because of our inherent presuppositions, but that in and of itself does not make it proper method.)

In addition, Epp at times is somewhat dismissive of other viewpoints and facets of the discussion; he seems eager to accept what appears to be a foregone conclusion (as an indication of this, see the dedication in the front matter). For example, in the concluding chapter Epp argues the case that his interpretation of Rom 16:7, plus the recognition that 1 Cor 14:34–35 is an interpolation, plus the recognition that 1 Tim 2:8–15 is deuterio-Pauline (and simply finalizes the subordination of women which began in the other deuterio-Pauline books of Ephesians and Colossians!) removes any Pauline restriction on women teaching in the church. What he fails to point out is that each of these premises is hotly debated within biblical scholarship and not necessarily widely accepted; for that reason, Epp will not be able to foreclose debate about the individual texts mentioned or the larger issue of gender roles in the church.

Finally, Epp implies throughout his text that he is taking the high road of a proper, enlightened, modern attitude toward an important contemporary issue, that of the role of gender in church life. My response is as old as it is predictable: The high road is not determined by our present socio-cultural norms, nor is it necessarily pointed out by the history of interpretation. The high road is the road delineated by the proper understanding of Scripture, and in many respects Epp has advanced the argument but not proven the point nor even reflected the depth of contemporary discussion. I do recommend his text to those who wish to familiarize themselves with scholarship on Junia and Rom 16:7. It should be read only as representative of ongoing discussion—not as the final word.

Annotated Bibliography for Gender-Related Articles in 2007

Compiled and Annotated by Barak Tjader

Contributing Editor

The Journal for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood

Louisville, Kentucky

In this issue of the journal we profile some of the most significant gender-related articles from 2007. Here is a brief reminder about the categories we are using and our intent in using them. *Complementarian* designates an author who recognizes the full personal equality of the sexes, coupled with an acknowledgment of role distinctions in the home and church, as articulated in the Danvers Statement (see back cover of *JBMW*). *Egalitarian* classifies evangelicals who see undifferentiated equality (i.e., they see no scriptural warrant for affirming male headship in the home or the church). Under the *Non-Evangelical* heading, we have classified important secular works that address the subject of biblical gender issues from a religious, albeit, non-evangelical point of view. This category also serves as our classification for liberal scholars wanting to retain some sort of Christian identity. Finally, under the *Undeclared* heading, we have listed those authors who do not give sufficient indication of their fundamental stance for us to classify them more specifically, or authors whose position is too ambiguous to classify in light of the category descriptions above.

Complementarian

Ashford, Bruce. "Worldview, Anthropology, and Gender: A Call to Widen the Parameters of the Discussion." *Journal for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* 12, no. 1 (2007): 7–9.

In light of a recent wave of aggressive secularism, Ashford reminds complementarians of

the need to understand and articulate the biblical anthropology. In conversation with an unbelieving culture, he argues, believers should present issues such as male and female complementarity within the framework of humanity's unique creation in the image of God.

Bjerkaas, Robert. "And Adam Called His Wife's Name Eve': A Study in Authentic Biblical Manhood." *Journal for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* 12, no. 1 (2007): 16–20.

Drawing principles from the narrative of Genesis 1–3, Bjerkaas explores the implications of Adam's naming of his wife for biblical manhood. As Adam chose the name "life" for his spouse even after the curses of Genesis 3, Bjerkaas reasons that masculinity as shown in Scripture requires husbands to believe the promises of God, look forward in faith, and initiate in speaking grace and truth to their wives.

Burk, Denny, and Jim Hamilton. "Younger Evangelicals and Women in Ministry: A Sketch of the Spectrum of Opinion." *Journal for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* 12, no. 2 (2007): 26–40.

Burk and Hamilton offer an assessment of the current state of young evangelicals concerning women in ministry. The article focuses on the views and practices of current evangelical pastors and leaders, with the authors dividing practitioners into four categories: (1) hierarchy in principle/hierarchy in practice, (2) hierarchy in principle/no hierarchy in practice, (3) no hierarchy in prin-

ciple/ hierarchy in practice, and (4) no hierarchy in principle/no hierarchy in practice. Burk and Hamilton's categories helpfully clarify inconsistencies and disagreements among both complementarians and egalitarians as to how they actually apply their principled views.

Davis, Andrew M. "Fathers and Sons in Deuteronomy 6: An Essential Link in Redemptive History." *Journal for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* 12, no. 1 (2007): 21–31.

Davis examines the redemptive-historical significance of Deuteronomy 6 within the overarching patriarchal context of Old Testament covenantal promises, arguing for a multi-generational approach of father-son training and discipleship. He makes a compelling case that Deuteronomy's patriarchal thrust envisions fathers—as representative spiritual heads of their families—raising up future generations of spiritual leaders. Davis then lists practical ways in which Israelite fathers were expected to train their sons to lead in the home, before concluding with several derivative applications for Christian fathers seeking to raise future leaders.

Duesing, Jason, and Thomas White. "Neanderthals Chasing Bigfoot? The State of the Gender Debate in the Southern Baptist Convention." *Journal for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* 12, no. 2 (2007): 5–19.

Duesing and White survey the colorful history of the Southern Baptist Convention's (SBC) views on gender. While rank-and-file Southern Baptists have traditionally understood the pastorate to be limited to men, the authors detail the prominence of the gender issue in the convention's escalating conflict during the 1980s and 1990s—particularly with regard to its academic institutions. Because of the shift in SBC seminaries, as well as the adoption of the Baptist Faith and Message 2000, Duesing and White convey optimism about the present state of the convention's gender debate and are hopeful that Southern Baptist churches will continue to see a practical outworking of their confessional complementarianism.

Nelson, P. G. "Inscription to a High Priestess at Ephesus." *Journal for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* 12, no. 1 (2007): 14–15.

Nelson provides a short description of a first-century tribute to an Ephesian high priestess. The inscription casts doubt on the popular egalitarian argument that Paul capitulates to cultural norms in advocating male headship in the home and church.

Storms, Sam. "Women in Ministry in the Vineyard, U.S.A." *Journal for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* 12, no. 2 (2007): 20–25.

Storms chronicles the move in Vineyard's stance on gender. Although early leader John Wimber advocated a complementarian view of church leadership, Vineyard churches did not initially take an official position in the gender debate. To clarify confusion over gender issues, Storms writes, the Vineyard USA Board of Directors penned a letter to pastors affirming egalitarianism at all levels of the church's ecclesial structure.

Walden, Wayne. "Ephesians 5:21 in Translation." *Journal for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* 12, no. 1 (2007): 10–13.

While commentators have disagreed over precisely how Eph 5:21 relates to its extended pericope, Walden argues that translation of the verse should show connection to both the preceding and subsequent passages. Furthermore, rather than espousing mutual submission, the verse actually teaches a structure of submission to proper authorities.

Egalitarian

Bilezikian, Gilbert. "Church Leadership that Kills Community." *Priscilla Papers* 21, no. 4 (2007): 5–7.

Bilezikian argues that most churches operate under an authority-driven model of government borrowed from the corporate business world rather than the congregationalism prescribed in the New Testament. New Testament ecclesiology, he asserts, calls for congregations to "exercise their own leadership before they have it imposed on them by

an elite group of leaders above them” (6). While the Pastoral Epistles prove exceptions to this rule, Bilezikian reasons that the leadership restrictions placed by Paul on women, unmarried men, and others are given for “situations of terminal crisis” (6). Aside from the exegetical and theological difficulties in relegating the leadership directives in 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus merely to churches in extreme crisis, Bilezikian ignores the clear instruction toward strong pastoral leadership given elsewhere in the New Testament (e.g. Heb 13:17, 1 Pet 5:1–5) in addition to the wider biblical teaching on gender.

Birungi, Medad. “Gender Injustice Destroys the Whole Family: One Child’s Experience.” *Priscilla Papers* 21, no. 2 (2007): 20–23.

Birungi narrates the story of reconciliation with his father who had cursed him along with the rest of his family years earlier, relegating them to lives of poverty. Because of the forgiveness his family now knows, Birungi seeks the inclusion of women in ministerial leadership roles.

Cohick, Lynn. “Met with Dancing: The Changing Faces of African Christian Women.” *Priscilla Papers* 21, no. 3 (2007): 16–24.

After asserting that societies construct gender, Cohick relates the ways in which African Christian women have been shaped by their identity in community. She parallels the results of her study with the biblical story of Jephthah’s daughter. Operating from a feminist assumption, Cohick suggests that just as Jephthah tragically sealed the fate of his own daughter, African society suppresses the self-determining power of choice that would free its women to actuate their potential. Cohick, as well as some of the African interviewees, views headship/submission structures in the home and church as a result of cultural biases rather than prescribed in Scripture.

Compleman-Blair, J. Martha. “New Lenses for Viewing Submission.” *Priscilla Papers* 21, no. 3 (2007): 4–8.

In this article, Compleman-Blair seeks to read-

just the lenses of academic scholarship with regard to interpreting Eph 5:18–22 and Col 3:12–17. She employs typical egalitarian argumentation in understanding husbands and wives to be mutually submissive and that the husband is the “source” of the wife. After flattening the hierarchical lenses of these passages, she offers five principles for reciprocating submissive relationships. Compleman-Blair then concludes with the troubling assertion that mutual submission “is righteousness” that “contains the very essence of eternal life: knowing God” (8).

Dinkler, Michal Beth. “Sarah’s Submission: Peter’s Analogy in 1 Peter 3:5–6.” *Priscilla Papers* 21, no. 3 (2007): 9–15.

Dinkler considers Peter’s injunction for wives to submit to their husbands in 1 Pet 3:5–6. Rather than a universal directive for all wives at all times, she argues, Peter advocates a “qualified submission” to unbelieving husbands for evangelistic purposes. Appealing to the Jewish and Greco-Roman pattern of *paterfamilias*, the wider context of Peter’s reference to Abraham and Sarah, and the parallel injunction to slaves, Dinkler contends that the submission Peter asks of wives is merely temporary and functional, not a permanent provision for Christian wives. Dinkler, however, does not adequately account for the fact that Peter addresses all wives and husbands, not merely the wives with unbelieving husbands. Nor does she address how the husband’s task of honoring his wife as the “weaker vessel” fits within the framework of qualified submission for the purpose of evangelism.

Dugan, Jennie. “Jesus and Trust.” *Priscilla Papers* 21, no. 4 (2007): 19–27.

Dugan contrasts Jesus’ cultivation of trust with the Pharisees’ essentially defensive and mistrustful outlook. Laced with enigmatic assertions—such as, “Jesus would not disregard equality any more than he would have disregarded empathy” (19) and “To Jesus, equality has no limits, no endpoints” (21)—the article argues for the full equality of all persons and the abrogation of social and ecclesial hierarchy. Dugan, however, nowhere distinguishes between ontological and functional equality and

does not deal with texts that are problematic to an equality that “has no limits.”

Keener, Craig. “Women’s Education and Public Speech in Antiquity.” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 50, no. 4 (2007): 747–59.

Keener argues that women in antiquity were, by and large, less educated than men. Though Keener—like many other egalitarians—uses this to justify his understanding of the cultural specificity of texts such as 1 Tim 2:11–12 and 1 Cor 14:34–35, he is careful to point out that the central premise of his historical evaluation does not necessitate an egalitarian conclusion.

Keener, Médine Moussounga. “How Subjection Harms Congolese Women: A Call to Consciousness.” *Priscilla Papers* 21, no. 3 (2007): 25–28.

Keener details the atrocities endured by women in the Republic of Congo. Congolese women face the cruelties of poverty; prostitution; AIDS; physical and sexual abuse in the home, school, and workplace; and rape in the midst of war-torn areas. Complementarians and egalitarians alike can vehemently renounce and seek to prevent and correct this type of predatory patriarchy that victimizes women made in the image of God.

Lincoln, Lucy. “Two Gardens.” *Priscilla Papers* 21, no. 1 (2007): 21–26.

Lincoln offers an exercise in biblical hermeneutics with view to the current gender debate. She argues that the garden-tomb of Jesus wherein death was defeated echoes the garden of Eden from which death entered the world. Second, when Mary mistakes Jesus for a gardener, Lincoln asserts that John points readers back to the failure of the first gardener to parallel the second gardener whose mission did not fail. Furthermore, Jesus reverses the freedom relinquished by Adam and Eve in acquiescing to the tempter’s scheme in Eden by freeing Mary of Migdal of her shackled, demonic past. Lincoln concludes that John’s use of literary echoes in Jesus’ commissioning of Mary to relay the news of His resurrection helps explain the “few verses” that seem to contradict the full

inclusion of women in ministry.

Manasseh, Elizabeth Leelavathi. “Gender Injustice: Evangelical Initiatives in India.” *Priscilla Papers* 21, no. 2 (2007): 24–27.

Manasseh laments the lack of gender justice in Indian society and churches. She argues that the New Testament mandates a “new community in Christ” in which all racial, class, and gender divisions are removed. Unfortunately, Manasseh’s perception of three theological assumptions underlying a “subordinationist” biblical hermeneutic does not reflect the views of complementarians. Complementarians reject any notion of woman’s ontological inferiority, do not view “all daughters of Eve” with contempt for Eve’s role in the fall, and certainly deny that woman’s existence is merely instrumental rather than fundamental. While all believers can join in grieving the state of injustice in India, egalitarian gender roles in the church and home do not necessarily follow.

Pierce, Ronald W. “The Feminine Voice of God: Women as Prophets in the Bible.” *Priscilla Papers* 21, no. 1 (2007): 4–8.

Pierce traces the prophetic voices of women through the biblical narrative, emphasizing their leadership role and recounting the stories of how God has used women to speak to His people. Pierce concludes that the fact of women prophets legitimates the full inclusion of women in the offices of the church and the task of preaching. While complementarians can affirm and celebrate with Pierce the unique and valuable contributions of women in Scripture, they will not accept the jump he makes from prophet to preaching applications within the church.

Sider, Ronald J. “Gender and Justice Today.” *Priscilla Papers* 21, no. 2 (2007): 4–8.

Sider details some of the horrific injustices against women prevalent in the world today. The article lists statistics concerning (1) cultural preferences for boys that result in massive abortion and abandonment of girls, (2) inequality in educational opportunities, (3) inequality in health care, (4)

inequality in property ownership and work compensation, (5) physical violence against women, and (6) sexual trafficking and prostitution. Sider notes that those on all sides of gender discussions can agree to the outrage of social structures that propagate violence and injustice toward women.

Story, J. Lyle. "The Discipleship of Women—From Jesus' Birth to the Empty Tomb." *Priscilla Papers* 21, no. 1 (2007): 14–20.

Story analyzes the draw of Jesus in his interaction with women followers. Highlighting the radically countercultural inclusive nature of His discipling relationships, Story shows how the narratives of Jesus' encounters with women affirm and define their place as genuine disciples.

Undeclared

Hoehner, Harold W. "Can a Woman Be a Pastor-Teacher?" *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 50, no. 4 (2007): 761–71.

Seeking to clarify confusion about proper roles for women in ministry, Hoehner argues that the office of elder/overseer is distinct from the gift of pastor-teacher. While the New Testament reserves the office of elder for men, it does not place restrictions on gifts and, thus, does not exclude women as pastor-teachers. Hoehner claims that keeping this distinction clears up "85–90%" of the problems raised about women in ministry (771). He asserts that separating gift from office opens up many possibilities for women in ministry, such as teaching in parachurch organizations and academic institutions. In an attempt to clarify uncertainty about women in ministry, however, Hoehner perhaps confuses the issue further for local churches, as no specific applications of this gift inside the church are discussed. Moreover, exercising a gift outside the church so closely related to a function expressly forbidden inside the church seems to miss the larger thrust of the New Testament's teaching on gender. For a more detailed response to Hoehner, readers should consult the review of his article by James Hamilton in this issue of *JBMW*.

Tracy, Steven R. "Clergy Responses to Domestic Violence." *Priscilla Papers* 21, no. 2 (2007): 9–16.

Tracy argues that clergy can and often do exacerbate the problem of domestic violence by asking women to submit to abusive husbands, not condemning the practice from the pulpit, minimizing its significance, and failing to separate women from abusive men. Positively, he suggests that clergy educate themselves on the problem of abuse, condemn it from the pulpit, seek help from "professional" counselors, hold abusers fully responsible for their actions, and protect abused women and children.

Tracy, Steven R. "Patriarchy and Domestic Violence: Challenging Common Misconceptions." *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 50, no. 3 (2007): 573–94.

After showing the fact of domestic abuse as a problem in the United States, Tracy seeks to clarify erroneous beliefs about the causal connections between patriarchy and abuse. According to Tracy, the feminist view that sees patriarchy as the ultimate root cause of abuse fails to account for the complexity of the issue as well as studies that show that men who regularly attend conservative, patriarchal churches are the least likely to abuse women. The opposite error, he argues, is to see no causal relationship at all between patriarchy and abuse. Tracy concludes by issuing three challenges to complementarians and egalitarians, calling on each side to address the issue with clarity and to avoid mischaracterization of opposing arguments.

Yamauchi, Edwin M. "Scripture as Talisman, Specimen, and Dragoman." *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 50, no. 1 (2007): 3–30.

In describing the biblical-theological methodology of conservative evangelicals, Yamauchi details some of the recent developments in the gender debate. While claiming allegiance to neither side, he compares the "redemptive movement" hermeneutic of egalitarian William Webb with the writings of complementarian Wayne Grudem.

Non-Evangelical

Anderson-Rajkumar, Evangeline. “Practicing Gender Justice as a Faith Mandate in India.” *Studies in World Christianity* 13, no. 1 (2007): 33–52.

For Indian women to claim their rightful place in church leadership, the author contends, gender justice must precede both theology and ministry because of belief in a God who is gender-just.

Bateye, Bolaji Olukemi. “Forging Identities: Women as Participants and Leaders in the Church among the Yoruba.” *Studies in World Christianity* 13, no. 1 (2007): 1–12.

Bateye observes that the rise of Pentecostalism in Africa has given occasion for women to take leadership roles in the church. The female leaders of this new generation of churches have emphasized the place of women in Jesus’ ministry, the ontological equality of women to men, and that problematic Pauline texts are culturally specific and non-binding on the contemporary church.

Makoro, Thelma. “The Political Emancipation of Women in South Africa and the Challenge to Leadership in the Churches.” *Studies in World Christianity* 13, no. 1 (2007): 53–66.

Makoro argues that a culture of male dominance in Southern Africa has led to the exclusion of women from pastoral leadership. She contends for women’s “emancipation” in church leadership using sociopolitical, rather than biblical, rationale. Furthermore, Makoro suggests that denying women leadership positions in the church classifies as “abuse and dehumanisation of women” (56).

Wall, John. “Fatherhood, Childism, and the Creation of Society.” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 75, no. 1 (2007): 52–76.

Wall critiques the “soft” patriarchy advocated by sociologist Bradford Wilcox in *Soft Patriarchs, New Men: How Christianity Shapes Fathers and Husbands*. Wall instead argues for a child-centered, egalitarian “progressive familism” that sees cultivating a child’s creative participation in society as

the ultimate end of fatherhood. He criticizes the emphasis that soft patriarchalists place on subjective, therapeutic expressiveness in the home while justifying a strict segregation of public/private spheres. (See also the response by Wilcox in the same volume.)