

THE JOURNAL FOR BIBLICAL
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MANHOOD & WOMANHOOD

ARTICLES INCLUDE:

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R. Albert Mohler Jr.

You've Come a Long Way, Baby
Mary A. Kassian

The Syntax of 1 Timothy 2:12:
A Rejoinder to Philip B. Payne
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Barry Joslin

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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.

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Table of Contents

STANDARD FARE

- 2 Editorial
- 6 Odds & Ends

ESSAYS & PERSPECTIVES

- 11 **Sorry, President Carter ... This Argument Falls Flat**
R. Albert Mohler Jr.
- 13 **You've Come a Long Way, Baby**
Mary A. Kassian
- 24 **Raising Girls to be Godly Women in a Confused and
Conflicted Culture**
Nina Fry

STUDIES

- 37 **The Syntax of 1 Timothy 2:12:
A Rejoinder to Philip B. Payne**
Andreas J. Köstenberger
- 41 **"Son of Man" or "Human Beings"?**
Hebrews 2:5–9 and a Response to Craig Blomberg
Barry Joslin

FROM THE SACRED DESK

- 51 **The Means, Mandates, and Motivation of Biblical Womanhood
(Titus 2:4–5)**
Eric M. Schumacher

GENDER STUDIES IN REVIEW

- 57 **Whence Evangelical Feminism?**
A Review of Pamela D. H. Cochran, *Evangelical Feminism*
Mark Rogers
- 61 **Finally Unconvinced**
A Review of John G. Stackhouse Jr., *Finally Feminist*
Robert E. Sagers
- 64 **New Paradigms or Old Fissures?**
**A Review of Mark Husbands and Timothy Larsen, eds.,
*Women, Ministry and the Gospel***
Jared M. Compton
- 68 **Where Faith and Life Meet**
A Review of Carolyn McCulley, *Radical Womanhood*
Candi Finch
- 71 **Costly Tolerance**
A Review of R. Albert Mohler Jr., *Desire and Deceit*
Timothy Shaun Price
- 74 **New Testament Theology and a Biblical View of Gender**
A Review of Thomas R. Schreiner, *New Testament Theology*
Christopher W. Cowan
- 77 **Annotated Bibliography for Gender-Related Books in 2008**
Jeff D. Breeding

Editorial: A Critical Look at the Barna Study on the Religious Life of Homosexuals

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Introduction

Martin Luther is reported to have said that gospel preachers disgrace themselves by failing to take a stand on God's word in the face of opposition.

If I profess with the loudest voice and clearest exposition every portion of the Word of God except precisely that little point which the world and the devil are at that moment attacking, I am not confessing Christ, however boldly I may be professing Him. Where the battle rages there the loyalty of the soldier is proved; and to be steady on all the battle front besides, is mere flight and disgrace if he flinches at that point.¹

In his day, Luther stood against a Roman Catholicism that sold indulgences to parishioners so that they might buy forgiveness of sins. For

Luther and the other Reformers, the sale of indulgences amounted to a nullification of the Bible's teaching about justification and grace. Justification by *grace* through *faith alone* in the work of *Christ alone* were doctrines under siege because of a tradition that did not accept *sola scriptura*. The Reformers understood that the authority of the Bible itself was at stake, and in that sense the Reformation became a battle for the Bible. That battle would have been lost, however, had faithful believers such as Luther failed to identify those places at which the assault on biblical truth was most fierce. To shrink back from that fight was nothing less than a cowardly capitulation to the enemies of truth.

In every generation, Christians face opposition to the word of God that they profess. Sometimes the attacks are subtle. Sometimes they are not. The issues vary, but the opposition from the enemy does not. His line of attack is ancient: "Hath God really said?" (Gen 3:1). Has God really said

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that there is only one way of salvation? Has God really said that you cannot serve God and your money? Has God really said that you shouldn't lust after that woman who is not your wife? And the attacks go on and on.

In our generation, one line of attack goes like this: Has God really said that there is male and female? Has God really said that a man shall cleave to his wife and become one flesh with her alone? This line of questions is particularly effective in cultures that have cast off the heterosexual norm that is revealed both in nature and in the Bible. Many in the West in general and in America in particular regard this heterosexual norm as the ethic of the powerful who wish to repress unjustly the sexual freedom of the homosexual minority. Thus biblical notions of manhood and womanhood and God's design for human sexuality are precisely that place where "the world and the devil are at that moment attacking."

The issues have changed, but the opposition to God's word hasn't. The question for us is whether or not we will "flinch" or stand true. The culture's hostility to biblical teaching on gender and sexuality has only increased in recent decades, and the rising tide of opposition shows no signs of subsiding. One can hardly suggest today that God has a distinct heterosexual purpose for human sexuality without being dismissed by many as hateful and bigoted. In other words, there's no quicker way to be dismissed as narrow and irrelevant in today's culture than to declare faithfully the word of God as it relates to human sexuality. It is not surprising, therefore, that even some evangelicals are calling for muted tones on the topic of homosexuality. It was only three years ago that Brian McLaren called on evangelicals to stop talking about homosexuality. He argued that our ethic is offensive to the culture and that we are not really sure what the Bible teaches on the subject anyway.² Essentially, he made the ancient appeal: Hath God really said? Clearly, the mainstreaming of homosexuality in the culture is now putting pressure on communities of faith, and some are caving in.

A Look at Barna's Recent Study

Last summer, the Barna Group released the results of a survey that explores the spiritual life of gay and lesbian adults. The study examines "20 faith-oriented attributes" and how homosexuals and heterosexuals differ from one another on these attributes. Among other things, the survey found that heterosexuals are more likely than homosexuals to hold an orthodox view of God, to attend church, to read the Bible, and to pray regularly. Homosexuals are more likely than heterosexuals to be unchurched, to have an unorthodox view of God, and to identify themselves as "liberal" on social issues.

What particularly piqued my interest was George Barna's commentary on the survey. He argues that some popular stereotypes about the spiritual life of gays and lesbians are simply wrong. He writes,

People who portray gay adults as godless, hedonistic, Christian bashers are not working with the facts. A substantial majority of gays cite their faith as a central facet of their life, consider themselves to be Christian, and claim to have some type of meaningful personal commitment to Jesus Christ active in their life today.

The data indicate that millions of gay people are interested in faith but not in the local church and do not appear to be focused on the traditional tools and traditions that represent the comfort zone of most churching Christians. Gay adults clearly have a different way of interpreting the Bible on a number of central theological matters, such as perspectives about God. Homosexuals appreciate their faith but they do not prioritize it, and they tend to consider faith to be individual and private rather than communal.

It is interesting to see that most homosexuals, who have some history within the Christian Church, have rejected orthodox biblical teachings and principles—but, in many cases, to nearly the same degree that the heterosexual Chris-

tian population has rejected those same teachings and principles. Although there are clearly some substantial differences in the religious beliefs and practices of the straight and gay populations, there may be less of a spiritual gap between straights and gays than many Americans would assume.³

Barna thinks it significant that the study establishes that a majority of homosexuals are spiritual persons. For him, it's important because the statistic blows up a stereotype that portrays gay people as non-religious.

But we have to question whether Barna has rightly interpreted the significance of this study. To say that most homosexuals consider themselves to be religious (or even Christian) is not surprising—or at least it should not be. Most Americans consider themselves to be Christian, but of course it doesn't actually follow that they are. Many sinners *think* themselves to be Christian, but *thinking* does not make it so. A close look reveals that many who claim the name “Christian” are not *Christian* in any biblical sense (Matt 7:21; 2 Tim 3:5).

The problem is that large segments of the population simply don't understand what Christianity is. In fact, this study says that both gay and straight people believe in similar proportion that “good people can earn their way into Heaven through their goodness.” Misunderstandings about Christianity abound, and it's no shock that the rate of misunderstanding between heterosexual and homosexual populations would be similar. This doesn't make the homosexual population more *Christian* than we previously thought. It does reveal, however, that the population in general is more confused about Christianity than a “Christian” nation should be. Evangelicals who are “surprised” by this finding need to read their Bibles more.

Why does Barna think it so important to downplay the differences between the spiritual lives of homosexuals and heterosexuals? The data shows that there are some significant divergences between the two groups with respect to the proportion and the content of their religious practices. The study shows homosexuals to be more likely than the het-

erosexuals to be heterodox and unchurched. Why does Barna minimize this difference while hyping the alleged similarity? The data would not seem to point in this direction, though the ever-present cultural pressure to mainstream homosexuality would.

Conclusion

Thomas Kuhn once argued that there is no such thing as theory-neutral observation, for all scientific observation is theory-laden.⁴ In other words, our worldview and personal experiences color everything that we see so that there is no such thing as objective, detached observation of facts. That appears to be the case with respect to the way that Barna has characterized the results of The Barna Group survey. What led Barna to his peculiar interpretation of this study? Can it be that even Barna's analysis has been shaped to some extent by the prevailing cultural winds? Barna would do well to clarify why he thinks these similarities between homosexuals and heterosexuals are significant.

Evangelicals need to be wary of external influences that are pushing us to give up a biblical sexual ethic—influences that compel us to minimize the difference between biblical teaching and where the culture departs from it. We cannot give-in to the temptation to declare this a matter of religious indifference, as though the question of homosexuality were a second or third order issue. The word of God compels a clear word from Christians on matters of sexuality. There is no faithful discipleship that ignores the heterosexual norm that is affirmed over and over in both the Old and New Testaments. There is no call to repentance from sexual sin where this critical teaching is left out or ignored. When this teaching is overlooked, that is the “flight and disgrace” that Luther warned against in his day, and it is a warning that we would do well to hear in ours.

ENDNOTES

³This line is oft attributed to Luther, though I have not been able to find the source. Luther says something close to it in a letter dated June 3, 1523, but it is not the same quote. See *D. Martin Luther's Werke : kritische Gesamtausgabe (Weimarer Ausgabe) : [3. Band] Briefwechsel*, ed. (Weimar: H. Böhlhaus Nachfolger, 1933), 81-82. As far as I can tell, the exact quote belongs to the apocryphal Luther, though he would likely have shared the sentiment

expressed in it.

²Brian McLaren, "Brian McLaren on the Homosexual Question: Finding a Pastoral Response" [cited 3 April 2009]. Online: http://blog.christianitytoday.com/outofur/archives/2006/01/brian_mclaren_o.html: "Frankly, many of us don't know what we should think about homosexuality. We've heard all sides but no position has yet won our confidence so that we can say 'it seems good to the Holy Spirit and us.' . . . If we think that there may actually be a legitimate context for some homosexual relationships, we know that the biblical arguments are nuanced and multilayered, and the pastoral ramifications are staggeringly complex. We aren't sure if or where lines are to be drawn, nor do we know how to enforce with fairness whatever lines are drawn."

"Perhaps we need a five-year moratorium on making pronouncements. In the meantime, we'll practice prayerful Christian dialogue, listening respectfully, disagreeing agreeably. When decisions need to be made, they'll be admittedly provisional. We'll keep our ears attuned to scholars in biblical studies, theology, ethics, psychology, genetics, sociology, and related fields. Then in five years, if we have clarity, we'll speak; if not, we'll set another five years for ongoing reflection."

³"Spiritual Profile of Homosexual Adults Provides Surprising Insights," Barna Group [cited 30 July 2009]. Online: <http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/13-culture/282-spiritual-profile-of-homosexual-adults-provides-surprising-insights>.

⁴Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970). Quoted in Stanley Porter, "Studying Ancient Languages from a Modern Linguistic Perspective: Essential Terms and Terminology," *Filologia Neotestamentaria* 2 (1989): 151.

Odds & Ends

CBMW leader “very encouraged” by NIV announcement

Randy Stinson, president of The Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood said on September 1, 2009, that he is both grateful and hopeful after Zondervan announced earlier in the day that it will revise its New International Version (NIV) translation of the Bible to correct the “mistake” it made in publishing the gender-neutral version of the NIV.

Evangelical scholars associated with CBMW were concerned with more than 3,000 changes that appeared in the TNIV when it was published in 2002, changes that flattened gender language, eliminating many references such as “son,” “he,” “him,” “his,” “father,” and “brother,” references that diverged from the original Greek, Hebrew, and Aramaic.

Translators from Biblica (formerly the International Bible Society), admitted in a press conference announcing the new NIV that many concerns regarding the faithfulness of gender-neutral translations to the original languages were legitimate and that such translations had divided the evangelical community. In his comments, Biblica CEO Keith Danby referenced the gender-neutral NIVi, which was published in 1997 in the United Kingdom.

“It is very humble of Zondervan and Biblica to admit mistakes and acknowledge the controversy that they brought to the evangelical community over the past several years,” Stinson said.

“We are grateful for the godly approach to try to reconcile this. We are hopeful for the new product. I don’t have any reason to believe that they are not sincere about their willingness to revisit the more than 3,000 gender changes to which we were opposed.”

Stinson said he has been in conversation with scholar Doug Moo, chairman of the Committee on Bible Translation (the committee that is respon-

sible for the new translation) and believes that the evangelical concerns over the accuracy of so-called “gender-neutral” language will be taken seriously.

When Zondervan first announced a revision of the NIV in 1997, a group of evangelical leaders and scholars including CBMW, Focus on the Family, God’s World Publications (publisher of *World*) and others, met in Colorado Springs and developed a set of guidelines for biblical interpretation as it relates to gender language.

The guidelines were to serve as a baseline for translation of the gender language in the TNIV, but translators did not abide by them. Stinson said he is encouraged that the translation committee for the newest NIV may at least loosely follow the Colorado Springs Guidelines.

“It is my understanding that the Committee on Bible Translation does not see itself as obligated to the Colorado Springs Guidelines, but still may end up translating some of those passages or maybe many of those passages in a way that is commensurate with those guidelines when it revisits its decisions from the past,” Stinson said.

“We will reserve judgment, and we are going to be watching this closely with hope and giving the benefit of the doubt to the people revising the NIV. We will evaluate the product based on things like the Colorado Springs Guidelines and other parameters we think are important in the debate.”

“It sounds like they are very genuine about involving other scholars who would have been in opposition to the changes to gender language in the TNIV and who desire to engage in genuine dialogue.”

– Jeff Robinson

Ligon Duncan Responds to NIV Announcement

On September 1, 2009, Zondervan (the publisher of the NIV), the Committee on Bible Translation [CBT] (which oversees the NIV and TNIV translations) and Biblica (which owns the

copyrights to the NIV and TNIV) announced the discontinuation of the TNIV translation. The TNIV received significant criticism from the larger evangelical community both because of the way in which it was introduced to the Christian public (there was a widespread perception of lack of integrity in the process), and because of numerous controversial aspects to the translation itself (including but not limited to the way it handles gender language and the veiling of some important Messianic references).

I want to thank publically Maureen (Moe) Girkins, President of Zondervan, for her transparent integrity in this process. I have the utmost respect for her. I also want to thank Professor Doug Moo of the CBT, who has long been a hero of mine (along with his colleague and mine, Bruce Waltke). Though I disagree with Professor Moo's public assessment of the relative correctness of the choices the TNIV made in relation to gender language, I honor him as a father in the faith and brother in the Lord, from whom I have learned more than I can adequately express, and for whom I have the highest esteem.

I also believe Ms. Girkins and Professor Moo implicitly when they say that the CBT is embarking upon: "a complete review of every gender-related change we have made in the TNIV" and that they are "actively seeking scholarly input" from anyone who would like to send it to them. I will personally avail myself of that opportunity with Professor Moo (and I have been expressly invited and encouraged to do so by Ms. Girkins).

When the TNIV first surfaced, the Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood emphatically criticized the CBT's translation choices in numerous places, especially relating to gender-neutral language. We believe that a flawed translation philosophy resulted in the TNIV presenting English readers with an unjustified rendering of the gender language of the Hebrew and Greek texts of the Bible. It is our sincere hope that this new revision of the NIV will do better. We await the new product of the CBT with expectancy. And when we have the opportunity, we will review it for the larger Christian public with rigor and charity.

I especially appreciate that Zondervan and Biblica have both privately and publically acknowledged that they made serious mistakes of process, and that the CBT has committed itself to re-examine the gender-related changes that appeared in the TNIV. This is a welcome and humble approach.

May I also say (though this may come unlooked for and from an unexpected source), as the Chairman of CBMW, the quick reaction of some egalitarians in the blogosphere to Zondervan's announcement, accusing Zondervan and the CBT of "caving in" to "fundamentalists," is uncharitable, inaccurate, and unfair. There is every indication that the CBT aims to be true to its own translation philosophy, whatever the feedback of egalitarians or complementarians may be.

—J. Ligon Duncan III

Albert Mohler Responds to NIV Announcement

The announcement of a new project involving the New International Version of the Bible [NIV] is certain to attract a good deal of interest, both in the media and throughout the evangelical world. This level of attention is inevitable, for few issues can approach the importance of translating the Bible faithfully and accurately.

The announcement of a new NIV update will attract special attention because of the controversy that surrounded the publication and release of what became known as the TNIV, or Today's New International Version, announced in 2002. As is now well-known, the release of the TNIV led to a firestorm of controversy among evangelicals. Even as supporters of the TNIV declared the translation to be superior to previous contemporary English translations in terms of "gender accuracy," others saw the new translation as hopelessly accommodated to contemporary concerns about gender.

The controversy over the TNIV was heated and uncomfortable, but inevitable. Those of us who saw the translation as deficient and misguided in its claim to and application of "gender accuracy" responded to the new translation with alarm and deep concern. The issues of primary concern with the release of the TNIV remain. These issues

include, but are not limited to, matters of gender reference.

As many of us made clear at the time of the TNIV's announcement and release, the issues with this translation had to do with translation decisions that we were convinced did not produce "gender accuracy," but lamentable inaccuracy. The rigorous application of these decisions produced a translation that was not only problematic in terms of direct and indirect gender references, but also in its confusion of crucial texts with messianic significance.

The announcement by Biblica (formerly known as the International Bible Society), the Committee on Bible Translation, and Zondervan comes as the world of English Bible translations has been transformed, even in the brief years since 2002. The joint release indicates that this new translation will be known as the NIV, even though it will be based on the TNIV as it has been edited even since publication. This is a significant departure from the earlier promise to "freeze" the NIV translation in order to protect it from controversy. This decision had been a defensive move taken by the publisher and its partners as controversy threatened to cause significant harm to the reputation of the NIV. As far back as 1997 an effort to revise the NIV was met with intense concern related to the use of "inclusive language."

The issues of concern related to the TNIV remain. For the sake of the gospel, we must hope and pray that we do not confront these same issues in the updated NIV. At the same time, we must avoid reckless talk. Even where we must disagree, we must recognize that everyone involved in this discussion will face the judgment of God for how this disagreement is conducted.

Today's decision indicates that the NIV will be now be "unfrozen." But now the NIV partners have acted openly and honestly to announce their intention. One of the most lamentable aspects of the earlier controversy over the TNIV had to do with what were clearly understood to be broken promises related to the NIV.

The "unfreezing" of the NIV is inevitable. Evangelicals must be committed to the translation

of the Bible into the vernacular language of contemporary people. No translation, no matter how worthy, can remain static and unchanged without the consequence of becoming dated and increasingly out of touch with the development of language. The "unfreezing" of the NIV has now been announced in a way that is respectful and honest.

Maureen (Moe) Gerkins, president of Zondervan, along with representatives of Biblica and the Committee on Bible Translation, have approached this new project and update with the stated determination to revisit controversial translation issues related to the TNIV and to consider all the concerns raised in that process. She has demonstrated integrity in discussing these issues openly and honestly. She, along with Zondervan's partners, has promised an openness to these concerns. They have not promised to change their translation philosophy. Their straightforwardness on this is commendable, even where we may find ourselves in disagreement over these decisions and the underlying translation philosophy.

The controversy over the TNIV divided the evangelical community. Regrettably, in many cases the controversy produced more heat than light. Nevertheless, this was not always the case. This controversy brought strategic attention to crucial questions related, not only to the NIV family of translations, but to the entire project of translating the Bible into the English language. Furthermore, the controversy was directed to very real disagreements about the meaning of gender and language. These are issues of great theological, biblical, pastoral, and moral importance.

Behind the most recent controversies there remains the larger question of translation philosophy, often conceptualized in the distinction between more formal translations and translations that are more dynamic. Even as I recognize a spectrum between formal and dynamic approaches, my strong preference, based in theological and biblical considerations, is for a translation that is committed to formal equivalence as the primary goal.

In the end, the update of the NIV to be released in 2011 will have to stand on its own. Those of us who have had significant concerns with the TNIV

should communicate these concerns respectfully, candidly, and directly to the Committee on Bible Translation, to Zondervan, and to Biblica. When released, the updated NIV will deserve and require the attentive study and review of all committed evangelicals. We must hope and pray that this updated NIV will be found both faithful and useful. For now, the decisions that will determine the faithfulness and usefulness of this updated edition are in the hands of the Committee on Bible Translation. We must all pray that their work will produce an updated translation we can greet with appreciation and trust. We must take the members of the Committee on Bible Translation at their word that they will consider these concerns. To fail to pray and to act in this way will be to fail at a basic Christian commitment. The issue is not only the integrity of a Bible translation, but our integrity as Christians.

And so we hope. And so we pray. And so we wait.

– R. Albert Mohler Jr.

The TNIV Is Dead ... Sort of.

As everyone now knows, the TNIV will go off the market in 2011, and now it is all but dead ... sort of. The 2011 revision of the NIV will be based on the TNIV, though we still do not know the extent to which gender-neutral translations will be included. According to Doug Moo, the verdict is still out on this question. Ted Olsen reports for *Christianity Today* that,

Doug Moo, chairman of the the Committee on Bible Translation (which is the body responsible for the translation) said the committee has not yet decided how much the 2011 edition will include the gender-inclusive language that roiled critics of the TNIV.

“We felt certainly at the time it was the right thing to do, that the language was moving in that direction,” Moo said. “All that is back on the table. This has been a time of transition in the in the way the English language has handled gender, and it is in flux and in process as things are changing quickly” (“Correcting the

‘Mistakes’ of TNIV and Inclusive NIV, Translators Will Revise NIV in 2011,” *Christianity Today* blog, dated September 1, 2009, accessed on-line, <http://blog.christianitytoday.com>).

I’m holding out hope that the Committee on Bible Translation will not do in the NIV 2011 what they did in the TNIV. If they do, I would oppose it, and so would many others. The NIV would then become the new “divisive” translation, and I don’t think that helps anyone.

That being said, I’m glad that the TNIV is going off the market. For the sake of the countless numbers who read the NIV, I hope that the inaccuracies produced by their “gender accurate” translation philosophy disappear too.

– Denny Burk

Church of Scotland Approves Openly Homosexual Pastor

In May the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland approved the appointment of an openly homosexual man as pastor of Queen’s Cross Church in Aberdeen. Scott Rennie, the pastor in question, was previously married but is now divorced and living with his male partner. A group of pastors had opposed the appointment but lost the vote. There was intense debate and the possibility of a significant schism has been discussed (reminiscent of the Great Disruption of 1843). Some pastors said they were considering a move to the Free Church of Scotland if they can navigate the Free Church’s position on exclusive psalm singing.

This is a major development in the gender debate with wide impact on believers in Scotland and elsewhere. It is interesting to read the rationale given by those supporting the ordination of open homosexuals. According the *The Scotsman*, Reverend Lindsay Biddle of Affirmation Scotland, a group which supports gay and lesbian clergy, stated, “Scripture does not address homosexuality, much less condemn it.” Archbishop Desmond Tutu weighed in to support the appointment stating,

I find it a little difficult to understand when, from all that we know about our

Lord, he would have been on the side of the oppressed and on the side of those in the minority, but then we say in this one case Jesus goes against all the paradigms that we know about him and sides with those who persecute an already persecuted minority.

The approach to the scriptures shown here is telling. All references to homosexuality in the Bible are ignored or excluded (presumably arguing those references only refer to homosexual prostitution), and in the place of explicit statements of Scripture we are given Jesus' practice of siding with the oppressed. Jesus sided with the Scriptures. He reached out to the Samaritans, for example, but did not endorse their teaching (cf. John 4:21–22). Care and compassion in the ministry of Jesus involve bringing people out of errors and into the truth. Jesus did not affirm the woman at the well's immoral lifestyle but called her to repentance.

Interestingly, some have commented that having conceded the issue of women's ordination, there was little ground for holding to a strict reading of the Scriptures in the debate about homosexuality. With the issue now settled in favor of normalizing homosexual behavior, those commenters appear to be correct.

– Ray Van Neste

Sorry, President Carter... This Argument Falls Flat

R. Albert Mohler Jr.

President

*The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary
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For critics of the Southern Baptist Convention, former President Jimmy Carter is the gift that just keeps on giving. Last July, yet another round of news reports trumpeted the news that the former president has resigned his membership in the Southern Baptist Convention. Almost a decade after he first made this announcement, his repetitive return to this theme set up a new avalanche of news reports. Reports, we might add, that are not news. Adding insult to injury, the reports are about a “resignation” that isn’t even a resignation. Try explaining that to the international media.

Back in October of 2000, President Carter sent a letter to some 75,000 Baptists, indicating that he intended to separate himself from the Southern Baptist Convention—a denomination with which he had historically been associated through church membership, public identification, and personal involvement. He spoke of this as “a painful decision” that was made necessary by the convention’s stated convictions on a number of issues. For some years, Mr. Carter had been publicly identified with the more liberal wing of Southern Baptist life. He was well known for holding liberal positions on an entire range of issues that set him at odds with the denomination. The catalyst for his public announcement was the revision of the denomination’s confession of faith earlier that year.

Any honest observer will be compelled to clarify that Mr. Carter’s action was an exercise in public relations. Individuals are not members of

the Southern Baptist Convention, and there is no mechanism for individuals either to join or to resign from the denomination. Local churches indicate their desire to identify with the Southern Baptist Convention through contributing to its causes and declaring themselves to be “in friendly cooperation with” other churches in the fellowship of the convention. As more careful media sources indicated back in October of 2000, President and Mrs. Carter actually remained members of a congregation that is, as *The New York Times* then explained, “still affiliated with the convention.”

Just a few years later, the former president reiterated his desire to separate from the Southern Baptist Convention, producing a series of news reports that rarely referenced the fact that Mr. Carter had made such a public announcement years earlier. Over the last two weeks, the pattern has erupted all over again.

The latest eruption of reports about President Carter’s severing of ties with the Southern Baptist Convention came in the aftermath of an article published in the July 12, 2009, edition of *The Observer* [London]. In this article, Mr. Carter claimed to speak on behalf of “The Elders.” The group’s website identifies “The Elders” as “an independent group of eminent global leaders, brought together by Nelson Mandela, who offer their collective influence and experience to support peace building, help address major causes of human suffering and promote the shared interests of humanity.”

In his article, President Carter reiterated his decision to sever public ties with the Southern Baptist Convention. In his words,

So my decision to sever my ties with the Southern Baptist Convention, after six decades, was painful and difficult. It was, however, an unavoidable decision when the convention's leaders, quoting a few carefully selected Bible verses and claiming that Eve was created second to Adam and was responsible for original sin, ordained that women must be "subservient" to their husbands and prohibited from serving as deacons, pastors or chaplains in the military service. This was in conflict with my belief—confirmed in the holy scriptures—that we are all equal in the eyes of God.

To his credit, President Carter apparently did not claim that this was a new decision or a fresh announcement. Though some media sources jumped on the announcement as "news," others were careful to put his statement in an appropriate historical context. Furthermore, President Carter's reference to the Southern Baptist Convention was not the main point of this article. Instead, his reference to the Southern Baptist Convention introduced his argument that any religious teaching that denies what he construes as full equality for women "is in clear violation not just of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights but also the teachings of Jesus Christ, the Apostle Paul, Moses and the prophets, Muhammad, and founders of other great religions—all of whom have called for proper and equitable treatment of all the children of God."

That, suffice it to say, is a mouthful. This is not a new argument for the former President. But in his article in *The Observer* he does make some interesting assertions. While acknowledging that he has not been trained "in religion or theology," he went on to argue that "the carefully selected verses found in the holy scriptures to justify the superiority of men owe more to time and place—and the determination of male leaders to hold onto their influence—than eternal truths."

All this fits a pattern for which Mr. Carter is

now well known. He simply rejects the texts in the Bible that clearly establish different roles for men and women in the church and the home. He dismisses these verses for the simple reason that he also rejects the inerrancy of the Bible.

He may well be the world's most famous Sunday School teacher, but over just the last several years he has publicly expressed his rejection of the belief that persons must come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ in order to be saved. He has also stated that his faith would not be shaken if Jesus did not perform some of the miracles attributed to him in the New Testament. His denial of biblical inerrancy is not merely theoretical—he actually operates on the assumption that at least some texts of the Bible are false, untruthful, malignantly oppressive, and thus untrustworthy.

President Carter actually makes no argument *for* women as pastors. He simply dismisses out of hand what the Christian church has believed for centuries—and what the vast majority of Christians around the world believe even now. His argument should embarrass any serious person who considers this question, for it is grounded in little more than his own sense of how things ought to be. He makes claims about the Bible that are reckless and irresponsible and historical claims that would make any credible church historian blush. He straightforwardly rejects what he admits some texts of the Bible teach.

Then, he opens and closes his article by citing as his main authority the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the United Nations in 1948. This text, we might note, also declares "freedom of thought, conscience, and religion" as basic human rights. The more important question is this: Does President Carter really believe that he will convince Christians—Southern Baptist or otherwise—to see any human statement as holding a higher authority than the Bible? That question, more than anything else, points to the real reason that President Carter and the Southern Baptist Convention have parted ways. The point of division remains the ultimate authority and total truthfulness of the Bible as the Word of God.

You've Come a Long Way, Baby¹

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In the late 1960s, the Morris Tobacco Company introduced Virginia Slims as a “women’s only” cigarette, launching it with the now well-known slogan, “You’ve come a long way, baby!” The print ads were marked by staged, old-fashioned, black-and-white photos picturing the miserable state of women in the 1900s, prior to the first women’s movement, juxtaposed against full-color photos of far happier, modern women demonstrating their emancipation from male dominance . . . by smoking Virginia Slims.

In one such ad, three small black-and-white scenes depict an arrogant, overweight husband impatiently ringing a bell, demanding that his servile wife respond to his every need. The caption reads, “With this ring, I thee wed. Ring for supper. Ring for paper. Ring for slippers.” The happy, modern, Virginia Slims woman pictured in the forefront rejects the traditional male-defined institution of marriage. Man will not be the head of *her* home. “You’ve come a long way, baby!”

The caption of another ad announces, “Back then, education taught men to run the world and women to run the house.” It shows bored women sitting at old-fashioned desks learning about home economics. The blackboard proclaims that there will be a laundry quiz on Tuesday, and that their homework consists of several cooking and cleaning assignments. The Virginia Slims woman on the adjoining page stands in marked contrast to this outdated concept of female domesticity. She is enlightened. She knows that running a house and looking after children is a low-class, unfulfilling, demeaning job, unsuitable for someone with a university education. She’s determined to get out of the house and do something really important—like run the world! “You’ve come a long way, baby!”

The old-fashioned, black-and-white scene of a third ad depicts several women working hard at typewriters and desks behind their male boss, who thumbs his lapels and takes all the credit for their efforts. The caption reads, “Virginia Slims looks back upon the self-made man (and all the women who made him possible).” The smug Virginia Slims woman in the foreground holds the lapels of *her* business suit in the same manner as the boastful male boss. But there’s no one in the background propping her up. She’s a self-made woman. She makes *herself* possible! “You’ve come a long way, baby!”

A final ad features a large, colorless photo of two policemen forcibly removing a woman from a public beach for wearing an immodest bathing suit. The woman is screaming, “You just wait! Someday we’ll be able to wear any bathing suit we want. Someday we’ll be able to vote. Someday we’ll even have our own cigarette!” The policeman retorts, “That’ll be the day.” But the happy, enlightened Virginia Slims woman in the forefront has the last word. She doesn’t doubt there *will* be a day when she has the right to set her own standards of sexual conduct, morality, and propriety—a day when she dismantles and rewrites all the rules.

“You’ve come a long way, baby!”

We’ve Come a Long Way

Women truly have come a long way in the past fifty years. But a long way isn’t necessarily a good way or the right way.

Up until the middle of the last century, Western culture as a whole generally embraced a Judeo-Christian perspective on gender and sexuality as well as the purpose and structure of the family. Heterosexual marriage, marital fidelity, and the bearing

and nurturing of children in an intact family unit were highly valued concepts—the norm of societal practice. Most agreed that the primary responsibility of the male was to lead, protect, and provide for his family, while the primary responsibility of the female was to nurture and care for her children and home. Differences between male and female were accepted and seldom questioned.

Furthermore, for both men and women, their sense of duty and responsibility to family was far greater than the pursuit of personal fulfillment. Though they may not have been able to identify the source of their values, most individuals had a sense of what it meant to be a man or a woman. They understood the appropriate outworking of gender roles and relationships.

Not any more. We’ve “come a long way, baby.” And the speed and magnitude of force with which this understanding has been deconstructed is visibly astonishing.

Consider the cultural image of women in the 1950s represented by the popular TV sitcom *Leave It to Beaver*. The Cleaver family exemplified the idealized suburban family. In this television series, four ideals were presented as requisites for a happy life, both for women and men: education (Ward and June Cleaver both had college degrees), marriage, children, and hard work. In typical late fifties fashion, June worked hard at home all day taking care of her household and serving in the community, while her husband, Ward, worked hard outside of the home to financially support the family. June was there with fresh-baked cookies and a tall, cold glass of milk when her children, Wally and Beaver, arrived home from school. When Ward walked in the door after work, June, wearing a pretty dress, greeted him with a smile and a kiss, a clean house, and a hot meal on the table for supper.

June and Ward Cleaver were both very happy. In fact, adults in the *Leave It to Beaver* sitcom who didn’t or couldn’t attain the cultural ideals of education, marriage, children, and hard work were the ones depicted as being troubled or missing out. Mrs. Mondello, for example—the mom of Beaver’s friend Larry—had a husband who was frequently out of town on business. She was presented as an

unhappy, exasperated parent struggling single-handedly to raise a son, sometimes depending on Ward to help discipline him. Spinsters like prim, rich Aunt Martha were presented as irksome and interfering, while Uncle Billy, the globe-trotting, yarn-spinning bachelor; free-loading Jeff, the tramp; and Andy, the alcoholic handyman, were depicted from the happily married viewpoint of the series as having missed the mark in life. In the one episode dealing with divorce, the event is depicted as a horrible tragedy, having solely negative effects on children and adults alike.

As the *Leave It to Beaver* sitcom suggests, life for women truly was very different fifty years ago than it is today. Consider these real-life observations from the 1950s:

- Getting married was the norm. Almost *everyone* got married. The average age was twenty for gals and twenty-two for guys.
- Once married, it was expected that the couple would have children, and that the husband would financially support his wife so she could stay at home and care for them during their childhood years.
- The divorce rate was very low. People were expected to remain married and to make their marriages work. Divorce was considered a terrible tragedy.
- If a divorce did occur, and if there were children involved, the courts expected the ex-husband to financially support the wife in a homemaking role, because society considered it vitally important that children have a mom at home.
- Chastity, virginity, and fidelity were virtues; sex outside of a marriage relationship was shameful.
- Scarcely anyone lived common-law, for it carried the stigma of “living in sin.” Furthermore, it was unthinkable and totally improper for a single woman to have a male roommate. The number of couples living together common-law before marriage was so small that statistics for this phenomenon were not even recorded.

- Having a child outside of wedlock was also considered shameful. (Today, one American child is born outside of marriage every twenty-five seconds. More than 40 percent of children will go to sleep tonight in homes in which their fathers do not live.)
- Only 30 percent of all women were employed outside of the home in 1960, and many of those worked part-time only. Very rarely was a woman professionally employed if her children were younger than school age.
- Children were highly desired, highly valued, and highly welcomed additions to both family and community.
- There was no birth control pill.
- Abortion was illegal.
- Pornography, rape, homosexuality, sexual perversion, sexual addiction, and sexually transmitted diseases were uncommon and rarely encountered.
- Men saw it as their responsibility to protect and provide for the women and children under their care.
- Women saw it as their responsibility to ensure that the home front was in order so they could promote and enjoy family life, support their husbands, and focus on raising children in a stable, nurturing, loving environment. Their professional careers took secondary status to their primary and most important career of raising and nurturing the next generation.
- Though certainly not attained by all, the idyllic, *Leave It to Beaver* pattern of morality, marriage, family, and home was upheld by society as the ideal.

That was the world I was born into, less than fifty years ago. So I can say with firsthand experience and with absolute, undeniable accuracy—as perhaps you can too—“We’ve come a long way, baby.”

So have our ideas about womanhood.

By the late 1960s, the image of June Cleaver being happy at home in her role as a wife and mother had fallen by the wayside, replaced by the 1970s Mary Tyler Moore image of a perky single

woman in her thirties, pursuing a career at a television station. *The Mary Tyler Moore Show* was lauded as a television breakthrough because it portrayed the first independent, attractive career woman as the central character. It discreetly implied that although Mary was single, she was on the pill and sexually active. Yet the focus of the show was on her career, not on her association with men. She was truly on her own, with no recurring father, boyfriend, fiancé, or husband looking out for her. With each episode, the show’s theme song proudly alluded to her autonomy, her independence, and her ability to survive just fine without a man: “You’re going to make it after all!”

In the 1980s, television introduced us to Murphy Brown, an investigative journalist and news anchor for *FYI*, a fictional TV newsmagazine. In contrast to the gentle sweetness of Mary Tyler Moore’s character, Murphy Brown was loud-mouthed, brash, driven, self-assured, self-absorbed, and highly opinionated. She was a divorcée and a proud atheist. During the course of the series, Murphy became pregnant but chose not to marry her baby’s father. Naturally a man would cramp her style. Instead, she left the baby in the care of a revolving door of nannies so she could pursue her career. The child was merely a side plot in a story line that revolved around Murphy’s self-actualization in the workplace.

In the mid-nineties, enter Ellen—a woman who owned her own independent bookstore. Ellen lived with a man, but their relationship was merely platonic. She wasn’t sexually attracted to him; he was just her roommate. Gradually, however, we discovered that Ellen wasn’t attracted to men at all. She was a lesbian—a woman-identified woman with the right to define her own sexuality and her own morality. And no one had the right to judge her for it! As the cover of *TV Guide* lauded, Ellen was “OUT—and in charge!”—as are virtually all the women portrayed in the media in the past decade. From children’s cartoons to television series to movies, women in popular media are now portrayed as having an “in charge, kick-butt, don’t-need-a-guy, I’m-powerful, traditional-marriage-and-family-and-morals-are-outdated,

I-have-the-right-to-rule, how-dare-you-tell-me-what-to-do” mentality.

We’ve now been thoroughly inundated with the message that when it comes to relationships, women can make their own rules. They can sleep around, hook up, be in casual or long-term relationships, live common-law, get married or remain single, get divorced, get pregnant, have a baby (being married is inconsequential) or abort it, have men as roommates, have sex with men and/or women, and participate in virtually any type of behavior they choose. The sitcom *Friends* was based on the premise that all of these are equally valid choices. A woman can set her own standards and dictate the terms of her relationship with men. And as long as she’s “nice” about it, and true to herself, it really doesn’t matter what she does. Who are *we* to judge?

The epitome of this mind-set is reflected in the most recent popular sitcom for and about women: *Sex and the City*. Selfhood and sisterhood are what it’s all about. As long as women are loyal to themselves and to their female buddies, they’re on the right track. They can be single or married, lesbian, heterosexual, or any combination thereof. They can be promiscuous, perverted, immoral, have sex as a onesome, twosome, threesome, or roomsome. They can be loud, arrogant, vulgar, crude, and crass, but if they stand up for themselves and for other women, and if they’re caring and nice underneath, then they’re OK. In the new worldview, men are whiny, needy, not too bright, and totally unreliable. They are marginalized and emasculated—used, regarded, and discarded like Kleenex from a box. (The *Sex and the City* character Charlotte only hesitates a moment before giving up her engagement ring to help her girlfriend pay for the down payment on a house.)

Nowadays, the height of empowered womanhood is to live a self-serving, self-righteous, neurotic, narcissistic, superficial, and adulterous life. The main character in *Sex and the City* wraps it up well when she counsels women that “the most exciting, challenging, and significant relationship of all is the one you have with yourself.”

So in a few short decades—in the span of my lifetime—the ideal of a happy, fulfilled woman has

gone from one who values and serves her children, her husband, and her community, to one who serves and exalts herself and has a very different type of commitment toward men and children.

Which begs the question: How did this happen? The factors are many and complex, but a very large piece of the puzzle can be attributed to the philosophy of feminism.

The Feminist Revolution

Feminism is a distinct philosophy that shook the underpinnings of society in the early 1960s like a tsunamic earthquake shaking the ocean’s floor. Feminism is indeed an “ism”—like atheism, humanism, Marxism, existentialism, or postmodernism. The “ism” indicates that we’re talking about a particular philosophical theory, a doctrine, a system of principles and ideas.

It’s important to understand that feminism encompasses much more than the cultural phenomenon of the women’s rights movement. It’s more than just “yesterday’s fashion”—a neglected piece of our past hanging like the hippy beads in the back of our mother’s closets. It’s more than women having the right to an abortion, the right to vote, or the choice to pursue a career. Feminism is a distinct worldview with its very own ideologies, values, and ways of thinking. And whether or not you know it—or would even care to admit it—feminism is a philosophy that has profoundly affected each and every one of us living in this day and age.

Some may think that an intellectual foray into past philosophy, like the one we’re taking together in this chapter, is an exercise in futility. But it’s the student of history who both understands current culture and is equipped to envision a path for the future. We need to know where we’ve come from and how we got to this point if we hope to determine where we go from here.

I can prove that this is a biblical way of approaching history. During a time of national turmoil, the people of ancient Israel were served by the men of Issachar, men who, according to 1 Chron 12:32, “had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do.” My purpose in this overview is to help you “understand the times” so that

God can raise us up as a holy Issachar generation of women in our day. Women who hold the knowledge of our times in one hand, and who hold the truth, clarity, and charity of the Word of God in the other. Women whose hearts are broken over the gender confusion and the spiritual, emotional, relational carnage of our day. Women who (like those men of old) “know” what we, the church, “ought to do.”

So I’m going to take you back to the 1950s—back to the days of *Leave It to Beaver*—and paint some very broad brush strokes to show you how the philosophy of feminism developed and was integrated into culture.

First, a bit of historical background. Geopolitically, the world of the 1950s was witnessing an era of revolution. The American, French, and Russian Revolutions that had preceded this time had each been based on the enlightenment idea that all people are equal, that no one group has an inherent right to dominate and rule another group. The word “revolution” itself (from the Latin *revolutio*) means “a turnaround,” entailing a fundamental change in power that takes place in a relatively short period of time. In the late 1940s and 1950s, the world witnessed revolutions in India, Korea, China, Hungary, Iraq, and Cuba. In all these revolutions, the ruling class was overthrown through violence or civil disobedience by the class they had ruled and sometimes oppressed.

This revolutionary fervor and the fight for individual rights steadily spread from political to social structures. Workers demanded their rights and formed unions—then went on strike if their demands weren’t met. College students marched against oppressive educational establishments. Attention was drawn to the racial inequity between blacks and whites when, in 1955, Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on the bus, and the Civil Rights movement was born.

But that wasn’t all. During the 1950s, a female French philosopher, Simone de Beauvoir, proposed that modern society was also in need of a revolution in gender roles.

de Beauvoir argued that in the relationship between male and female, men were the ruling class, and women were the lower “second sex.” She

believed that in order for women to live as full human beings, they needed to demand their rights, collectively rebel against men, and overthrow all the societal structures that men had constructed to keep women in a state of servitude. Specifically, de Beauvoir proposed that in order to gain equality with men, women needed to get out of the home and intentionally deconstruct Judeo-Christian ideas about marriage, motherhood, and morality.

In the late 1950s, American political activist and journalist Betty Friedan picked up on de Beauvoir’s thinking. She constructed a questionnaire for the fifteen-year reunion of her graduating class, asking her college-educated female colleagues about the level of happiness and fulfillment they experienced in their marriages and their roles as wives and mothers. Friedan detected undercurrents of discontent and dissatisfaction in their answers.

In the following months she interviewed dozens of other women. And from all of these combined responses, Friedan concluded that a discrepancy did indeed exist between what society told women would make them happy and fulfilled, and how happy and fulfilled they actually felt. In her resulting book, published in 1963, Friedan argued that women were trying to conform to a religious, male-dictated image of womanhood—the *Leave It to Beaver* ideal she called the “feminine mystique”—but that doing so left them with vague feelings of emptiness, yearning, and wanting something more.

Friedan proposed that a gnawing sense of unhappiness with woman’s role was a common female problem, albeit one with no name, concluding that the role itself was to blame for woman’s discontent. So like de Beauvoir, Friedan suggested that in order to find fulfillment, American women should begin to question, challenge, and rebel against the accepted role of wife and mother and traditional thoughts about morality. According to Friedan, a woman could only be fulfilled if she had a life plan that included education, a career, and work that was of “serious importance to society.” (Homemaking and raising children were not thought to be of “serious importance.”) To be equal to men, each woman needed to move beyond the

restrictive shackles of the male-defined, male-serving, traditional role of wife and mother, and *name* herself by developing a vision for her own future. She needed to reject the image of womanhood that had purportedly been constructed and perpetuated by men. Woman needed to claim the authority to define her own existence.

Friedan summarized the underlying precept of feminism when she declared, “We (women) need and can trust no other authority than our own personal truth!” According to feminism, the only hope for woman’s happiness and self-fulfillment lay in rejecting a male-defined, Judeo-Christian worldview and convincing herself to define her own truth.

Alvin Toffler, author of *Future Shock*, called Friedan’s *The Feminine Mystique* “the book that pulled the trigger on history.” And indeed, once woman accepted this very basic premise of needing and trusting no other authority than her own, she set her foot on a path that would rapidly take her—and ultimately the whole of society—in a direction diametrically opposed to the heart and purposes and ways of God.

Throughout the 1960s, de Beauvoir’s and Friedan’s writings began to gain popularity among North American women. Many were evidently experiencing inner feelings of frustration and discontentment, eagerly yearning for the “something more” proffered by these feminist pioneers. A problem had been exposed. Feminists were convinced that it was *the* problem. And although they had not yet found a word to adequately describe it, they felt confident that therein resided the cause of woman’s malaise.

In the late 1960s, feminist author Kate Millett used the term “patriarchy” to describe the “problem without a name.” Patriarchy derives its origin from two Greek words: *pater*, meaning “father,” and *arche*, meaning “rule.” Patriarchy was to be understood as the “rule of the father,” and was used to describe both the dominance of the male as well as the inferiority and subservience of the female.

Feminists argued that patriarchy wasn’t just an abstract concept of men having more power and authority than women. It was a pattern woven

throughout every aspect of culture and thought. Patriarchy had dictated the whole of Western culture’s family, social, political, and religious structures. Patriarchy was at the root of its social etiquette, customs, rituals, traditions, and laws. Patriarchy was woven throughout its entire system of education and the economic division of labor. All of these things were responsible for keeping men in a dominant position (and therefore women in a subservient position) throughout human history.

This conclusion could mean only one thing: in order to attain woman’s equality, every aspect of belief and culture would need to be changed. Only the demise and redefinition of all patriarchal structures would lead to her freedom. Only in breaking free from traditional Judeo-Christian roles and rules would woman find meaning and self-fulfillment.

And thus, the trigger was pulled.

Renaming Self

In the first phase of feminism, women claimed the right to name themselves, to redefine their own existence. Their goal was to become more like men and to shed the differences that made them weak and vulnerable to exploitation. Women began to dress like men; to smoke, drink, and swear like men; to claim sexual freedom and participation in the work force on the same basis as men; and to control the biological functions that made them different from men.

Newly established feminist groups, such as NOW (the National Organization for Women), began public lobbies and demonstrations in order to further the feminist agenda, which consisted of five main tenets: (1) full self-determination, (2) freedom from biology, (3) economic independence, (4) total and equal integration, and (5) sexual freedom.

To that end they fought for an Equal Rights Amendment, liberalized divorce laws, legalization of abortion, reproductive technology, Planned Parenthood, state-funded day care, pay equity, affirmative action, women in the military, and lesbian rights. They picketed outside *The New York Times*

building in opposition to the male/female segregated help-wanted ads run by the paper. They organized demonstrations against the firing of stewardesses. They demonstrated on Madison Avenue against TV soap operas. They organized a splashy protest of the Miss America contest that played across nearly every television screen in the country. They boycotted, picketed, lobbied, demonstrated, sued, marched, and engaged in all kinds of nonviolent civil disobedience.

But although awareness of the women's movement was growing, allegiance to the feminist perspective was still not widespread. Feminist theorists concluded that women as a whole needed enlightenment. They needed to discover how oppressed they really were.

Then along came a tool—discovered quite inadvertently—that effectively convinced women of the rightness of the feminist cause. This proved to be the key to igniting their revolution.

Feminists in New York discovered that if they gathered women together in small groups, and got those women talking about their personal hurts and grievances against men, then *all* the women in the group would begin to get upset and bitter against men—even those who initially had no identifiable issues. With the right direction, the group's anger could then be channeled into personal and political activism. Collectively, the whole group could be empowered to rebel against men, thereby becoming actively committed to the feminist cause.

Kathie Sarachild, a feminist activist in New York, learned that this new technique was called "consciousness raising," and that it wasn't actually "new" at all. Consciousness raising was a political technique that had been used by the revolutionary army of Mao Tse-tung, whose slogan was, "*Speak bitterness to recall bitterness. Speak pain to recall pain.*" To promote discord and instability in a village, Mao's political revolutionaries would gather townswomen together to discuss the crimes their men had committed against them, encouraging the women to "speak bitterness and pain." Initial reluctance gave way to collective anger as woman after woman recounted stories of rape by their landlords, of being sold as concubines, of physical abuse by

their husbands and fathers-in-law. As the women vented their bitterness, they experienced a new-found strength and resolve that empowered them to corporate action. In one village, for example, a peasant man was physically pummeled by an entire group of women because his wife had complained to the others about the way she had been treated. The revolutionaries had incited the women to speak bitterness. And as a result, the women grew angry and rebellious. They went home and demanded personal and political change. That's how Mao Tse-tung fueled his revolution.

In the fall of 1968, Sarachild organized a guide and manifesto to consciousness raising (CR) and presented it to the first national Women's Liberation Conference, held in Chicago. She proposed that the feminist movement use this political technique to activate a broad scale gender revolution, arguing that through consciousness raising groups, small sparks of personal unhappiness could be fanned into an inferno of corporate discontent and political action. The small group dynamic was the most radical, effective tool for leading a woman to a personal "aha!" moment—the moment when she sees that all the problems in the world are due to the rule of men, and that traditional rules and roles need to be discarded in order for women to achieve equality and personal fulfillment.

Consciousness raising encouraged women to change their beliefs and behavior patterns, to make new demands in interpersonal relationships, to insist on their own rights, and to support the women's movement, thereby consummating their new awareness with political action. And the groups spread like wildfire. Soon there were "CR-Rap" groups in homes, in community centers, in churches, in YWCAs, and in many places of business.

Perhaps you remember an old Fabergé shampoo commercial that alluded to the CR craze. It started with a picture of just one woman. Then as her image steadily multiplied, she chirped, "I told two friends about Fabergé Organic Shampoo . . . and *they* told two friends . . . and so on . . . and so on . . ." Soon the screen was filled with hundreds upon hundreds of copies of her image. That's the power

of word-of-mouth.

And that's exactly how feminism spread.

Only about two hundred women attended the first national women's conference in Chicago in 1968. But with the help of consciousness raising, incessant media coverage, and generous government funding, women all across the continent caught the revolutionary fervor and began to claim the right to name and define themselves. By 1970, twenty *thousand* women marched proudly down New York's Fifth Avenue, identifying themselves as part of the women's liberation movement. Friedan summed up the tenor of the occasion when, at the conclusion of the march, she blazed,

In the religion of my ancestors, there was a prayer that Jewish men said every morning. They prayed, "Thank thee, Lord, that I was not born a woman." Today . . . all women are going to be able to say . . . "Thank thee, Lord, that I *was* born a woman, for this day. . . ."

After tonight, the politics of this nation will never be the same again. . . . There is no way any man, woman, or child can escape the nature of our revolution.²

Renaming the World

Women as a group were having their eyes opened—their consciousness raised—to the commonality of their experience. They were now a sisterhood. The effect was an internal, personal legitimization of the differences found in women. Whereas the first phase of the movement viewed women's differences as weaknesses, the second phase viewed women's differences as a source of pride and confidence. Feminists began to believe that not only were women "just as good as" men. They were in fact "better" than men—a shift in mind-set epitomized by Helen Reddy's Grammy-winning song "I Am Woman," which topped the pop charts of that time. Looking back, I can still hear the roar, "in numbers too big to ignore . . . I am strong, I am invincible, I am woman!"

Feminists reasoned that women not only had the right to name themselves but also had the right to name the world. In the words of the song, they

had to "make their brothers understand." Men had gotten everything so very wrong. History was but a legacy of arbitrary, male-defined meaning: *his*-story. And it was time for that to change. From economics to politics, psychology to linguistics, relationships to religion, women needed to challenge and change that which men had both constructed and construed for their own benefit. Women needed to look at the world through the lens of female experience and come up with new values and definitions. What's more, they needed to reeducate all people to think according to the new feminist paradigm. The formation of feminist-driven government agencies, combined with federal funding and media momentum, ensured that they were able to do just that.

Thus, their leaders embarked on an intensive strategy of feminist research and education they called "Woman Centered Analysis" and "Women's Studies." This was essentially the study of the world based on women's own perceptions and experiences. The National Women's Studies Association (NWSA), which coordinated and spearheaded the effort, noted that their aim was to promote "a breakthrough in consciousness and knowledge which will transform individuals, institutions, relationships, and, ultimately, the whole of society."³ It was not long, naturally, before college courses sprang up across the country exploring the rights of women, their status in society, the discrimination they experienced in public roles and private lives, as well as the male gender bias prevalent in culture, literature, and learning.

The explosion of woman-centered analysis and women's studies in the 1970s was absolutely staggering. Prior to 1969, there were *no* women's studies courses on college campuses. Ten years later, the number of women's studies courses had mushroomed to well over thirty thousand. Women's studies had been established as a distinct discipline with degrees available at bachelor, master, and doctoral levels. Feminist journals, publications, and magazines (such as *Ms.*) flooded the popular market.

Efforts by the NWSA led to the introduction of feminist theories into all areas and all lev-

els of education. Educators modified kindergarten books, grade-school curricula, continuing education courses, and technical school syllabi to reflect a feminist worldview. The values and beliefs of feminism began to be presented in newspapers, periodicals, newscasts, and television programming. By the end of the 1970s, it was difficult to find any medium of communication uninfluenced by feminist thought.

Feminists often refer to the 1970s as the Golden Age of feminism. At the opening of the decade, their theory was being espoused by a small handful of radicals. By the close, however, it had disseminated to the point where to some extent, it had influenced every member of society. As the eighties dawned, many women had claimed the feminist right to name themselves and their world. And a few, both in secular and religious circles, had started to claim another right: the right to name God.

Renaming God

When Helen Reddy accepted the Grammy award for her “I Am Woman” song, she proudly proclaimed, “I’d like to thank God because *She* made everything possible.” Betty Friedan, earlier that year, had predicted that the great debate of the next decade would be “Is God He?” Feminists had proven successful at naming themselves and their world, and in the final phase of feminist thought development, they turned their attention to naming God. The progression was logical. For if woman has the right to define her own existence, as well as the right to define what men and the world ought to look like, then she surely has the right to redefine God too.

Feminists argued that the “male” God of the Bible was bad for women. For “if God is male, then the male is god.” They argued that religion and the God of the Bible were the primary tools men had used throughout history to keep themselves in a position of power, and women in a position of servitude.

But if the male God of the Bible is unacceptable to women, then who or what is god? According to feminism, women get to decide—which ultimately means that they themselves are god.

The feminist metaphysic teaches that each woman contains divinity within her own being. New Age philosophy, Wicca, and goddess worship are all expressions of the feminist spirituality that arose in the 1980s and 1990s. According to feminism, each woman is her own goddess, part of the elemental, female creative power of the universe.

Have you ever wondered why advertisers nowadays would name a new women’s shaver after a goddess, marketing their product as being able to provide stubble-free legs worthy of the goddess in you? This idea didn’t come out of a vacuum. It reflects the fundamental premise of feminism that women have the inherent right to name themselves, the world, and God.

God’s Right to Name

Again, the fundamental premise of feminism is that “women need and can trust no other authority than our own personal truth.” Feminism teaches that women ought not to bow down and submit to any external power.

But that’s not the message of the Bible. God created us. And He created us male and female. This fact is not inconsequential. It *means* something. The Bible informs us that there was an essential difference in the manner and purpose behind the creation of the two sexes. The New Testament reiterates that there are basic differences between men and women that are to be honored as part of God’s design. By refusing to honor these differences, or by defiantly stating that it cannot be so, we are claiming the right to define our own existence. But according to the Bible, that is a right which belongs to God alone. It is God who made the earth and created mankind upon it, and we have no right to question the wisdom of His directives for our behavior. God spoke through Isaiah:

Woe to him who quarrels with his Maker, to him who is but a potsherd [a broken piece of pottery] among the potsherds on the ground.

Does the clay say to the potter, “What are you making?” Does your work say, “He has no hands”? . . .

Concerning things to come, do you

question me about my children, or give me orders about the work of my hands?

It is I who made the earth and created mankind upon it (Isa 45:9, 11–12).

Paul repeats the admonition in Romans:

But who are you, O man, to talk back to God? “Shall what is formed say to him who formed it, ‘Why did you make me like this?’” Does not the potter have the right to make out of the same lump of clay some pottery for noble purposes and some for common use? (Rom 9:20–21).

The Creator fashioned the two sexes differently. This is a fact we dare not overlook nor trivialize. In 1 Corinthians 11 we are told that “man did not come from woman, but woman from man; neither was man created for woman, but woman for man” (vv. 8–9). Furthermore, “woman is not independent of man, nor is man independent of woman. For as woman came from man, so also man is born of woman. But everything comes from God” (vv. 11–12). Numerous other texts in the Bible deal with differences in both the creation and roles of male and female.

The two sexes were simply created differently. And the Bible provides important information as to how these differences are to be evidenced. It does not, as some have argued, provide a stereotyped checklist of *which* sex does *what* (like, men fix the cars; women do the baking), but it does provide broad foundational principles for the proper functioning of male–female relationships. The biblical framework teaches us to know and understand ourselves as men and women.

Our identity as male and female also has an important symbolic aspect. It teaches us about the relationship between ourselves as God’s people (the church) and God. It also teaches us something of the inter-Trinitarian relationship within the Godhead itself. The reality of who we are, how the world works, and who God is, is not hidden. It is revealed to us through the symbols and images of God, as well as through His creation of male and female. If we lose these fundamental images, we

lose ourselves.

Feminists recognize that the act of *naming* conveys power to those who do it. When women claim the right to name themselves, they remove themselves from God’s authority, claiming what is rightfully His as their own. This is the crux, as well as the foundational danger of feminist philosophy. As Christians, we must allow God to name Himself, to name His world, and to name male and female. This belief contains the only hope for getting life right. The only hope for discovering our true identity and purpose. The only hope for untangling the gnarled, knotted mess that sin has made of gender and relationships. The only hope for experiencing ever greater measures of healing and joy. And above all, the only hope for reflecting and exalting the beauty of the gospel and the glory of God.

Saying “Yes!” to True Womanhood

So what’s the answer to the question feminism posed almost fifty years ago? It was a spiritual question: “What is going to bring women happiness and fulfillment and joy in life?” Do we turn back the clock and return to the 1950s? Is it true that woman will only find satisfaction when she finds the perfect man—when she’s a mom and housewife, when she’s safely situated in a station wagon and a white picket fence? Or do we rely on the current feminist formula for fulfillment—woman’s unmitigated freedom to pursue fulfillment in career and sex, controlling and discarding men and doing what we please?

History has shown that the *Leave It to Beaver* ideal is not the one that will satisfy. There is no man on the face of this earth who can completely fulfill the desires of a woman’s heart. Being a wife and a mom is great, but it doesn’t satisfy our deepest needs.

The feminist solution, however, won’t satisfy either. The longings of our hearts will not be met when we look to careers and sex and self-determination for fulfillment. We won’t find any more happiness striving for the modern-day ideal than our 1950s sisters did by striving for the ideal of their time. No, in order to find fulfillment as a woman,

you and I need to turn our hearts toward the right target. We need to turn to the One for whom we were created and to whom all our yearnings point—the Lord Jesus Christ—and say “yes!” to Him.

We tend to reduce the discussion about womanhood merely to questions about her marital status and whether or not she has children, along with peripheral issues like her education and career choices, whether or not she works outside of the home, her use of birth control, whether she homeschooled or publically educates her children, the type of clothes or make-up she wears. The essence of true womanhood is to understand and agree with the Creator’s design for womanhood as it is revealed in Scripture. A woman is a true woman when her heart says “yes” to God’s design.

Feminism promised women happiness and fulfillment. But it hasn’t delivered. The new generation is disillusioned. They can see that feminism hasn’t brought women the satisfaction it promised. Today women are searching for new answers. They want to know how to make life work.

Ultimately their longing will only be satisfied by embracing the gospel of Jesus Christ and a biblical understanding of manhood, womanhood, and gender relationships. The time is ripe for a new movement—a seismic, holy quake of countercultural Christian women who dare to take God at His Word, who have the courage to stand against the popular tide, choosing to believe and delight in God’s plan for male and female.

And I say we get ready to take it “a long way, baby.”

ENDNOTES

¹This address, delivered at True Woman ’08, is based on *The Feminist Mistake* by Mary A. Kassian (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2005) and contains select quotations from that work. It will be published in the following book based on the conference: *Voices of the True Woman Movement: A Call to the Counter Revolution* (Chicago: Moody, forthcoming). Used by permission.

²Marcia Cohen, *The Sisterhood: The Inside Story of the Women’s Movement and the Leaders Who Made It Happen* (New York: Ballantine, 1988).

³Cited by Marilyn Boxer, “For and About Women: The Theory and Practice of Women’s Studies in the United States,” in *Feminist Theory: A Critique of Ideology* (ed. Nannerl O.

Keohane, Michelle Z. Rosaldo, and Barbara C Gelpi; Chicago: University of Chicago, 1982), 237.

Raising Girls to be Godly Women in a Confused and Conflicted Culture¹

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London, England

Never before in our history have we been so eager to tear up the blueprint of biology and redefine our roles as men and women, mothers and fathers.²

Introduction

I have watched with growing concern as girls have been molded, influenced, and, in many cases, damaged by a false worldview that has permeated western society at every level. As a teacher on playground duty in the 1990s I saw little seven- and eight-year-old girls forsaking their skipping ropes for the opportunity to sing and dance along to the latest Spice Girls song. They knew the lyrics by heart, and the dance routines were copied exactly as their pop idols had modelled them on the television. The fact that the girl-power lyrics were beyond their understanding and that the sexualized dance routines were performed in all innocence by these little children did not take away from the fact that they were being given a view of womanhood that would affect them deeply and influence their behavior and attitudes in untold ways as they grew up. Even secular commentators are now concerned about what is happening to girls and women in our culture. Maggie Hamilton writes,

Alongside the fragmentation of family and community due to relationship breakdowns, greater mobility, long working hours and time deprivation, we have seen the rise in the power of the media and the new technologies. These forces are exposing girls to concepts way beyond their years. They make it easy for girls to lead lives that their parents know nothing about. What was once the domain of

adults has become part of the lives of our children. The need to appear “out there” helps to explain why girls are pushing the sexual boundaries so young, why pornography has so much appeal to girls, and why there has been an alarming increase in sexually transmitted diseases amongst our teenagers.³

There is obviously more to the decline of womanhood than simply the imbibing of unhelpful lyrics in a pop song. There is an alternate worldview working against what the Bible teaches about womanhood.

A worldview is a way of interpreting the world. It seeks to explain events and set life in a context. Every worldview has its own narrative that can be broken down into 3 parts: (1) Creation—origins/how things began; (2) Fall—how things have gone wrong/obstacles to progress; (3) Redemption—how things can be put right/the way forward. A person’s worldview can be discovered in the answers he or she gives to 4 key questions:⁴ (1) Who am I? (2) Where am I? (3) What’s wrong? (4) What is the solution? A worldview, therefore, sets forth a “truth”—articles of faith according to its own set of assumptions. Consumerism, secularism, feminism and every other “ism” has a “gospel” of its own.

We will follow a creation, fall, redemption structure in exploring how to raise girls to be godly women in a confused and conflicted culture.

Creation: God’s Good Order

Genesis 1 opens with the words of the Creator God who dispels darkness, emptiness, and chaos

and brings light, fullness, and order. The eternal relationship of Father, Son, and Spirit spills over into the creation of the cosmos. The sheer power, drama, and exuberance of the event display the greatness of this God. In Genesis 2 he is called the Lord God—Yahweh Elohim—the covenant God. This Creator is not remote. Relationship is core to all that he is. The Trinity will be reflected in the world he has made. There is purpose and there is promise in Yahweh Elohim. And so he makes a man.

In Gen 2:18 God says that it is not good for the man to be alone, but it is not until all the animals have been brought to Adam and named that woman is formed and brought to him. Adam is made to feel his need before the promise of a “helper” is fulfilled by God.

Eve, like Adam, was created by God to be an image bearer and together they shared the Creation Mandate and the Cultural Mandate—God’s command to be fruitful and multiply and to rule and subdue the earth. God’s benevolent rule and order were established in this creation mandate and in the words of God himself, “It was very good.” The picture, then, is of creation existing in perfect harmony with itself and its creator. Within this context, total transparency and trust characterized the relationship between God and the first family and was reflected perfectly in the way Adam and Eve related with each other and the creatures they ruled. There was order in these relationships. We will return to that later, but for now we note the following:

Adam and Eve are given “dominion”—kingly rule over the earth. Their own relationship is that of equals. Their origins, gifts, characteristics and callings, however, are not the same. There are important differences. This relationship is based on complementarity (different but equal) not egalitarianism (equal because of sameness). Just as in the Trinity, there is order but total equality—so it is with these perfect human beings in a perfect world. Sharon James writes, “Adam was incapable of fulfilling the creation mandate alone, and, even more profoundly, he was in need of a relationship with another human being. But although woman was one ‘of the same kind’ as

himself and perfectly equal in dignity, she was gloriously different. They fitted together.”⁵

Fall: Conflict and Confusion

When Eve was deceived and ate the forbidden fruit, her role of “helper” was corrupted. She and Adam turned their back on the true Word of God and followed a lie. Instead of “being like God” when they ate the fruit, they became separated from God and divided from one another. God’s created order had been deliberately and cunningly overturned by the Enemy in the form of a serpent. A member of the animal kingdom speaks a word (a lie) that is acted upon by the woman. The man then has to give account to God. The catastrophic consequences of sin and rebellion against God’s commands radically altered the nature of all relationships, and the Creator’s order was reversed. After judgement is passed, God restores His original order. He begins with Adam, then Eve, then the serpent. The effects of sin on the man and the woman will be distinctive. Man has been formed from the earth, and it is from the earth that he will feel the full effects of the curse. The woman had been formed from the man. It is in the area of relationships, especially with men that she will most feel the effects of the curse. In every age and every culture we find evidence of the tensions this created. From now on, men and women will not live in perfect harmony in a perfect world and in perfect relationship with their God. Until the end of time there will be suffering, pain, and death—physically, spiritually, and relationally.

This conflict introduced at the Fall must frame our thinking about the feminist movement in our own day. We need to understand, moreover, the dominant worldview in our culture so that we can equip our girls to stand for Christ in this generation, discerning truth from falsehood and growing into godly women.

The Industrial Revolution

The upheaval of the Industrial Revolution had untold consequences for the developed world. Before that time, family and community life had continued in much the same way for millennia.

According to Nancy Pearcey, “The vast majority of people lived on farms or in peasant villages. Productive work was done not by lone individuals but by families and households.... [T]he boundary between home and world was highly permeable.... It meant that husband and wife worked side by side in the same economic enterprise.”⁶ “With production centred on the family hearth husbands and fathers were ‘a visible presence, year after year, day after day’ as they trained their children to work alongside them. Being a father was not a separate activity to come home to after a day at work; rather, it was an integral part of a man’s daily routine.”⁷

Within a generation the advent of the industrial age and mass production shifted the economic base, from the home to the factory and the office. Mass migration from the countryside to the towns and cities followed with unforeseen consequences, particularly within the family. As men left their homes to work in the new industries the following things happened:

- Wage earning and domestic duties became separated. A public/private divide began to operate in society.
- Men spent far less time with their families, and the home became the woman’s domain.
- Skills and attitudes to work that had been handed down from father to son for generations were lost as new and specialised practices were demanded in the new workforce.
- Women were denied the opportunity to develop their skills and make their contribution to the productivity of the extended family. Previously, they had worked alongside their husbands and families in farming or trade, now they gradually moved from being producers to being consumers.
- Social interaction became more limited for women who were confined to home. They were isolated with their children. As opportunities to participate in the wider world decreased for women, so their responsibilities within the family increased—often without the support of extended family around them.

- The workplace became competitive—the place where a man proved his worth and individual advancement was the reward. The ground had shifted. In the colonial period husbands and fathers viewed themselves as the head of the household in order to provide for and protect the whole family and community. It was, at its best, a self-sacrificing model of leadership, but now self-interest and personal ambition were promoted in the workplace so that the wheels of industry would turn for profit. Individualism overtook communal manhood.
- The requirement for men to take the moral lead was eroding. Increased pressure came upon women to maintain moral values in the home. They now had the primary role of raising the children in the virtues that were necessary for civilized society—communal responsibility, religion and self-sacrifice, as well as creating a “haven” for the husband—to balance the temptations of the world outside. Religion and social reform came to be seen as predominantly feminine interests. Women were expected to take the lead in maintaining moral standards in the family and in society whilst men were to be the rugged individualists who proved their worth through success in the workplace and whose input to family life was secondary to that of his wife.

The increased pressures that industrialisation brought to bear on social structures in general and the family unit in particular were enormous. Some kind of reaction was inevitable.

Liberal feminism began, as a movement, in the late eighteenth century and eventually saw the granting of the vote, property rights, access to education and to the professions at the beginning of the twentieth century. The radical feminism that replaced it and reached its zenith in the 1960s was very different, as we shall see.

The Righting of Wrongs

There is no doubt that many women have

suffered, and continue to suffer, at the hands of ungodly male leadership. It is not difficult to find examples of injustice against women, from the wife and mother who feels isolated and taken for granted on the one hand to the victim of domestic abuse, on the other. The oppression of women by men is well documented: “[T]hroughout history men have tyrannised women, whether by wife-beating, polygamy, rape or forced prostitution. There are records through the ages of women being raped by conquering armies, but the worst instances have probably taken place this [twentieth] century.”⁸

Equality and justice are important concepts to us, as human beings. The problem lies in the definitions of those two concepts and the remedies that were offered in order to restore them. The Women’s Movement’s focus on legitimate grievances became the tool for an attack on the traditional roles of men and women, and then for women to attempt to displace men altogether.

According to Sharon James,

A small number of thinkers aimed, in effect, to liberate women from their womanhood. The very things that were of central importance for so many (marriage, motherhood, homemaking) were derided as being fit only for those who were mentally subnormal or emotionally weak. These ideas could not have insulted women more.... [T]he adoption of these ideas led to misery and frustration. Far from being liberated by modern feminism, women have been betrayed.⁹

The Corruption of Good Intentions

The sincere feminist then was concerned to see an end to injustice and oppression in the world. Their cause was about the welfare of women and children, and social justice. This was to be achieved through protest, petition, and persuasion, leading to a change in public policy.

But then “equality” became the watchword. The politics that surround this idea and the egalitarian belief system that developed from it are clearly identified in much of the revolutionary rhetoric that found its way into the women’s move-

ment. Let’s take a closer look at its appeal.

What meaning does the word equality convey to us?

Equality	Inequality
Fairness	Unfairness
Inclusiveness	Exclusiveness
Sameness	Difference
Balance	Imbalance
Justice	Injustice

It has long been a strategy in debate to disprove or discredit your opponent’s argument by taking it to extremes or aligning it with the unacceptable. We would want to align ourselves with the list on the left. These are good ideals. (In fact, the only category we might argue with is “sameness,” and that is the nub of the issue. The misguided idea that equality must mean “sameness,” has now grown deep roots in popular thinking. To be equal but *different* is seen as contradictory. For the modern feminist, women have to be the same as men, socially, economically, and politically, in order to be equal with them.

“Ours is the age of modernism, with a great emphasis on egalitarianism and on sexuality,” writes Paul Vitz.

These two elements have combined to create the modern emphasis on androgyny. Androgyny or unisex is the notion that sexuality, male and female, is not fundamental to our nature, that all forms of sexuality are equivalent and basically arbitrary. From an androgynous perspective, male and female are not part of the nature of reality—much less of the nature of who each person is.¹⁰

Social Upheaval and Power Games

Early Feminists concluded that the only way for women to gain recognition and engage in the public sphere again was to leave the private sphere of the home—which to them had become oppressive—and join the men in the workplace. This meant that the training and discipline of

the next generation was passed from mothers to “professionals”—child care workers and teachers. The public sphere was increasingly secular in its philosophy and practice. Within two generations parental responsibility for the spiritual and moral development of their children passed from fathers to mothers to “experts.” The family link was severed. Girls would now become influenced by a wide range of people who have little or no contact with their family. The media and education would influence girls in ways that were totally new.

Since the publication of *The Second Sex* by Simone de Beauvoir (1949 in French, 1953 in English) the history of the female sex has been rewritten. As Sharon James has observed, “Women are the Second Sex, argued Beauvoir, because they are always defined in relation to men, and exist for their good. This injustice is perpetuated in the institution of marriage. For women, marriage is no better than slavery. de Beauvoir was equally hostile to motherhood.”¹¹

This publication along with *The Feminine Mystique* by Betty Freidman (1963), *The Female Eunuch* by Germaine Greer, and others, reached popular consciousness in the 1960s. Women were told that they must be “liberated” from the shackles of patriarchal rule, male expectations and the burden of domesticity. It was argued that men had held power for quite long enough. Women should claim the privileges that men had always enjoyed. The power of men was used abusively. The world would be a better place if women took the lead. The “culture of dependency” had to be broken. The dawning of the twentieth century saw a trickle of female assertiveness become a flood during the 1960s and result in a tsunami of legislation in the 1980s and 1990s.¹² The process is still ongoing. It was not long before equality *with* men turned into independence *from* men. The first casualty of this approach, of course, was the institution of marriage. It is here that the objectives of some in the feminist movement, and followers of Marxist ideas found a unity of purpose.

The Consequences for Marriage, Family, and Society

The attack on marriage was astonishingly suc-

cessful. The popularizing of the ideas that married women were an oppressed minority, that domesticity was degrading, that motherhood was a burden, and that all men were “users” took root and grew. Women were persuaded that the way out of this depressing life was to find their worth in the same place as men—the workplace. This would give them, not only real status and a stimulating social life but also provide financial independence from men. As James Tooley says,

The feminists on Closing the Gender Gap—representative of a broad swathe of opinion in feminist education circles and influential on government policy—are pleased that girls, and working-class girls in particular, are leaving the domestic sphere of home and hearth and becoming increasingly independent of men through work. The education feminists think that this is the only way girls can gain status. It is only in the world of men—work, the public sphere—that women can find fulfilment and happiness, the same as it is for boys and men.¹³

We are all well aware of the social consequences when women across society began to exercise their right to self fulfilment: dramatic rises in the divorce rate, family break-up, cohabitation, illegitimacy, absent fathers, the acceptance of casual sex as a leisure activity, the epidemic of STDs, juvenile crime rates, violence, insecurity, and mental illness including self-harm and depression in young girls, to name but a few.

Divide and Rule

In the decades since its inception, feminist ideology has, of course, developed and changed. Clashes of emphasis and personality have produced many “brands” of feminism. However, according to James Tooley, they largely fall within two groupings: Equality (rationalist) feminism and Liberal (celebratory) feminism. “Whether it be old feminism, new feminism, radical feminism, cultural feminism, post-modern feminism, post-structuralist feminism, gender feminism or lesbian feminism, to name but a few—one’s feminist ideas may be

usefully categorised as falling into one of these two categories.”¹⁴

What relevance does all this have for us today? You may feel that this is rather a tired subject—that things have settled down after the extremes of the initial debate in the 60s and 70s and that it is time we moved on. Sharon James suggests that

By the beginning of the twenty-first century, the movement known as feminism had fragmented. The dream of a united sisterhood had never come to pass; indeed the tabloids were able to revel in vicious infighting between supposed “sisters”. The so-called sameness feminism of the 1960s was soon taken over by the difference feminism of the 1980s (women are the superior sex!) and there was now a major backlash against feminist ideas in the 1990s. It is now said that we live in a post-feminist era.¹⁵

The reason we need to understand what has happened in the past is that it has shaped the way that girls and women think about themselves in the present. James goes on to say, “Popular thinking is still conditioned by the discredited notion that men and women are basically the same. People are nervous of comments about men and women that might be construed as sexist. It is still said that any differences between the sexes are probably only the result of societal conditioning.”¹⁶

The belief that “societal conditioning” was the only basis for differences between the sexes meant that traditional views of the roles of men and women had to be changed. The education system was one obvious means of achieving such change.

The State Takes Over

The advocates of feminism were not content with winning over the intellectual elite and chattering classes; nothing less than the liberation of the ordinary woman in the street would fulfil their ambitions. The best place to accomplish this was in the schools. State schooling became saturated with feminist ideals and the gender neutral curriculum took shape. James Tooley observes,

It is the themes of the early Greer, Steinem and Friedan—that independence and career are what are most important to a girl, that marriage, children and family are just so much domestic drudgery—that match the curriculum and emphasis of schooling for girls today.... Just as Betty Friedan realised in *The Feminine Mystique*, it is mainly through their schooling that women and girls can escape the limitations of discrimination and reach their full potential.¹⁷

Referring to the American sex discrimination law, Title IX (1972), Tooley says,

The prejudices of the early Betty Friedan, of the early Gloria Steinem, they are all there, spelled out in legislative detail to ensure gender neutrality that emphasises over and over again that the only way to success and fulfilment for women is through achievement in the worlds of business, science sport and politics. The family does not get a look in here.¹⁸

Why is this important?

The feminist message has been absorbed into our western culture. Its assumptions are reflected in magazines, films, TV, books, music, and classrooms where gender-neutral curriculum has pervaded all subjects. It is impossible to avoid it. The subliminal nature of its assumptions makes it very difficult to resist. In arguing against equality feminism we are in danger of appearing to support oppression and injustice. Christian girls who want to resist the feminist worldview find themselves swamped and cannot keep their guard up all the time. Eventually they may struggle to think biblically about men and their leadership.

The ground, however, is shifting. Some feminist writers have reviewed their earlier rants against traditional female roles. Friedan, Greer, and others have retracted some of their earlier statements, especially about motherhood and homemaking, and lamented the loss of things they despised and undermined. Even Simone de Beauvoir’s *The Second Sex* has been reread and reinterpreted:

Betty Friedan moved on from her ideas in the Second Stage, recognising that women need families, indeed, could find the fulfilment of their need for power and security within the family. de Beauvoir was torn between denigrating domesticity—which seemed she had to do, perhaps for ulterior motives—and delighting in it.... Germaine Greer's *The Whole Woman* seemed to fit neatly into this camp too. The alternative women's voices raised wonder why we need, through education, to create women who are restless and questing, and whether it might not be better to create a society in which women are happy and fulfilled.¹⁹

They now lean towards celebrating the differences between the sexes and the unique role that women can fulfill. But it is too late for regrets. Laws are not that easily repealed. Two generations of girls have marched to a different tune.

Independence from men has led to dependence on the state. The "freedom" to pursue a career has led to exhaustion and emptiness. There has been rise in violence and drinking among young girls who are behaving like boys. Casual sex has encouraged men to use women and then leave them—with no guilt attached.

Some commentators are now saying that feminism has not only been bad for men and children but disastrous for women: "By celebrating their independence from men, and pooh-poohing men's romanticization of gender roles as a throwback to something women have long abandoned, perhaps the feminist educators are themselves engaging in creating injustice for women, the injustice that follows when women are deprived of reliable men to depend upon."²⁰

The ignoring of sexual differences has led to confusion and frustration—for both sexes. The trail of destruction left in the wake of the feminist juggernaut is endless. Anne Moir and David Jessel comment in *Brainsex*, "Men are different from Women. They are equal only in their common membership of the same species, humankind. To maintain that they are the same is to build a society based on a biological and scientific lie."²¹

In her book *Sex Change Society* Melanie Phillips concludes,

Men need work, women need choice (i.e. whether to work outside the home or not), children need both their parents. Government policies should not promote a sex-change society. They should support the sensitive and complex networks of interdependence between men and women. Without such reinforcement, a serious hole will remain at the heart of any welfare reform, and of society itself.²²

The feminist worldview continues to hold sway, even as it crumbles under its own weight.

Conclusions

Ever since sin entered God's creation there has been tension in the relationships between men and women. The twentieth century feminist movement only amplified these tensions. Western culture became "feminized" with disastrous results for both sexes. It is impossible for girls to avoid totally the influence of feminist thinking. It is all pervasive in our culture.²³

So, what is our God-given identity as girls and women? What does true womanhood look like? How are we to teach the next generation of girls to live God-centered, Christ-exalting, Bible-saturated lives?

Redemption: Restoring God's Design *Beyond Culture*

In turning our attention to a biblical understanding of this issue I want to make clear that I am not just advocating a return to "traditional" roles for men and women. I say this for two reasons. First, "traditional" roles differ from culture to culture. Moreover, any one culture's norm varies through the passage of time. To which culture would we look for *the* tradition? How far back would we go? Which historical era would we choose? Second, in one sense our culture's "tradition" has resulted in the mess we now observe. The actions and reactions of our forebears have brought us to this state of confusion. Advocating that we reinvent the

social structures or moral environment of another time—even if that were possible—could lead to the repetition of the same mistakes. We would look in vain for a culture or time where male/female relationships reflect God’s intentions perfectly. Since the Fall there has always been abuse of one sort or another. That is why our only sure footing is God’s pre-Fall design for male and female as it is revealed in Genesis 1-2.

We must return to God’s Design in Genesis because it is pre-Fall.²⁴ As John Piper argues,

When the Bible teaches that men and women fulfil different roles in relation to each other, charging man with a unique leadership role, it bases this differentiation not on temporary cultural norms but on permanent facts of creation.... [T]he foundation of this differentiation is traced back to the way things were in Eden before sin warped our relationships. Differentiated roles were corrupted, by the fall. They were created by God.²⁵

Principles and Practice

There are several practical steps we can take to train-up young girls with a biblical worldview while guarding their consciences from feminist influences.

(1) Teach a biblical worldview

A biblical worldview begins with God at its center and with God radiating out at every point. Thus, knowledge of God is the starting point. This means that, from the earliest age, our girls must be taught theology. The study of doctrine is not just for ministers and scholars. Whenever we speak of God to a little girl, we are teaching theology! This needs to be accurate. She must not be given the impression that the world centers on her (much loved as she is) or on other people, but on God. She has been made to know, worship, and enjoy him. The character and attributes of God are foundational to a biblical understanding of life. As girls and women we will only begin to understand our place in God’s purposes if we begin with God himself: God as three in one (Father, Son, and Spirit—

all involved in creation), Creator, Promise-Keeper, Holy, Sovereign, Compassionate, and Wise.

(2) Teach that God has spoken and given us everything we need to live life with joy in him

The Bible must be taught as the written word of God and as the final authority on all matters. We then need to teach from a view based in biblical understanding. Before we listen to historians, sociologists, educationalists, psychologists, biologists, anthropologists, or anyone else, we will stop to ponder the Maker’s Instructions. The Bible must be our foundation.

(3) Teach that everything in life relates to God, including our identity as girls/women

All goodness, beauty and truth come from him. We live in relationship with him through Jesus Christ. Jesus is Lord. There is no area of life outside of his Lordship. There is no spiritual/secular divide. All our heart attitudes, character, choices, priorities, behaviour and circumstances are under his rule and we are being transformed by the work of the Spirit in our lives so that we are no longer controlled by the false messages of the world but can engage with the world to transform it as he changes us to be more like Jesus. We will then desire to bring glory to Christ by reflecting his glorious design for men and women until the new creation.

(4) Give definitions and demonstrations

The biblical definition of womanhood will need to be broken down and explained as girls grow up, but it will also need to be demonstrated or modelled so that they see a compelling picture presented to them. We need to be real about the heart issues involved in living like this, especially with teens, so that they know that such a spirit can only develop in total dependence on God.²⁶

(5) Teach that this is a heart issue

If women have been deceived by promises of freedom, liberation, and independence, it is because it finds an echo in our fallen hearts. Just like Eve, we have a desire to take things into our own hands and corrupt God’s order. The voices that call to us

from our culture only have power over us because they appeal to the desires of our fallen hearts. It is the condition of the human heart that is at issue here. To present our girls and young adults with a list of do's and don'ts or a well organized program outlining the role of women will not suffice. Piper argues that, in winning people over to a vision of manhood and womanhood,

Not only must there be thorough exegesis, there must also be a portrayal of the vision that satisfies the heart as well as the head. Or to put it another way: we must commend the beauty as well as the truth of the vision. We must show that something is not only right but also good. It is not merely valid but also valuable, not only accurate but also admirable.²⁷

Presenting a biblical worldview is not enough. It is possible to affirm statements of truth but not engage with them. There must be a heart response and transformation that leads to joy, wonder and worship of God. To leave worldly ways of thinking and behaving and to embrace God's way is to know true freedom and liberty in Christ. When we apply this to the way we live as men and women we will begin to worship him in all our relationships with the opposite sex. The question that we have to answer, therefore, is "How does the Bible describe womanhood?"

Proverbs 31: The Ideal Woman.

Dorothy Patterson has described Proverbs 31 as "a full length portrait of a godly heroine finished in fine detail."²⁸ What kind of woman do we have here? She is a teacher and an accomplished business woman. She organizes the food, the estate, the clothes, the furnishings, and the moral education of the household. She is loyal and faithful, respectful and dependable, and brings glory to her husband. As Doug Wilson has put it, "This passage denies that a woman's place is *in* the home. It affirms that her *priority* is the home."²⁹

The picture here is more akin to pre-industrial western society than that of the culture we now experience. The exuberant description of this

woman carries with it a sense of fulfilment and joy. She is blessed by God and is a blessing to others. His goodness fills her heart and spills over to impact not only her household but all who encounter her.

The fact that she is the ideal woman should not discourage us. This portrait is beautiful and something to which we would want to aspire and to encourage our girls to emulate. This woman is not a downtrodden, oppressed, unhappy doormat but a joyous and energetic life-giver. She is confident but not overbearing. She is organized but not obsessive. She is generous but not self-referencing. She is beautiful but not vain, intelligent but not boastful, busy but not self-important. She is respected and respectful.

This woman seems to have avoided two particular dangers that are warned against later in the scriptures (although examples of failure in these areas can be found throughout the Old Testament as well). They are lack of submission (disrespect, complaint, taking authority) and lack of modesty (showiness, vanity).

Submission and Modesty: Contentious Issues

Titus 2 shows where feminine beauty comes from. It is from within. It is the overflow of a heart that trusts God—totally. This shows itself in submission. All the gifts and attributes that are listed are to be exercised in the context of this particular attribute. It is highlighted again and again throughout the New Testament and demonstrated repeatedly in the Old Testament (Gen 3:16; Eph 5:22; 24; Col 3:18; 1 Pet 3:1, 5). Even though this biblical mindset is misinterpreted, misunderstood, and totally alien to our twenty-first century sensibilities, it appears to be very important to God. Girls need to know not only the biblical definition of womanhood, but also of manhood as well. Girls need to be able to recognize the characteristics of a "worthy man." It is this kind of man to look for in a husband, elder, brother in Christ. This is the kind of man who is safe to be with.

God's purpose for husbands is to lead with love and integrity. His purpose for wives is to willingly submit to this leadership and to use their gifts

and abilities to enhance it. Both of these roles take enormous strength and self-control if they are to be fulfilled in the way God intends. It is fair to say that this is the antithesis of modern thinking about womanhood.

How then can we raise it with girls? We can do so in the following ways:

Inspire them to live godly lives by pointing them to women of faith, both past and present. Study the lives of female Bible characters who were obedient to God. Read and tell the stories of female missionaries past and present. Encourage them to read Christian biographies for themselves. Introduce them to Joni Eareckson Tada's books (there are children's versions of her story as well as adult/teen level).

Also, point them to Noel Piper's *Faithful Women and their Extraordinary God*.³⁰ One way to overturn the "doormat" image of Christian women and to expose the confusion between submission and oppression is to see the way that God has used intelligent, creative, energetic, determined, submissive women to accomplish great things in his kingdom—married or single. We copy the people we most admire. Let us point them to godly examples.

Help them to understand what the Bible means by "submission" so that they see the beauty of God's design. This will be done by teaching and example. How do we relate to men? Do we encourage and enable worthy leadership or do we undermine them (with humor). What should be our response when faced with ungodly behaviour in men? This is a big issue for girls and women. Some reactions are self-protective because of past hurts. How should we deal with that? Which scriptures help us in this situation?

Teach them to say no to a complaining or grumbling heart. I am not saying that girls should not share difficult times or puzzling circumstances with a trusted friend. Nor am I saying that girls will never have those times when they pour out their hearts before God in an agony of spirit (cf. 1 Samuel 1). No, by this I mean avoid the development of a discontented disposition.

In her book *Calm my Anxious Heart*, Linda Dillow introduces us to Ella—a missionary wife,

and mother to one of Linda's friends.

Ella worked as a missionary with the pygmies in Africa for fifty-two years. She had left her country, her family, and all that was familiar. Primitive does not even begin to describe her living conditions in the scorching heat and the humidity of the African bush. But Ella found no relief because electricity, air conditioning, and other modern conveniences were only a dream. Some days it was so unbearably hot that she had to bring the thermometer inside because it couldn't register past 120 degrees without breaking. Ella's daughter wondered how her mother had done it—how she had lived a life of contentment when her circumstances would have caused the hardest to complain. Recently she unearthed a treasure, a much more significant find than gold or silver. In an old diary of her mother's, she discovered Ella's prescription for contentment:

- Never allow yourself to complain about anything—not even the weather.
- Never picture yourself in any other circumstances or someplace else.
- Never compare your lot with others
- Never allow yourself to wish this or that had been otherwise.
- Never dwell on tomorrow—remember that tomorrow is God's, not yours.

Ella's eyes were fixed on eternity. Her tomorrows belonged to God. She had given them to Him. And because all her tomorrows were nestled in God's strong arms, she was free to live today.³¹

The key to submission to worthy men is submission to God. He superintends our circumstances. He has ordered our days before any of them came to be. He is sovereign. His sovereignty and goodness are at issue when we will not accept the circumstances.

This will inform the way we talk about our own circumstances as well as how we will react when girls bring a complaint or a moan. We will

acknowledge their problem but not leave them with it. Even very young girls can be encouraged to think in this way, “Yes, that’s very hard. I wonder what God wants you to do / or to learn in this.” Encourage them to put their hope and trust in God. They will meet suffering, injustice, and unfairness in many situations in their lives. The way we help them to deal with difficulty now will either help or hinder them in the future.

Teach them about the beauty that lasts. In our culture girls need to learn about modesty. Purity and propriety are considered to be outdated concepts. We need to resurrect and remarket them. They are very positive attributes and very attractive when properly understood and lived out.

Teach them and show them that the development of character is *more important* than their appearance. This starts early. Comment more on good character than good clothes—even with toddlers! Work diligently to press 1 Pet 3:1–6 upon the consciences of teenagers. Study it, apply it, live it even though this is set in a marriage context. Godly character and attitudes are not learned at the altar. It’s best to start young. In a culture that defines us by how we look, this is powerfully counter-cultural. “A gracious, unselfish, generous woman is truly beautiful in God’s sight. Others will find her attractive, even if naturally speaking she is plain, for her expression and demeanour will be warm and giving.”³²

Teach them to develop feminine qualities: purity, self-control, kindness, submission, contentment, good deeds, a gentle and quiet spirit. This instruction is not geared towards a particular personality type. It is about heart attitudes. Whether we are extrovert or introvert, chatty or quiet, these verses apply.

Getting Practical: The What, When, Where, How, Who, and Why?

What should we teach?

- (1) The Genesis 1 “helper” design is an exalted design.
- (2) The value of purity, modesty, and chastity.
- (3) The value of a submissive attitude—at present to parents. The limits

to submission (not to submit to sin or abuse).

- (4) The value of a meaningful career—to glorify God and serve others by properly using gifts (not as a means to self-fulfilment; not making career a god).
- (5) The value of marriage, motherhood, homemaking; older women to teach younger women (but all for the glory of God, not making god out of marriage/family/home).
- (6) The value of the great number of ministries that women can and should fulfill.
- (7) The value of inner beauty that lasts forever.
- (8) Positive female role models (from Bible and church history) who lived out godly womanhood.³³

In teaching these things, here is one trap to be avoided. One reaction to feminism is romanticism. This may be a greater danger for some girls—not the rejection of men but the idolizing of them to give what only God can. The romantic image of the ideal man is not helpful. The Jane Austin School of Romance does not encourage dependence on God for our well-being. If we make this mistake we will not be enabling women. Not even the closest relationship will meet needs that should only be met in God. To attempt to do so will put unbearable strain on a man and hinder his ministry. The same mistake can be made by looking to friends to meet our deepest needs. No human relationship can bear the weight of this expectation. We must constantly point girls to God, to put their hope in Him.

When and where should we teach the next generation?

- (1) At every opportunity.
- (2) Wherever we are (Deut 6:7).
- (3) At planned times and places.
- (4) In the family and in the church.

How should we teach the next generation?

- (1) By explicit teaching; by being intentional and repetitive. Children are immersed in equality-feminist ideas very early. They need to hear

God's voice clearly and often on this subject.

- (2) By example.
- (3) In dependence on God.

Who should teach the next generation?

- (1) It is primarily the privilege of fathers and mothers to teach their daughters about manhood and womanhood. Children's workers and youth workers and the church family support and reinforce this teaching.
- (2) For children of families unattached to the church—children and youth workers, pastors, and church members will be their teachers and examples. The great hope, of course, is that these families will be reached for Christ and transformed by the gospel so that parents can train their own children in righteousness. In the meantime members of the church family will teach them and pray for them and their families.

Why should we teach the next generation?

- (1) Because they are bombarded with a godless world view that can have disastrous consequences if it is lived out.
- (2) Because without the truth they will follow lies.
- (3) To keep them from sin.
- (4) To help them see that all of life is under God's rule.
- (5) To raise their eyes to Christ, enlarge their hearts with love for him and broaden their horizons with an appreciation of his truth so that they live their lives to the glory of God.

This is an impossible task. But when did God ever ask us to do something that is possible? He asks us to do the impossible because it is his work and will only be done in total dependence on Christ. In this way, we experience the joy of living and working in relationship with Christ, and he gets the glory. There will be trial, failure, and pain along the way but "with God nothing is impossible" (Luke 1: 37).

May he deepen our joy in him as we seek to equip and encourage the girls of this generation to be godly women who in turn equip and encourage the next generation until the Lord returns and we live with him forever in the new creation.

Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain,
But a woman who fears the Lord is to be
praised (Prov 31:30).

ENDNOTES

¹This essay is based on a message delivered at the Children Desiring God Conference, Minneapolis, MN, April 2009.

²Anne Moir and David Jessel, *Brain Sex: The Real Difference between Men and Women* (Mandarin, 1989), 149.

³Maggie Hamilton, *What's Happening to Our Girls?* (New York: Penguin/Viking, 2008), 2.

⁴James Sire, *Naming the Elephant: Worldview as a Concept* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2004), 115.

⁵Sharon James, *God's Design for Women: Biblical Womanhood for Today* (Carlisle, PA: Evangelical Press, 2002), 54.

⁶Nancy Pearcey, *Total Truth: Liberating Christianity from its Cultural Captivity* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2004), 327.

⁷*Ibid.*, 20.

⁸James, *God's Design for Women*, 67.

⁹*Ibid.*, 20.

¹⁰Paul Vitz, "The Father Almighty, Maker of Male and Female, (Support from Psychology for the Fatherhood of God)," *Homiletic and Pastoral Review* (Feb 1997).

¹¹James, *God's Design for Women*, 20.

¹²See *Past and Present: Key Dates in Equality*, UK Equal Opportunities Commission, 2006.

¹³James Tooley, *The Miseducation of Women* (London: Continuum, 2002), 92.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, 41.

¹⁵James, *God's Design for Women*, 17.

¹⁶*Ibid.*

¹⁷Tooley, *The Miseducation of Women*, 54.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, 55.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, 119.

²⁰*Ibid.*, 118.

²¹Moir and Jessel, *Brain Sex*, 5.

²²Melanie Phillips, *The Sex-Change Society: Feminised Britain and Neutered Male* (London: The Social Market Foundation, 1999), 360.

²³John Piper ("A Vision of Biblical Complementarity: Manhood and Womanhood Defined according to the Bible," in *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood: A Response to Evangelical Feminism* [Crossway Wheaton, 1991], 26-27) writes,

The tendency today is to stress the equality of men and women by minimizing the unique significance of our maleness or femaleness. But this deprecation of male and female personhood is a great loss. It is taking a tremendous toll on generations of young men and women who do not know what it means to be a man or woman. Confusion over the meaning of sexual personhood today is epidemic. The consequence of this confusion is not free and happy harmony among gender-free persons relating on the basis of abstract competencies. The consequence rather is more divorce, more

homosexuality, more sexual abuse, more promiscuity, more social awkwardness, and more emotional distress and suicide that come with the loss of God-given identity.

²⁴Douglas Wilson writes, “The woman reflects the glory of God by reflecting the glory of man, whose glory she is. However much modern egalitarians do not like it, God did not make the world according to their specifications” (*Future Men* [Moscow, ID: Cannon Press, 2004], 17).

²⁵Piper, “A Vision of Biblical Complementarity,” 28.

²⁶Piper offers this definition: “At the heart of mature femininity is a freeing disposition to affirm, receive and nurture strength and leadership from worthy men in ways appropriate to a woman’s differing relationships” (ibid., 37).

²⁷Ibid., 26.

²⁸Dorothy Patterson, “The High Calling of Wife and Mother in Biblical Perspective,” in *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, 373.

²⁹Wilson, *Future Men*, 150.

³⁰Noël Piper, *Faithful Women and their Extraordinary God* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2005).

³¹Linda Dillow, *Calm My Anxious Heart: A Woman’s Guide to Finding Contentment* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1998), 11–12.

³²James, *God’s Design for Women*, 276.

³³Sharon James, “Manhood and Womanhood in Biblical Perspective,” a seminar delivered at Chessington Evangelical Church.

The Syntax of 1 Timothy 2:12: A Rejoinder to Philip B. Payne

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Introduction

In a recent article, Philip Payne has reiterated his earlier contention that Paul in 1 Tim 2:12 forbids women only from assuming *improper* authority over men in the church.¹ Payne claims that Paul (or his amanuensis, or a pseudepigrapher) used the expression οὐδέ (“nor”) in this verse essentially as a subordinating conjunction, subsuming the Greek verb αὐθεντεῖν under the head word διδάσκειν, with the resultant meaning “to teach men *by assuming* independent authority.”²

At the beginning of his essay, Payne promises that he will identify “many instances” where οὐδέ “joins an *infinitive* with positive connotations to an infinitive with negative connotations.”³ However, strikingly, in none of the examples he cites on the following pages does οὐδέ link infinitives!⁴

At the very end of his piece, Payne claims that nine of the 102 extrabiblical parallels to 1 Tim 2:12 I cited in a previous publication involve the use of one word with a positive and another with a negative connotation (which, if true, might allow one to construe 1 Tim 2:12 as a positive word, διδάσκειν, being modified by a negative one, αὐθεντεῖν, though still not necessarily with the second word subordinated to the first by way of *hen-diadys*).

Even if this were the case, of course, this would still mean that the pattern of usage (positive-positive or negative-negative) I proposed would obtain

over 91 percent of the time in the entire New Testament and extrabiblical Greek sources, a considerable weight of probability. What is more, even in these nine cases Payne’s arguments demonstrably fall short.

The Nine Alleged Problem Passages

(1) In 2 Cor 7:12, in the phrase neither “on account of the one who did the wrong *nor* on account of the one who was wronged,” both perpetrating wrong and being victimized are viewed negatively by Paul as part of a wrong committed (two corresponding aspects of the “one single idea” Payne is affirming).

(2) In 2 Thess 3:7–8, both idleness and eating someone else’s bread without paying for it are viewed negatively. Payne’s discussion of this on pp. 242–43 is inadequate; clearly, in context, Paul implied that it would have been wrong for him and his associates to eat anyone’s bread free of charge because doing so would have made them a “burden” to others, which clearly has a negative connotation.

(3) In Sir 18.6 (LXX), neither diminishing nor increasing God’s mercies is viewed as possible or desirable; while “diminish” and “increase” are conceptual opposites, from the writer’s perspective the only proper approach is to represent God’s mercies accurately; hence both diminishing or increasing them is discouraged.

(4) In Diodorus Siculus, *Bib. Hist.* 3.30.2.8, both surprise and distrust express skepticism over

against outright acceptance (note the escalation from surprise to distrust here).

(5) In Josephus, *Ant.* 15.165.3–4, in context, both “meddling in state affairs” and “starting a revolution” are viewed negatively. While the first term, depending on the context, is capable of having both positive and negative connotations, a negative connotation is more likely in light of the clear and consistent pattern of usage of οὐδέ elsewhere as well as other considerations.

(6) In Plutarch, *Regum et imperatorum apophthegmata* 185.A.1, both sleeping and being indolent are viewed negatively (again, there is an escalation from sleep to indolence). In the present context, the trophy of Miltiades calls for a positive response; by comparison, both sleep and indolence fall short. To adduce a passage from another of Plutarch’s work which evinces a “positive view of sleep” completely misses the point, because verbal meaning is contextual rather than merely a function of lexis.

(7) In Plutarch, *Aetia Romana et Graeca* 269.D, both exact and approximate reckoning are viewed negatively in the present context (the limited skill of mathematicians).

(8) In Plutarch, *Quaestiones convivales* 711.E.3, “harming” and “getting the best of us” are both viewed negatively; both are virtual synonyms, and, certainly, wine “getting the best” of someone is not viewed positively by the writer as Payne suggests!

(9) In Plutarch, *Bruta animalia ratione uti* 990.A.11, touching is viewed negatively because it results in pain; thus both actions are viewed negatively and related to each other in terms of one action (touching) resulting in the experience of another (experiencing pain).

The difficulty with Payne’s analysis of these references is his categorization of verbs as “positive” or “negative.” Contrary to Payne’s understanding, however, it is not the case that verbs are “positive” or “negative” by themselves.⁵ Rather, verbs convey a positive or negative connotation *in context*. Thus, lexical meaning by itself is inadequate to discern a given term’s connotation in context. A writer’s use of a given verb is to a significant extent a matter

of aspect or perception and, thus, subjective. As shown, therefore, properly understood none of the alleged nine “problem cases” of the pattern of the usage of οὐδέ I identified are problematic. To the contrary, they conform perfectly to this pattern, as do the other 93 of 102 instances not disputed by Payne. The pattern is always positive/positive or negative/negative, never positive/negative or vice versa.

Payne’s Proposal that οὐδέ Joins Two Expressions Conveying a “Single Idea”

Another difficulty pertains to Payne’s contention that οὐδέ joins two expressions conveying a “single idea.” This may indeed be the case (though this is an entirely different matter than whether οὐδέ joins concepts viewed positively and negatively by the writer), and I, for one, have never denied this possibility. It is important to keep in mind, however, that οὐδέ as a coordinating conjunction, does not necessarily join two concepts to such an extent that the two actions completely merge and become indistinguishable from one another. Instead, while there may be an overlap, a certain amount of distinctness may be retained. For example, one action may result in the experience of another (e.g., touching an object leading to the experience of pain).

Therefore, to posit the presence of “one single idea” or two completely separate concepts as the only two possible alternatives is unduly disjunctive and fails to do justice to the way οὐδέ functions in *koine* Greek.⁶ Applied to the present case, the interpretation of 1 Tim 2:12, then, the overarching “single idea” is that women ought not to serve in authoritative church positions, whether by teaching men or by ruling (both functions are reserved for male elders)—two functions that are distinct yet closely related. In other words, “exercising authority” is a larger term than “teaching,” since a person may exercise authority in other ways besides teaching (such as by making decisions binding on the entire church or by exercising church discipline; see also 1 Tim 5:17). Conversely, teaching is one major way in which authority is exercised in the church.

Exegetical and Background Matters

Apart from these linguistic and syntactical difficulties, Payne fails also on the level of exegesis and background.⁷ On an exegetical level, Payne's contention that Paul's statement in 1 Tim 2:13 ("Adam was formed first") "implies that woman should respect man as her source" misconstrues what is clearly a reference to Adam's prior creation, not him being the woman's source. Payne's discussion of affirmations of women teaching elsewhere in the Pastorals, likewise, contains assertions that fail to prove his point.⁸ For example, Payne adduces the pronoun "anyone" in 1 Tim 3:1 as support for the claim that women as well as men should be allowed to serve as elders while failing to note the "faithful husband" requirement in the following verse. He proceeds to cite Timothy's instruction by his mother and grandmother, which is hardly relevant here, since no one disputes that mothers and grandmothers may instruct their sons or grandsons in the faith. Finally, Payne notes the injunction for older women to teach younger women in Titus 2, which again is not relevant in a discussion of women teaching *men*. None of this can properly be regarded as legitimate support for the notion that women should be appointed as elders or overseers in the local church.

With regard to background, Payne mounts an unconvincing argument that Paul sought to forbid women perpetrating false teaching in the Ephesian context. Yet this does not follow from a reading of 1 Tim 2:12 in the context of the immediately following verses. Specifically, Paul states that Adam was created first (1 Tim 2:13) and that it was not Adam who was deceived but the woman (1 Tim 2:14). This makes clear that Paul's concern is with the woman as the *victim of deception*, not as the *perpetrator of false teaching*. Nowhere in the context of 1 Tim 2:12 is Paul's point regarding Eve that she *taught Adam falsely*.

Instead, in Timothy's Ephesus there seem to have been those who told women that true spirituality consisted in refraining from engaging in their natural functions of marriage and childbearing (see, e.g., 1 Tim 2:15; 4:3; 5:14).⁹ Paul's concern for women in this context was for them not

to fall prey to such deception by engaging in teaching or assuming a ruling function, or by aspiring to the pastoral office (see 1 Tim 3:1–2). Instead, he wanted them to be devoted to fulfilling their domestic and familial roles. Also, if Paul's injunction in 1 Tim 2:12 was merely for women not to "assert independent authority over men," as Payne claims, why would it be the case, as he also asserts, that the present tense form of "I do not permit" in 1 Tim 2:12 "fits a *current* prohibition better than a *permanent* one"?¹⁰ Is there ever a time when it is biblically appropriate for women to "assume independent authority over men"? It is hard to conceive of such a circumstance.

Conclusion

For these reasons, there continues to be every reason to believe that Scripture teaches that men should serve as heads of households (e.g., Eph 5:23–24; 1 Tim 3:4–5) and as elders in the churches (1 Tim 2:12; 3:2; see also 5:17). In this way, the Bible links the authority structure in the natural family and the authority structure in the spiritual family, "God's household" (1 Tim 3:15), the church. This does not mean that women are denied significant participation in the ministry of the church, nor is their role as wives and mothers to be disparaged or diminished in any way (see, e.g., 1 Tim 2:15). In this life, God so chose to order male-female relations in the family and the church that wives submit to husbands and the church to male elders. This neither reflects any merit on the man's part nor demerit on the woman's part; such is the will of God according to Scripture.

ENDNOTES

¹Philip B. Payne, "1 Tim 2.12 and the Use of οὐδέ to Combine Two Elements to Express a Single Idea," *New Testament Studies* 54 (2008): 235–53. See the critique of Payne's earlier version of this thesis in A. J. Köstenberger, "A Complex Sentence: The Syntax of 1 Timothy 2:12," in *Women in the Church: An Analysis and Application of 1 Timothy 2:9–15* (2d ed.; ed. A. J. Köstenberger and T. R. Schreiner; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005), 55–56 (retained from the first edition). Payne originally argued that the two infinitives form a *hendiadys* (P. B. Payne, "Οὐδέ in 1 Timothy 2.12" [unpublished paper presented at the 1988 annual meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society]), though he no longer uses this term in his later article because of unspecified "disputes over its definition" ("1 Tim 2.12 and the Use of οὐδέ," 235, n. 2). The present article was first submitted to *New Testament Studies*, the journal that

carried Payne's article. The editor declined to publish the article, however, on the grounds that it failed to meet the criteria for responses set by the journal.

²See Payne, "1 Tim 2.12 and the Use of οὐδέ," 243–44. Note in this regard that Payne proposed that Paul used οὐδέ differently from Luke (see *ibid.*, 241–42). However, it is hard to see how it is meaningful to speak of "Paul's use of οὐδέ" (see, e.g., 244: "Paul's typical use of οὐδέ") if the Pastorals were written by someone other than Paul (especially a pseudepigrapher), as Payne suggests as a possibility.

³*Ibid.*, 236 (emphasis added).

⁴*Ibid.*, 236–41.

⁵*Ibid.*, 251–52.

⁶Sometimes Payne's language is less precise than might be desired, such as when he speaks of οὐδέ joining "expressions that reinforce or make more specific a single idea" (236). What Payne fails to note here is that in those cases this may involve the introduction of a second, related (yet nonetheless distinct) idea. See further the discussion below.

⁷See especially Payne's discussion on 247, which contains a large number of questionable assertions and logical *non sequiturs*. See further the discussion below.

⁸*Ibid.*, 248.

⁹See Andreas J. Köstenberger, "Ascertaining Women's God-Ordained Roles: An Interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:15," *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 7 (1997): 104–11.

¹⁰Payne, "1 Tim 2.12 and the Use of οὐδέ," 243, n. 23 (emphasis added). Payne does not support this assertion.

“Son of Man” or “Human Beings”? Hebrews 2:5–9 and a Response to Craig Blomberg

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Introduction

In the summer of 2006, approximately 150 scholars and students from around the world met at Scotland’s oldest university, the University of St. Andrews.¹ The purpose of this conference was to present papers and discuss how the epistle to the Hebrews intersects with Christian theology. The meeting was second in a series of conferences aimed at bringing biblical scholars and Christian theologians together for cross-disciplinary dialogue. The conference produced two collections of essays, one of which contains an essay by Craig Blomberg, which is under consideration here. I was fortunate enough to attend both the Hebrews conference as well as Blomberg’s presentation, which was subsequently published under the title, “But We See Jesus’: The Relationship Between the Son of Man in Hebrews 2:6 and 2:9 and the Implications for English Translation.”²

The purpose of this article is to evaluate Blomberg’s argument favoring the anthropological interpretation of Heb 2:5–9 and to argue against his contention that the anthropological view be reflected in our modern English translations. He concludes that the TNIV does this admirably, and, in his view, “accomplishes all the necessary tasks” of translation.³ The point that I stress in the following pages is that Blomberg’s preferred TNIV (as well as the NRSV) actually goes too far as a translation. Rather than leaving room for the Christological interpretation of these verses—whether or not one

maintains this interpretation—a *translation* such as the TNIV makes the Christological view of these verses extremely difficult.⁴

I will begin by giving a brief overview of Blomberg’s essay. This will be followed by an assessment and critique of Blomberg’s exegesis. If, exegetically, his interpretation is questionable and another interpretation is viable, then we must conclude that it is inappropriate to rule out a viable interpretive option. Next, I will discuss the matter of translation and why gender-neutral language goes too far in this specific passage of Hebrews. The purpose of this article is not to argue for one particular interpretation (anthropological or Christological) or one particular translation (“essentially literal” or “functionally equal”), nor is it necessarily or specifically to show what I perceive to be some of the difficulties of gender-neutral translation.⁵ Rather, the purpose is to demonstrate that Blomberg’s preferred translation of this text (TNIV) says too much in Hebrews 2, and actually *obscures* an interpretation that is widely-held both in today’s Hebrews scholarship as well as in the early church.⁶ As such, this translation does a disservice to readers and should be revised.

Overview of Blomberg’s essay

The point of Professor Blomberg’s essay is straightforward, and he is very clear and efficient in his argumentation. After voicing his displeasure with Poythress’s recent analysis,⁷ Blomberg pro-

vides a brief introduction to the thorny exegetical issues surrounding this oft-debated text. He also gives a helpful summary of the two chief interpretations of Heb 2:6 and 2:9 (anthropological vs. Christological). He then states that though he is frequently inclined to “both-and” positions on matters of theological conundra, on the interpretation of these verses he is quite convinced of a “purely anthropological approach to verses 5–8.”⁸ The balance of the essay is given to an exegetical defense of this interpretation, which is itself not a new interpretation.⁹ His contribution is in his application of his exegetical decisions to the issue of the translation of the passage for English Bibles. He concludes that the TNIV and NRSV are preferable over such “essentially literal” translations, such as the “somewhat retrograde”¹⁰ ESV. As I noted above, the purpose of this article is not necessarily to defend a particular interpretation or published translation,¹¹ but to assess Professor Blomberg’s overall point regarding the application of his exegesis to translation. Some attention, however, must be given to his exegesis since it is upon this that his conclusion rests. To this matter we now turn our attention.

The Matter of Exegesis

The anthropological interpretation is not as obvious and clear as Blomberg suggests. He has painted himself into a bit of a corner given that he denies any Christological overtones at all until verse 9,¹² arguing for a purely anthropological interpretation of the verses from Psalm 8.

The γὰρ (“for”) in v. 5, he argues, ties these verses to 2:1–4 (exhortation), and not to 1:13–14 (exposition). He writes, “The signs and wonders and other gifts of the Spirit represent God’s foretaste of humanity’s coming inheritance,” and he adds that these Spirit-wrought “tokens of spiritual redemption and victory” were given to people and not angels. Thus, he concludes, verse 5 paves the way for the anthropological interpretation of verses 6 and following.¹³

While it is true that such distributions of the Spirit (πνεύματος ἁγίου μερισμοῖς) are for people and not angels, there are two problems with Blom-

berg’s view of verse 4. First, “distributions” of the Spirit are not the same as “gifts of the Spirit,” and what is in view here is the actual distribution of the Spirit himself, and not “gifts that the Spirit gives” such as the charismatic spiritual gifts of which Paul speaks in 1 Corinthians 12–14.¹⁴ The grammar makes an objective genitive¹⁵ here more natural, and the distribution of the Spirit *himself* fits well in the flow of verses 3–4, which themselves recall early church tradition (see Acts 2:1–4ff.; 8:14–17; 10:44–46; 19:6). Second, the whole point of such miracles and distributions is not *who* gets them (whether humans or angels), but rather that such divine actions corroborate the message that was first spoken by the Lord, then to those who heard, and finally to the author and his congregation; this is God’s “testimony” to the authenticity of the gospel message.¹⁶ The emphasis is not on humanity who gets these gifts instead of angels, as Blomberg asserts.¹⁷

Further, Blomberg discounts the discourse analysis of Guthrie and Quinn on these verses,¹⁸ yet does not interact with their work. Discourse analysis simply *must* come into play in the course of interpreting Hebrews; this “word of exhortation” (13:22), being a sermon in written form, is an intricately-crafted literary gem that moves back and forth from exposition to exhortation (kerygma and parenesis), drawing its hearers’ attention back to his kerygmatic argument by way of inclusio and hook word.¹⁹ The intervening exhortation (parenesis) is one of many warnings that punctuate the landscape of this homily. Verses 1–4 of Hebrews 2 break off the exposition of 1:5–14 in order to warn them not to neglect the message spoken by God through his Son in these “latter days” (cf. 1:1–2). Parenesis “interrupts” kerygma in 2:1–4, which then returns to kerygma in verse 5.²⁰ Yet Blomberg asserts that there is “no necessary reason” why the original audience would have heard 2:5 and thought to “jump back” to the thought flow of 1:5–14.²¹ Yet this “jumping back” is precisely what the author does *repeatedly* throughout his sermon. The topic of priesthood is introduced at 2:17–18 (before the exhortation of 3:1–4:13) and resumed at 4:14–16 (after this exhortation). The topic of Melchizedek

and his priesthood is introduced at 5:11 (before the exhortation of 5:11–6:20) and then resumed in 6:20/7:1 (after this exhortation).²² In short, contrary to Blomberg's objections, "exhortative digression" is an integral part of Hebrews' discourse. The audience *would* have understood a resumption of argument after such a brief interlude.²³

One final point concerning Blomberg's exegesis of Heb 2:5 needs to be addressed—the meaning of "the coming world" (τὴν οἰκουμένην τὴν μέλλουσαν). He claims that Adam and Eve were created and given dominion over "a coming world" that "is only just beginning to open up to them."²⁴ The problem with this is that this is not how the Genesis narrative reads. Genesis 1:26–31 recounts the creation of man and woman in the *Imago Dei*, which comes *after* the world that they were commanded to rule had been created (Gen 1:1–25). The Cultural Mandate of verses 26–28 was not to rule over "a coming world" (Blomberg), but to rule over the "fish of the sea and birds of the air" etc. that had already been created. Blomberg's interpretation of the Genesis narrative is unusual, and does not seem to flow from the natural reading of the creation account. Adam and Eve were made vice-regents over *this* world, not "a coming world," or "a world that was coming into existence," and this is still the world (albeit fallen) over which humanity is *presently* summoned to rule. Presently, we are to rule over this world as God's vice regents just as were our first parents. The Cultural Mandate did not change nor was it removed after the Fall in Genesis 3.

Instead, what the writer of Hebrews means regarding "the coming world" is what Lane refers to as "the heavenly world to come." Lane is representative when he writes,

The writer had already identified the entrance of the Son into τὴν οἰκουμένην, the heavenly world of reality, at his exaltation as the occasion when the angels of God were commanded to worship him (see 1:6). He now takes up the thought again by designating the new creation designated by the Son's enthronement as τὴν οἰκουμένην τὴν μέλλουσαν. This dis-

tinctive designation, which finds equivalent expression in μέλλοντος αἰῶνος, "the age to come" (6:5), or πόλιν ... τὴν μέλλουσαν, "the city to come" (13:14), reflects a class of statements in the Psalter that proclaim the establishment of the eschatological kingdom of God.²⁵

Blomberg's interpretation of "coming world" is unconvincing to this writer and to much of broader Hebrews scholarship as well, which interprets τὴν οἰκουμένην τὴν μέλλουσαν ("the coming world") not as the "already existing cosmos" as Blomberg asserts,²⁶ but the one to come.²⁷ In contrast, F. F. Bruce rightly ascertains the flow of thought: "If then this world to come has not been entrusted to angels for its administration, to whom has it been placed in subjection? To the Son of God, whom his Father has 'appointed heir of all things' (1:2)."²⁸

In addition, when making his case for οἰκουμένην in 2:5, he fails to note that the same term is used in 1:6. This omission is puzzling, especially when both contexts deal with angels. Perhaps such an omission was simply an oversight, but no major commentary fails to cite 1:6 when discussing 2:5, and Blomberg's omission is striking. In my view, 1:6 does not help Blomberg's case, and in fact makes his view of 2:5 even less likely. This is important since if τὴν οἰκουμένην τὴν μέλλουσαν is the coming world and not the present one, then Blomberg's interpretation becomes less likely.

This brief exegetical discussion has focused attention on Heb 2:5 since it puts the whole of verses 6–8 either on an anthropological or Christological footing. From this, I conclude with several observations. First, the author demonstrates a kerygmatic flow of thought up to 2:5, and therefore provides a connection between 2:1–4 and 2:5ff. Second, the interpretation of "coming world" (τὴν οἰκουμένην τὴν μέλλουσαν) is critical, since, as Blomberg himself states, if it is the coming eschatological age, then the Christological interpretation is all but required.²⁹ In short, we are asked to accept Blomberg's interpretation in spite of the following points: (1) his problematic interpretation of 2:5 and τὴν οἰκουμένην τὴν μέλλουσαν, (2) the flow of thought of the writer's kerygma, (3) all other NT

uses of Psalm 8 are clearly Christological (which Blomberg acknowledges), (4), the witness of much of current Hebrews scholarship, and (5) the historic witness of the early church (which Blomberg acknowledges). Instead, he elevates the usage of Psalm 8 in Jewish sources over the witness of the NT writers, and considers the usage of Psalm 110 in Heb 1:13 to be in contradiction with the Christological interpretation of this verse as it relates to the usage of Psalm 8 in Heb 2:6–8. Again, this latter point is striking given that the compatibility of these two texts is demonstrated in other parts of the NT (see Eph 1:20–22; 1 Cor 15:25–27; cf. 1 Pet 3:22; Phil 3:21) where the already-not yet of NT eschatology is clearly in view. Such an already-not yet interpretation resolves any interpretational difficulties between Psalm 8 and 110. Additionally, Lane is correct to declare, “The tandem arrangement of these OT texts ... provides evidence for a *common exegetical tradition* upon which Christian writers drew.”³⁰

My own interpretation is as follows: These verses continue the Christological line of thought that was interrupted by the exhortation of 2:1–4. What we see is an excerpt from Psalm 8 followed by the author’s comments on it; such was a common practice in first century Jewish exposition. Through Psalm 8 the writer of Hebrews declares that all things are in subjection to the Ideal Man, Jesus Christ. Yet, it is also true that this full and final subjection has not yet been fully realized as Psalm 110 (recall 1:13). Thus, the common New Testament theme of the already and not yet is in play here, with the certainty of the theological reality awaiting its consummation in history and time.

In its original setting Psalm 8 referred to *humanity* and pointed back to the subjection of the world to Adam and Eve as God’s vice-regents over the creation. We see in Genesis 1–2 the command to subdue the earth, rule over it, and to be fruitful in it (Gen 1:26–28; the Cultural Mandate). However, in his usage of Psalm 8, the writer of Hebrews is not interested in the psalm for what it says about humanity’s rule, but rather in the inaugurated rule of the “Son of Man,” Jesus Christ.³¹ The emphasis is on the exaltation and incarnation of the Son, and the

usage of Psalm 8 accentuates the identification of Christ with humanity. Though the earth was made subject to man, due to the entrance of sin into the world, such dominion has never occurred. Rather, what is seen is a fallen world and the deplorable effects of sin. Yet, this psalm is consistently applied in the New Testament to Christ (Matt 21:16; 1 Cor 15:25–27; Eph 1:22; cf. 1 Pet 3:22; Phil 3:21). What our author means is that it is only Christ, as the true representative of humanity, who can fulfill this psalm. Christ has come to restore what man has lost. Hughes aptly writes, “Only in union with him [Christ] can man become man as God meant and made him to be.”³² The psalm represents “ideal humanity,” to which man has never attained due to sin. The psalm is therefore only perfectly fulfilled in the Ideal Man, Jesus Christ.³³ As Hooker states, “He has been crowned with the glory and honour promised to humanity in Psalm 8.”³⁴ Christ fulfills these words in a far greater sense. As Adam and Eve were to have dominion over the creation, so also Christ is to have an *eternal* dominion over the world to come. In keeping with his use of the Old Testament elsewhere (such as 2:12–13; 10:5–10³⁵), the meaning of this passage has been “Christologically transposed into a higher key.” Christ is the true representative of humanity, and as such He fulfills this psalm.

Theologically, the author’s use of Psalm 8 is strategic. Notice that there are elements both of exaltation and incarnation. Regarding exaltation we get the statements, “you have crowned him with glory and honor” and “you have put all things in subjection under his feet.” Regarding the incarnation, we get the statements, “you have made him for a little while lower than the angels.” Many Hebrews scholars make the helpful point that the focus on Christ “shifts” from his status as enthroned ruler and sustainer of the universe (in Hebrews 1) to his role as the Son of Man as identified with humanity in 2:5–18. The focus shifts from enthronement to incarnation, from His place in heaven to His role on earth. As such, Psalm 8 is used by the writer of Hebrews since it contains *both* elements and is therefore transitional. Psalm 8 contains both ideas of “all things in subjection” to Him, as well as His

being positionally “lower than the angels” (as a man) for “a little while.”³⁶

If the interpretation proposed here is indeed accurate, then the purely anthropological interpretation of Psalm 8³⁷ is far less likely. This, in turn, would contrast with Blomberg’s preferred anthropological *translation* as found in the TNIV. Such a translation obscures the Christological interpretation, which is well-attested in contemporary Hebrews scholarship. Moreover, the TNIV rendering rules out an interpretation that goes back to the earliest interpreters of the infant Church. To the matter of translation we now turn.³⁸

The Matter of Translation

The TNIV reads as follows; the gender-neutral terms are underlined.

⁵It is not to angels that he has subjected the world to come, about which we are speaking. ⁶But there is a place where someone has testified:

“What are mere mortals that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them?

⁷You made them a little lower than the angels; you crowned them with glory and honor

⁸and put everything under their feet.”

In putting everything under them, God left nothing that is not subject to them.

Yet at present we do not see everything subject to them. ⁹But we do see Jesus, who was made lower than the angels for a little while, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

As one can see, any reference to Jesus as “son of man” here is obscured, if not eliminated, by the translation of ἄνθρωπος and υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου with the gender-inclusive “mere mortals” and “human beings” in verse 6. Despite Blomberg’s insistence to the contrary, readers of the TNIV are hard-pressed to interpret this view in any other way other than what the translation demands—the anthropo-

logical interpretation. Though the marginal note is better and somewhat helpful (“what is a human being that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him?”), we question whether TNIV readers will take care to read these notes with consistency. At minimum, I would suggest that the text and marginal note readings should be reversed.

Gender neutral language is unnecessary here given that it obscures the interpretation that was most often held in ancient Christianity, as well as being the interpretation of leading Hebrews scholars over the past several decades. For example, as I scan the commentaries on my own shelves, I find the following who maintain the Christological interpretation: Lane writes, “The writer regarded the declarations of Ps 8:6–7 as independent statements descriptive of three stages in the experience of Jesus: (A) incarnation and humiliation...; (B) exaltation...; and (C) final triumph.... [the writer of Hebrews] made the entire exposition subservient to the perspective of the exaltation glory into which Jesus has entered.”³⁹ In his recent 2008 commentary, Thompson states, “The continuity with 1:5–14 implies the christological interpretation of the psalm.”⁴⁰ Similarly, Bruce maintains the same, yet goes further arguing for Second Adam language.⁴¹ Noting the flow of thought from verse 5 to verse 6 he asks, “If then this world to come has not been entrusted to angels for its administration, to whom has it been placed in subjection? To the Son of God, whom his Father has ‘appointed heir of all things’ (1:2).”⁴² Attridge argues this way, averring, “For Hebrews the psalm is not, primarily at least, a meditation on the lofty status of humankind in the created order, but an oracle that describes the humiliation and exaltation of Jesus.”⁴³ See also Ellingworth, who writes, “the primary reference is to Christ, but that what is said of Christ in the psalm has immediate implications for believers.”⁴⁴ To these could be added the scholarship of Bauckham,⁴⁵ Hooker,⁴⁶ Hughes,⁴⁷ G. Guthrie,⁴⁸ D. Guthrie,⁴⁹ Owen,⁵⁰ Phillips,⁵¹ as well as those in ancient Christianity.⁵²

As one can see, many of the best interpreters of Hebrews, whether modern or ancient, pastoral

or scholarly, interpret these verses Christologically. The point that pertains to a modern translation is this: If so many of the best resources argue for the Christological view, then should any *translation* obscure such a viable and well-supported *interpretation*? It seems preferable and wise that where there is such an option as is present here, then the translator should not encroach on the domain that rightfully belongs to the exegete, pastor, or teacher.

What is perhaps most surprising is Blomberg's insistence that the TNIV does not obscure a possible Christological interpretation. He asserts that the TNIV "leaves the door open" for the Christological interpretation, while "naturally suggesting the anthropological interpretation."⁵³ Yet, I do not see how the text's rendering leaves the door open at all—one must flee to the marginal note for any hope of a Christological interpretation. This is precisely the issue here—Blomberg acknowledges the fact that a Christological understanding of this passage cannot be had by means of the TNIV translation. The "open door" to which he refers is merely the marginal note. It is true that "the translation committees of the NIV have made clear from their first edition onwards that marginal readings are always to be considered part of the text."⁵⁴ However, I submit that in such a case as this, it would be preferable for the translation itself not to take a side on this disputed point. In other words, it would be preferable for the translation itself to leave open both possibilities since the meaning of this text is so contested. Further, it is questionable as to whether a marginal note is sufficient when the text reading is so biased towards a specific interpretation, and as to whether the average reader would actually access the marginal notes.

Should anyone wish to have a translation that supports the anthropological interpretation, Blomberg concludes, "but leaves the door open for the Christological one *in the text itself*, without resorting to marginal alternatives, then the NRSV fits the bill admirably."⁵⁵ The NRSV translation renders verse 6 thusly, "What are human beings that you are mindful of them, or mortals that you care for them?" It is puzzling to me that Blomberg asserts that the NRSV leaves the door open for

the Christological interpretation in the text itself. He writes, "Here there is no 'mere' in the text to trouble those who want to see Christ immediately in view from the outset."⁵⁶ Yet I do not see how the absence of the term "mere" makes the NRSV any better than the TNIV. How would the reader of the NRSV even know that the *absence* of a term ("mere") leaves the door open for the Christological interpretation?

I will conclude this section with a notable quote from Professor Morna Hooker, in her plenary address at the St. Andrews 2006 conference on Hebrews and Christian theology. Hooker had these words to say,

Now the author's interpretation of "man" and "son of man" in Psalm 8 is remarkable, even though modern translations, or many of them, do their best to insure that the readers of the English versions miss the significance of the passage *totally*, because they insist on using politically correct terms, such as "human beings," and "mortals." It seems to me that you've got to stick with "man" and "son of man" however much you may dislike the terms in order to grasp the author's point.⁵⁷

It is somewhat interesting that such an accomplished *female* New Testament scholar as Professor Hooker would be so adamant in her disdain for this gender-neutral language. While her point is that such translations obscure her preferred interpretation, which is Christological, my point is that a translation should not obscure such a well-attested interpretation to the point where it is unlikely for the average reader to be able to ascertain such an interpretation. While I do not expect Professor Blomberg to agree, I assert that such translations as the NASB, ESV, RSV, CSB, NET, NIV, NAB, NKJV do a fine job of translating this verse, albeit without the "political correctness" (to use Hooker's description) of the NRSV and TNIV. Further, since each of these particular English translations translate υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου as "son of man" and not "Son of Man" (notice the titular capitals) they should not be considered

“Christological translations.”⁵⁸

While it is true in some measure that “all translation is interpretation,” there is the matter as to *how much* interpreting a translator should do. Further, there is a difference between lexical/linguistic interpretation and the kind of exegetical/theological interpretation of the TNIV, as seen here in Heb 2:6. I have argued, the gender-inclusiveness of the TNIV and NRSV overstep the boundaries of good translation practice at this point and in doing so obscure a well-attested and historical interpretation of these verses.⁵⁹ For this reason these translations are inadequate.

Conclusion

In the preceding pages, I have attempted to demonstrate a specific weakness in the TNIV (cf. NRSV) translation of Heb 2:6. This specific text has been the subject of much attention in previous years, and my specific purpose was to interact with Blomberg’s rationale for his position on gender-neutral translation of Psalm 8 in Hebrews 2. First, I gave an overview of Blomberg’s essay, in which his point is that the anthropological interpretation is so clear that it should be reflected in the text’s published translation. The gender-neutrality of the TNIV in this passage “accomplishes all the necessary tasks” of translation.⁶⁰ Next, I interacted with and critiqued his exegesis of this passage, and then went on to question the translation of the TNIV. The point is simple, and is in fact the point of the present essay: If it could be shown, on exegetical grounds, that the anthropological interpretation is not as clear-cut as Blomberg suggests and that another interpretation is indeed quite viable, then the translation itself ought not rule out either interpretation. I find his interpretation to be unpersuasive; Blomberg is asking too much from his readers: we are asked to accept his interpretation in spite of: (1) his problematic interpretation of 2:5 and τὴν οἰκουμένην τὴν μέλλουσιν, (2) the flow of thought of the writer’s kerygma, (3) all other NT uses of Psalm 8 are clearly Christological (which Blomberg acknowledges), (4), the witness of much of current Hebrews scholarship, and (5) the historic witness of the early church (which Blomberg

acknowledges). Instead, he elevates the usage of Psalm 8 in Jewish sources over the witness of the NT writers and considers the use of Psalm 110 in Heb 1:13 to be in contradiction with the Christological interpretation of this verse as it relates to the usage of Psalm 8 in Heb 2:6–8. I suggest that this asks too much.

Further, what is one to make of Blomberg’s insistence that the TNIV “accomplishes all the necessary tasks” of translation? I suggest that in the matter of Psalm 8 in Hebrews 2, gender-neutral language does not serve its readers. I conclude that on this point the TNIV is a retrogression from the NIV, which does a fine job in translating this text. The TNIV obscures the historical and, as I have argued, correct interpretation of the passage in question. I am not arguing that the translation must be “Christological,” such as “What is Man ... the Son of Man.” Rather, I suggest that the translation itself be left neutral in this instance, making allowances for either interpretation to flow from the translation. Interpretation on this level, I aver, is exactly the role of the pastor or commentator, and not the role of the translator.

Postscript:

Shortly after the preceding article was complete came the interesting and timely announcement from Zondervan that the TNIV would no longer be produced once the NIV is revised for 2011 and the NIV2011 goes to market (<http://www.nivbible2011.com/index.php>). Whether or not it will retain or revise certain gender-neutral readings (such as the passage from Hebrews 2 discussed in the preceding pages) remains to be seen. This writer is hopeful concerning the possibility of improvements to such a widely-used translation, and would call upon readers of JBMW to pray for the Committee on Bible Translation, Biblica, and Zondervan as they work to complete a noble and difficult task.

ENDNOTES

¹<https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/divinity/rt/conf/heb06/>

²I was also fortunate enough to have my own essay published in the same work, “Hebrews 7–10 and the Transformation of the Law,” in *A Cloud of Witnesses: The Theology of Hebrews in its Ancient Context*

(ed. Richard Bauckham, Daniel Driver, Trevor Hart, and Nathan MacDonald; London: T & T Clark, 2008), 100–17.

³Craig Blomberg, “‘But We See Jesus’: The Relationship Between the Son of Man in Hebrews 2:6 and 2:9 and the Implications for English Translation,” in *A Cloud of Witnesses*, 98.

⁴On the matter of gender-neutral translations and the various challenges to all biblical translation, see for example Wayne Grudem, et al., *Translating Truth* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2005); G. Scorgie, M. Strauss, and S. Voth, eds. *The Challenge of Bible Translation* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003); Leland Ryken, *The Word of God in English* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2002); Vern Poythress and Wayne Grudem, *The Gender-Neutral Bible Controversy* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2000), as well as the bibliographies in each for further references to other books, monographs, collections of essays, and articles (scholarly as well as popular).

⁵This has been done in *JBMW*, as well as in other journals, books, and collections of essays in recent years. See Vern A. Poythress and Wayne A. Grudem, *The TNIV and the Gender-Neutral Bible Controversy* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2004). See also Vern Poythress, “Small Changes in Meaning Can Matter: The Unacceptability of the TNIV,” *The Journal for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* 10 (2005): 28–34. While not completely agreeing with Poythress on all matters, I am in agreement with the general tenet of his article. See also his interaction with Mark Strauss in *Christianity Today*, October 7, 2002, 37–42.

⁶Blomberg admits these points. See Blomberg, “‘But We See Jesus,’” 88.

⁷Poythress, “Small Changes in Meaning Can Matter,” 28–34.

⁸Blomberg, “‘But We See Jesus,’” 91.

⁹Blomberg restates this interpretation, which itself was popular in the first half of the twentieth century.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 96.

¹¹In the interest of full disclosure, I disagree with Blomberg on the matter of exegesis of this text; I find myself more persuaded by the Christological interpretation for several reasons. First is the matter of “the coming world” (τὴν οἰκουμένην τὴν μέλλουσαν) in verse 5. This is the Achilles’ heel for the anthropological interpretation. Guthrie and Quinn are correct to assert that “the coming world” in 2:5 overtly points to the Christological interpretation (George Guthrie and Russ Quinn, “A Discourse Analysis of the Use of Psalm 8:4–6 in Hebrews 2:5–9,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 49 [2006]: 239–40). Second is the matter of consistency. The writer of Hebrews consistently interprets the Old Testament through a set of Christological “lenses.” I aver that this is what he is doing in this passage as well. See Otfried Hofius, “Biblische Theologie im Lichte des Hebräerbriefes,” in *New Directions in Biblical Theology* (ed. Sigfred Pederson; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994), 112–13; 124. Hofius rightly contends that for the writer of Hebrews, Christ is the interpretive key to understanding the Old Testament. For a brief treatment, see Barry C. Joslin, *Hebrews, Christ, and the Law: the Theology of the Mosaic Law in Hebrews 7:1–10:18* (Paternoster Biblical Monograph Series; Carlisle, England: Paternoster, 2008 [USA 2009]), 200–04 and the numerous footnoted sources there.

¹²Blomberg, “‘But We See Jesus,’” 91.

¹³*Ibid.*, 93.

¹⁴James Moffatt, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (International Critical Commentary; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1986 [reprint]), 20; Harold Attridge, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1989), 67–68. The anarthrous genitive πνεύματος is arguably objective in this instance, see Attridge, *Hebrews*, 68 n. 67; F. F. Bruce, *Hebrews* (New International Commentary on the New Testament; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 69; contra Paul

Ellingworth, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (New International Greek Testament Commentary; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 146.

¹⁵Compare Gal 3:5.

¹⁶Attridge, *Hebrews*, 67. In fact, what is possibly in view here is the phenomenon seen at the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2, in which the Spirit *himself* was distributed to the 120 persons.

¹⁷Blomberg, “‘But We See Jesus,’” 92.

¹⁸George Guthrie and Russ Quinn, “A Discourse Analysis of the Use of Psalm 8:4–6 in Hebrews 2:5–9,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 49 (2006): 235–46.

¹⁹See Barry C. Joslin, “Can Hebrews Be Structured? An Assessment of Eight Approaches,” *Currents in Biblical Research* 6, no. 1 (2007): 99–129; Albert Vanhoye, *La structure littéraire de L’Épître aux Hébreux* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1963); George H. Guthrie, *The Structure of Hebrews: A Text-Linguistic Analysis* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998).

²⁰Lane rightly observes, “The paragraph is so dominated by the citation and explanation of Ps 8 that it could be overlooked that the writer introduces a second string of OT passages (vv 6–8, 12–13), which serves to compliment the quotations in 1:5–13.... The reference to angels in v 5 resumes the comparison developed in 1:5–14 and anticipates the exegetical interaction with Ps 8:5–7 (LXX) that follows” (William L. Lane, *Hebrews 1–8* [Word Biblical Commentary; Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1991], 44). In spite of Blomberg’s assertions to the contrary, Lane is surely correct that 2:5 resumes the argumentation that paused at 1:14 for the exhortation of 2:1–4. Yet Blomberg, when speaking of 2:5f., refers to 1:14 as a “remote” context from 2:5 (“‘But We See Jesus,’” 91). Four verses, which in the NA²⁷ text are not two complete sentences, hardly makes 1:14 “remote” and too-far removed from 2:5. Read aloud, I comfortably read these verses in 35 seconds. Yet Blomberg maintains that 1:14 is a “remote” context when considering 2:5. I would argue that 35 seconds and less than two full sentences is in fact not remote at all.

He also criticizes Robert Brawley (“Discursive Structure and the Unseen in Hebrews 2:8 and 11:1. A Neglected Aspect of the Context,” *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 55 [1993]: 84) for “jumping over” 2:1–4 to highlight parallels between 2:5–8 and 1:5–13 (Blomberg, “‘But We See Jesus,’” 91 n.19). It seems that the disagreement chiefly surrounds the matter of how 2:1–4 fit into these chapters. Blomberg appears reluctant to give much exegetical weight to the shift in literary genre, though he does in fact recognize the shift (91). This, in my view, is a significant weakness in Blomberg’s exegetical understanding of these verses. Again, his hermeneutical understanding of how 2:1–4 relates to 2:5f is unconvincing (91–92).

²¹He states that if this were the case, then they would have perceived an interpretive tension with 1:13, which asserts the not-yet fulfilled promise that all things will be made subject to Christ (Blomberg, “‘But We See Jesus,’” 92). Yet this is precisely a critical aspect to Hebrews eschatology, which, like much of the NT is inaugurated eschatology, seeing the “already” in eschatological tension with the “not yet.” Thus, there is no more tension here than in any other part of Hebrews where his eschatology comes into play. See Morna D. Hooker, “Christ, the ‘End’ of the Cult,” in *The Epistle to the Hebrews and Christian Theology* (ed. Richard Bauckham, Daniel Driver, Trevor Hart, and Nathan MacDonald; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 198; cf. Lane, *Hebrews 1–8*, 45–46; Bruce, *Hebrews*, 33–34; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 146.

²²Note that both of these examples are much more “remote” than the text in question; see above, note 20.

²³Guthrie, *Structure of Hebrews*, 63–64; see also Lane, *Hebrews 1–8*, 1:42–44.

²⁴Blomberg, "But We See Jesus," 92.

²⁵Lane, *Hebrews 1–8*, 1:45. See also Edward Adams, "The Cosmology of Hebrews," in *The Epistle to the Hebrews and Christian Theology*, 137; Douglas Farrow, "Melchizedek and Modernity," in *The Epistle to the Hebrews and Christian Theology*, 289 n. 19; cf. Bruce, *Hebrews*, 71–72; James W. Thompson, *Hebrews* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), 60–61; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 146. Attridge rightly observes that τὴν οἰκουμένην τὴν μέλλουσαν is common in apocalyptic and rabbinic tradition (Attridge, *Hebrews*, 70).

²⁶Blomberg, "But We See Jesus," 92–93; cf. Moffatt, *Hebrews*, 21.

²⁷See also the fine work of Ardel Canaday, "The Eschatological World Already Subjected to the Son: The Οἰκουμένην of Hebrews 1:6 and the Son's Enthronement," in *A Cloud of Witnesses*, 28–39. See esp. 29–30.

²⁸Bruce, *Hebrews*, 72.

²⁹Blomberg, "But We See Jesus," 88.

³⁰Lane, *Hebrews 1–8*, 46, emphasis added. See also Attridge, *Hebrews*, 72.

³¹Lane does not see Second/Last Adam theology in view here, and he may well be right. However, the interpretation here does not rest on Last Adam theology. That being said, there is also a likely allusion here to Dan 7:13, where "one like the Son of Man" is given dominion and rule by the Ancient of Days. The designation "Son of Man" is a frequent title for Christ in the New Testament.

³²P. E. Hughes, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977), 84.

³³Donald Guthrie, *Hebrews* (Tyndale New Testament Commentary; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 84; Lane, *Hebrews 1–8*, 47.

³⁴Hooker, "Christ, the 'End' of the Cult," 1.

³⁵See note 37 below.

³⁶See especially George Guthrie, *Hebrews* (NIV Application Commentary; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998), 96–98; 100–02; idem, "Hebrews," in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (eds. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), esp. 944–47.

³⁷One final point may be noted here. Blomberg observes, "This understanding allows us to take the excerpts of Psalm 8 cited in Hebrews 2:6–8 precisely according to their meaning in their Old Testament context" (93). But, is this how Hebrews uses the Old Testament—without any influence of a Christological hermeneutic, pointing forward to Christ? There is a difference between interpreting a text Christologically and applying a text to Christ one way or another. Does a "purely anthropological" interpretation cohere with Hebrews' hermeneutics as Blomberg maintains?

This is indeed a thorny issue about which much has been written. In Hebrews' hermeneutic, there is both correspondence to and expansion of the OT texts. See Joslin, *Hebrews, Christ, and the Law*, 192–207; and Guthrie, "Hebrews," 925–44. To be sure, there is no one specific way in which the OT is employed in every case. The writer of Hebrews used principles of exegesis that were common in his day, though in a manner that can clearly be described as "Christological." For him, the OT is in large measure anticipatory, and its meaning is only fully understood by reading it through the lens of Christ. Read in such a way, the OT writer is not disregarded. Rather, for Hebrews, the focus centers on what God has said to the fathers by the prophets in the former days (1:1) and what God has said in his son in these "latter days," with the two complementing one another and the latter completing the former. For a fuller treatment of the various exegetical approaches such as proof-texting, typological approach, anthropological-existential approach, Philonic exegesis, the *sensus plenior* approach of many in Roman Catholicism, the dialogical hermeneutics of Markus Barth and

other approaches, see the works of L. D. Hurst (*The Epistle to the Hebrews: Its Background of Thought* [Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1990]), G. Hughes (*Hebrews and Hermeneutics: The Epistle to the Hebrews as a New Testament Example of Biblical Interpretation* [Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1979]), R. Williamson (*Philo and the Epistle to the Hebrews* [Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1970]), G. B. Caird ("The Exegetical Method of the Epistle to the Hebrews," *Canadian Journal of Theology* 5 [1959]: 44–51), R. N. Longenecker (*Biblical Exegesis in the Apostolic Period* [2d ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999], 155–65), F. A. Malone ("A Critical Evaluation of the Use of Jeremiah 31:31–34 in the Letter to the Hebrews" [Ph.D. diss., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1989]), R. T. France ("The Writer of Hebrews as a Biblical Expositor," *Tyndale Bulletin* 47 [1996]: 245–76), as well as J. C. McCullough ("Hebrews and the Old Testament" [Ph.D. diss., Queen's University, 1971]; idem, "The Old Testament Quotations in Hebrews," *NTS* 26 [1980]: 363–79, esp. 364–67), S. K. Stanley ("A New Covenant Hermeneutic: The Use of Scripture in Hebrews 8–10" [Ph.D. diss., University of Sheffield, 1994]), G. Guthrie ("Hebrews' Use of the Old Testament: Recent Trends in Research," *Currents in Biblical Research* 1 [2003]: 271–94), M. Barth ("The Old Testament in Hebrews: An Essay in Biblical Hermeneutics," in *Issues in New Testament Interpretation* [ed. W. Klassen and G. F. Snyder; New York: Harper & Row, 1962], 53–78), J. Walters ("The Rhetorical Arrangement of Hebrews," *Asbury Theological Journal* 51 [1996]: 59–70), Hofius ("Biblische Theologie," 112–13, 124), D. Peterson ("God and Scripture in Hebrews," in *The Trustworthiness of God* [ed. Paul Helm and Carl R. Truemann; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002], 118–38), and E. E. Ellis (*Prophecy and Hermeneutic in Early Christianity* [Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1978], esp. 163–72).

The point I make here is this: even if Blomberg were to make a compelling case for this *interpretation*, and I do not think that he has, it *still* does not follow that it should be *translated* as the TNIV has translated (cf. NRSV) this text, as he maintains.

³⁸Space prohibits significant further interaction with Blomberg's arguments for the anthropological interpretation. Yet one other point must be addressed in brief. One of his arguments for his purely anthropological interpretation is the "lack of any demonstrable pre-Christian Jewish exegesis that takes this Psalm in a Messianic sense" (Blomberg, "But We See Jesus," 93). He then goes on to cite R. Joshua b. Levi in *b. Shab.* 88b which interprets Psalm 8 anthropologically.

The problem with this argumentation is that he elevates extra-biblical Jewish sources above the testimony of the NT itself as well as the testimony of the early church as to the Christological interpretation of Psalm 8 in early Christianity. He uses such Jewish sources, which are almost uniformly anthropological in their interpretation (which is to be expected), as a primary comparison to Hebrews, while at the same time minimizing the New Testament's own usage which Blomberg admits is, indeed, *uniformly* Christological (Blomberg, "But We See Jesus," 88 n. 4). Blomberg avers, "Indeed, all the other quotations or allusions to Psalm 8 in the New Testament appear to be straightforwardly Christological" (90). To therefore elevate Jewish sources over a clear New Testament witness is problematic in my view.

³⁹Lane, *Hebrews 1–8*, 44. Though Lane does note see Second Adam language in the designation "son of man," he does argue that Hebrews interprets these verses from Psalm 8 as Jesus fulfilling these verses for mankind, as a man. As such, Hebrews readily applies these verses to Jesus (1:47). Because Psalm 8 is here linked with Ps 110 (1:13), Lane too finds here the common NT exegetical tradition of NT writers citing these verses together, tying them

both to Christ. He writes, “In the NT, Ps 8 is almost invariably cited in association with Ps. 110:1 (1 Cor 15:25–27; Eph 1:20–22; cf. Phil 3:21; 1 Pet 3:22). The tandem arrangement of the two OT texts that speak of subjecting everything beneath the feet (Ps. 110:1 and Ps 8:7) provides evidence for a common exegetical tradition upon which Christian writers drew” (1:46).

⁴⁰Thompson, *Hebrews*, 60.

⁴¹See also Oscar Cullmann, *Christology of the New Testament* (rev. ed.; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1963), 188.

⁴²Bruce, *Hebrews*, 72.

⁴³Attridge, *Hebrews*, 72.

⁴⁴Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 152.

⁴⁵Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 244.

⁴⁶Hooker, “Christ, the ‘End’ of the Cult,” 200.

⁴⁷Hughes, *Hebrews*, 84f.

⁴⁸G. Guthrie, *Hebrews*, 96–98.

⁴⁹D. Guthrie, *Hebrews*, 84–85.

⁵⁰For example, see John Owen, *Hebrews* (Crossway Classic Commentaries; Wheaton: Crossway, 1998), 34–36. Though highly abridged, this volume preserves the Christological interpretation argued in these verses by Owen.

⁵¹Richard Phillips, *Hebrews* (Reformed Expository Commentary; Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 2006), 57–58.

⁵²See vol. 10 of *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture* (ed. E. M. Heen and P. D. W. Krey; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2005], *passim*), where the Christological interpretation dominates. Blomberg understands that in the history of Hebrews interpretation, this text has consistently (though not always) been interpreted this way (Blomberg, “But We See Jesus,” 88 n. 4).

⁵³Blomberg, “But We See Jesus,” 98.

⁵⁴*Ibid.*

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, 99.

⁵⁶*Ibid.*

⁵⁷Professor Hooker’s address was recorded and later given to me by a fellow Hebrews scholar and personal friend, Dr. Gareth Cockerill, Professor of New Testament and Biblical Theology at Wesley Biblical Seminary (<http://www.wbs.edu/Faculty/index.asp?S=view&t=b&f=Cockerill>). The published edition of Professor Hooker’s address, “Christ, the ‘End’ of the Cult,” is available in *The Epistle to the Hebrews and Christian Theology*, 189–212. The published form of this quotation is slightly shorter, and lacks a certain edge present in her oral remarks quoted verbatim here.

⁵⁸Note the commentaries of Attridge and Lane who translate without gender-inclusive language, though they go on to use such terminology in their interpretation. This is the model that I suggest is preferable—let the translation remain neutral, and allow its *interpretation* be given in explanatory comments. Has not God gifted His church with pastors and teachers whose calling is to interpret and declare the intended meaning? I would like to pose the question: Who ought to interpret the text, the pastor-teacher or the translator?

⁵⁹On this point, see also Grudem et al., *Translating Truth*, 71f. Yet it is not as though this is the only occasion in which the gender-neutrality of the TNIV has gone too far. For example, in the first edition, the translators solved an exegetical and theological debate in 1 Tim 3:11 and the question of women deacons when they translated, “women, *who are deacons*, . . .” adding the interpretive phrase “who are deacons.” In later editions, this phrase was removed (see <http://www.biblica.com/bible/verse/index.php?q=1timothy3:11&tniv=yes>). Regardless how one feels about women deacons, it oversteps the bounds of a translation committee to solve the issue

for the reader. The unsuspecting reader of the original TNIV would never know there’s an issue here, since the translation rules out any other interpretation. I am thankful that later editions removed such an interpretive phrase, yet disturbed that it was ever part of the translated text to begin with. Though many TNIV advocates make much of the point that “all translation is interpretation,” this example demonstrates that it is possible to go too far in translation.

⁶⁰Blomberg, “But We See Jesus,” 98.

The Means, Mandates, and Motivation of Biblical Womanhood (Titus 2:4–5)¹

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Sitting in a hospital waiting room, I came across a copy of *Forbes* magazine containing their 2007 list of the “100 Most Powerful Women.” I read a summary of what made each woman “powerful.” Many of the women were presidents, chairmen and CEO’s of large companies, or held political offices. None of these women, however, was noted for being a wife or a mother. Several of them likely were—but they were not noted as “powerful” or “influential” for that reason.

None of them was commended for possessing the qualities listed in Titus 2. Not one was commended for her reverence, love for her husband and children, purity, kindness, or for working at home and being submissive to her husband.

The world’s picture of what makes a woman significant is much different from the picture painted by scripture. If we are not careful as Christians, our minds will slowly be conformed to this world and not, as Paul writes in Rom 12:2, “transformed by the renewal of our minds” so that we may discern what God approves.

God is the one who created women, wives, and mothers. Therefore, he is the one who defines what they ought to be. His opinion is the one that ought to matter to us—even if it offends and confuses the world.

The Means of Biblical Womanhood

In Titus 2:3–5, Paul calls for the older Christian women to instruct the younger Christian women in how to live.

These verses are instruction for *all* Christian women about Christian womanhood. We discuss them on Mother’s Day because biblical motherhood cannot be divorced from biblical womanhood.

Being a biblical mother, wife, and woman is not a matter of evolutionary instinct. Biblical womanhood is developed through the means of biblical teaching and training. It is not something that you grow up “just knowing.” It is something that you are trained in by those who have gone before you. If this training is not provided, then it is likely we will fail to be what God calls us to be.

Training in womanhood begins with the church and its doctrine. Christian instruction does not begin with what you ought to do, but with what you ought to believe. Nevertheless, sound doctrine will always move into what our lives should look like. The gospel trains us in how to live. A mind full of the gospel should result in a life that displays the gospel. And so, the church that does not value instruction in sound doctrine will not value sound living.

Titus’s task as an elder is to teach sound doctrine that calls the older men and the older women to live godly lives. They, in turn, are to teach the younger men and women, respectively, how to live godly lives. Mature, godly women are called on to teach the younger women, training them to embrace biblical womanhood.

In our verses, the older women are to be intentionally encouraging, advising, and urging the younger women by setting an example in

word and in deed of what it means to be a biblical woman. Practically, this will mean an older Christian woman investing herself in the lives of younger Christian women with the intentional purpose of helping them to apply the gospel to their lives as women.

So, let me ask you:

- As a mature Christian woman, are you intentionally teaching and training the younger women in what it means not only to be a Christian, but also to be a *Christian woman, wife, and mother*?
- As a younger Christian woman, are you intentionally seeking out teaching and training from a mature Christian woman in what it means not only to be Christian, but also to be a *Christian woman, wife, and mother*?

The Mandates of Biblical Womanhood

Paul continues by listing six things to which biblical women are called.

Biblical mothers, wives and women are called ...

(1) ... to love their husbands and children

Have you ever considered that it requires training and teaching to love your family? If “loving” your husband and children were a matter of mere instinct, then Paul’s command for the older women to “train” the younger women to “love their husbands and children” would be senseless.

What does it mean for a woman to love her husband and children? Certainly, laundry, dishes, dusting, vacuuming, cooking, and playing taxi with the minivan are all included in love. But, we would be sadly mistaken if we concluded that this was the sum-total of love.

Gospel love goes beyond the realm of duty. In any relationship to which we are called, our model for love is the love that God has for us in Jesus Christ. God’s love for us is seen in him working on our behalf—sending his Son to die on the cross for our sins, raising him from the dead, pouring his Spirit into our hearts and drawing us to himself—but it is not limited to that.

God’s love in action flows from the affections

of his heart. Our Father God is a God of tender compassion, mercy, and grace, a God who works for the good of his people, over whom he *sings* and *rejoices* (Zeph 3:17). The love of God that he shows to us in the gospel is not the love of duty, but the love of delight.

Biblical love is not duty separated from the affections of the heart. God has never been pleased with people who go through outward forms of worship while their hearts are far from him. It does not honor him. And such duty, devoid of any affection, is not honoring to your husbands and children.

Mothers and wives, the love of God is the model of the love that you should have for your husbands and children. Does your heart rejoice and sing over the family that God has given you to love? Do your husband and children know of this affection? Is your love directed toward your family, your husband, your children? Or has the love of career, reputation, physical beauty, and comfort captured your heart?

Notice that this command includes no contingency clause, no qualifications. Paul does not say that women should love their husbands and children “only as much as they deserve to be loved” or “if they are doing their part in return.” Paul says nothing about what your husband and children deserve. Again, that is because our love for one another is based on God’s love for us in Jesus Christ.

Christian love in marriage and family is not based upon the law, giving to one another what we deserve. Law-love says, “If you do what I want and keep your end of the bargain, then I will love you.”

Christian love in marriage and family is based on the gospel. In the gospel, God shows us tender compassion, grace, and mercy freely. God loves us even though that is the last thing we deserve. Gospel-love says, “Even though you are a sinner, who daily offends me—I will love you as God has loved me in Jesus Christ.”

(2) ... to be self-controlled

This refers to living in a “prudent and thoughtful” manner, subduing your own life and exercising dominion over it. This too is an outworking of the gospel. Paul says in verse 11 that “the grace of God

has appeared ... training us ... to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in the present age, waiting for” the appearing of Christ.

The Christian life is lived in response to the gospel and in preparation for the return of Jesus Christ. We apply his thoughts, biblical wisdom, to our speech, our eating, our sleep, our actions, and our relationships.

A woman who is self-controlled is one who has learned not to be loud, boisterous, domineering, manipulative, and controlling. She does not blurt out her every opinion, thought, and piece of advice without first stopping to think of how it may reflect on her Savior. She does not pout or nag when things do not go her way. She is not a slave to sleep, television, food, the scale, the fashion magazines, or the opinions of others. She has learned the liberating strength of submission to her master, Jesus Christ.

(3) ... *to be pure*

To be pure means to have moral sense. Purity knows the difference between right and wrong and how to live in a way that pleases God. Purity is the application of the gospel to our lives. This is what Paul means later in the chapter (2:11–14), where he writes that the grace of God in the gospel trains us to “renounce ungodliness and worldly passions.” Jesus Christ redeemed us “from all lawlessness” to purify us to be a people “zealous for good works.”

We live in an age when purity is not valued amongst men *or women*. Women, supposedly “liberated” from old-fashioned views and purity scruples, are encouraged to pursue their own pleasures, to use men sexually, to dress immodestly, and to be self-centered divas.

Such impurity is not an option for the Christian woman. She now belongs to her master, Jesus Christ. Her sex life is purified within the confines of marriage. She does not flirt with or fantasize about other men. Her mind and body belong to her husband alone.

She does not adorn her body with suggestive and revealing clothing so that she might be the object of the lust of men. Purified by the gospel, her modesty and good works adorn the gospel and

show the world its beauty.

Her mouth is not full of the filthy speech of gossip, slander, grumbling, and complaint. It is full of the sweet words of edification, encouragement, and grace.

(4) ... *to be working at home*

No doubt, this is the most controversial of any of the things that God commands in this passage. Its lack of popularity does not make it any less clear. The word “working” reminds us that the younger women are not merely to be at home. They are to be “*working* at home.” Being a wife and mother is “work.” There are, too often, women who have not only chosen not to work outside the home, but have chosen not to work *at home* either!

Paul is most likely countering what he warns against for younger widows in 1 Tim 5:12. There, he warns of young widows who “learn to be idlers, going about from house to house, and not only idlers, but also gossips and busybodies, saying what they should not.” So Paul writes that he “would have younger widows marry, bear children, manage their households, and give the adversary no reason for slander.”

Being an idler, a gossip, and a busybody is not a danger for young widows only. It is a danger for married women, too. We can probably all think of those unfortunate examples of women who are at home and simply have too much time on their hands. They are persistently on the phone or email, too often, as Paul writes, “saying what they should not.” (With modern technology one does not have to go “from house to house” to be a busybody anymore.) They are persistently complaining and gossiping, stirring up trouble and meddling in business that is not theirs.

This is sad, because Paul says such women “give the adversary reason for slander”—they bring shame on the gospel.

Paul’s advice is this—if you are still young enough, get a family to care for! Have some babies! Take care of a home! If you are too old for that, then find a younger woman and teach her how to do it.

“At home” means that you should view the

home as your primary sphere of influence and your husband and children as your primary ministry.

That statement too can be quite offensive (much like the gospel of Jesus Christ). Our culture has convinced the modern woman that she cannot be successful, complete, or fulfilled unless she is working outside the home. The world says that a life spent in the tireless service of others without a paycheck (much like Jesus' earthly ministry) is a life that has been wasted. According to the world, the life that is spent serving oneself in search of promotions and profit is a life that has been well-used.

God created the woman to be a helper, a nurturer, a sustainer. If there is no helper, everyone else suffers. A husband *needs* a wife. That is why God created the first woman, because the first man needed a helper. Children *need* a mother. The old proverb says, "The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world." When women choose not to devote themselves to raising their children, they are forfeiting what may be the greatest position of world-influence that exists.

The temptation of Eve in the Garden of Eden was the beginning of feminism. The serpent called Eve to pursue what seemed good to her. After all, she saw that the tree was "good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise" (Gen 3:6). She pursued what the serpent told her would be fulfilling and rewarding.

Fulfillment does not come through pursuing what we think will fulfill us. Fulfillment comes through pursuing the purpose for which we have been created. God has intended that a woman's primary sphere of influence be her home, her husband, and children. This is not to say it is always wrong to have a job outside the home. There may be some instances when this is unavoidable. There are times when children have not yet come or when children are grown and more independent that such work will be more of an option. However, we should ensure that our biblical commitments are fulfilled first.

(5) ... *to be kind*

This word for "kind" (or "good") is found in

Acts 9:36, where we meet Tabitha, who was "full of good works and acts of charity." It refers to benevolence—loving action that aims at the good of others. Kindness is the sincere desire for other people to be happy. Such desire results in actions to bring that happiness about. It is shown in treating others well, working for their good.

Why does the command to be "kind" come immediately after "working at home"? Naturally, it is because husbands and children are sinners, undeserving of kindness.

Are you a wife and mother who is kind? Is the attitude of your heart one that desires the happiness and good of your husband and children, so that your actions pursue such an end? Or, are you bent on making them miserable because he failed to be Prince Charming and they aren't Brady-Bunch-obedient?

Do you walk around perpetually upset and angry about what hasn't gone your way? When your husband comes home in the evening, does he have reason to believe you may have spent the afternoon sucking on green persimmons? Do you pursue the happiness and the good of your family? Or, do you use guilt and intimidation to manipulate situations according to your will? Are you harboring and acting out of self-serving, self-pitying bitterness? Or, do you model the meek and gentle kindness of Jesus Christ shown to us in the gospel?

(6) ... *to be submissive to their own husbands*

God made men and women equal but different. There is no inferiority between men and women, but there is an order. When God designed Adam and Eve, he established an order for the marriage relationship. He assigned Adam with certain responsibilities and then created Eve as his helper in carrying out those responsibilities. So, they are both responsible for carrying out that purpose, but responsible in different ways. Adam is primarily responsible for seeing that the task is done. Eve is responsible for helping Adam and following his leadership in doing so.

In Ephesians 5, Paul explains that marriage is a picture of Christ and the church. You can't be a picture of Christ and the church if one of the char-

acters is out “doing their own thing.” If husbands are too proud and lazy to be kind and loving sacrificial servant leaders, then the picture doesn’t work. A self-centered or weak or abusive or unfaithful husband presents a picture of a self-centered or weak or abusive or unfaithful Jesus Christ—a false gospel is presented.

Husbands should lead like Jesus and lay down their lives for the good of their brides. They should listen to their wives as Christ listens to our prayers. They should seek only the good of their wives as Christ seeks only the good of his church.

Likewise, if the wife is too proud and self-centered to model a loving, obedient church, then a false gospel is presented. A self-centered, self-pursuing, disobedient, dishonoring wife sends the message that the church should be self-centered, self-pursuing, disobedient, and dishonoring to Christ.

The Motivation of Biblical Womanhood

We have seen six commands the older women are to teach the younger women to obey. Why is it that the young women are to be trained to live such lives? What is our motivation? What is our goal? What is driving Paul to write these things, as controversial and counter-cultural as they may be?

Paul ends this string of commands with this simple reason: “that the word of God may not be reviled.” The “word of God” probably refers to the gospel of Jesus Christ. Thus, the motivation of biblical womanhood is the glory of God in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

You will have noticed that in describing each of these six callings, I have taken us back to what we see in the gospel. As Paul writes in verse 14, the gospel is that Jesus Christ “gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.”

We are sinners who have offended God, disobeyed his commandments and exchanged his glory for something less. We deserve only the wrath of God. Yet, “Christ gave himself for us to redeem us.” He did not treat us as we deserve. Rather, he took the penalty that we deserved upon himself when

he died on the cross. And, rising from the dead, he showed that satisfaction had been made for our sins. When we turn from our sins in repentance and trust that Jesus paid for those sins through his death and resurrection, God forgives us, declaring us to be righteous in his sight.

Paul writes in chapter 3, verses 5-7:

He saved us, not because of our works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs of eternal life.

We are made “a people for his own possession” and “heirs of eternal life.” We become the people of God, and he becomes “our God.” God promises us that he will dwell with us forever as our God. That begins with his Holy Spirit dwelling in us, purifying us, and conforming us into the image of Christ. God’s presence will continue eternally when Christ returns for us and we are resurrected to dwell in a new Heavens and new Earth with him forever.

That message then is all that matters to the Christian. It is the most important thing in the world. All our lives ought to be lived in a response of faith to that message.

Our goal is to bring glory to God by declaring and displaying the truth of the gospel. That is what Paul appeals to when he gives his reason for all these commands. When a Christian woman lives out these six callings, she “adorns the doctrine of God our Savior.” She displays the beauty of the gospel. And, therefore, in her the “word of God may not be reviled.”

However, when a Christian woman rejects or neglects these six callings, then her life is not displaying the gospel of Jesus Christ. She presents with her actions a message that is different than she professes with her mouth. The world may then revile the gospel because it does not see its power worked out in the one who professes it.

Woman, What is Your Purpose?

Feminism tells women to be concerned about themselves, to pursue their own fulfillment, freedom, and significance. Scripture tells women to be concerned with displaying the glory of God in the gospel of Jesus Christ—and to give their lives to that end.

Christian wives, mothers, and women, what is the goal and purpose of your life?

ENDNOTES

¹This sermon was preached on Mother's Day, May 11, 2008. The audio is available at <http://northbrookbc.org/sermons/080511am.html>.

Whence Evangelical Feminism?

A Review of Pamela D. H. Cochran, *Evangelical Feminism: A History*.
New York: New York University, 2005.

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The Chicago Declaration, adopted at the first meeting of Evangelicals for Social Action (ESA) in 1973, included several statements on women's rights. The Evangelical Women's Caucus soon grew out of these ESA meetings, and the evangelical feminist movement was born. Pamela D. H. Cochran's *Evangelical Feminism: A History* tells the story of this movement, focusing on evangelical feminist theology, leaders, and institutions. The book attempts to place the evangelical feminist movement within the wider contexts of evangelicalism and American religion more generally. Cochran writes that questions "over the nature, meaning, and scope of biblical authority" were at the heart of evangelical feminism, and argues that the movement resulted from and contributed to a weakening of biblical authority, which characterized American evangelicalism during the last quarter of the twentieth century (2).

Cochran explains that two important developments led to the rise of evangelical feminism in the 1970s. First, evangelical scholars like Bernard Ramm, Edward J. Carnell, and Daniel Fuller had been working to reconceptualize the doctrines of inspiration and inerrancy. Their modified definition of inerrancy and use of modern hermeneutical and theological methods, though fervently contested within evangelicalism, resulted in the expansion of evangelical, theological, and hermeneutical boundaries. At the same time, feminism and women's rights were a hot topic. Betty Friedan's *Femi-*

nist Mystique was published in 1963; NOW was founded in 1966; *Ms.* magazine began publication in 1972; and the Supreme Court handed down their decision on *Roe v. Wade* in 1973. Progressive evangelicals like those at ESA meetings, concerned to speak out on contemporary social issues, began to apply the progressive hermeneutical tools of evangelical scholars to the issue of women's roles.

In 1974, Nancy Hardesty and Letha Scanzoni wrote *All We're Meant to Be: A Biblical Approach to Women's Liberation*. This was the first evangelical book to advocate egalitarian interpretations of the Bible, and was the most influential book in launching the evangelical feminist movement. The authors utilized new hermeneutical methods of evangelical scholars like Paul Jewett to reinterpret passages in order to show that the Bible liberates women from oppression in the home, church, and society. Cochran points out that the book received favorable reviews in evangelical publications, and that no one criticized the authors for moving beyond evangelical boundaries on the issue of biblical authority. This would not have been possible twenty years earlier, before shifts within evangelicalism on the issue of biblical authority (29).

In 1975, the first conference of the Evangelical Women's Caucus (EWC) drew 360 women. In 1978, the EWC held its second conference at Fuller seminary, where faculty members like Jewett, Jack Rogers, and David Hubbard led seminars for the one thousand participants. Cochran explains

that through 1978, the goal of most evangelical feminists was to prove that traditional interpretations of passages on women's roles were wrong and that Paul was misunderstood. However, in the late 1970s and 80s, two different methodological approaches began to appear within the movement.

"Conservative" evangelical feminists, like Pat Gundry were committed to a "strict definition of biblical authority that did not allow them to ignore certain of Paul's statements on women" (45). Gundry and others thought that by examining the historical and cultural context of the pertinent passages, the real meaning could be brought out—a meaning that would support evangelical feminism. "Liberal" evangelical feminists such as Virginia Mollenkott claimed to be committed to biblical authority, but argued that some of Paul's pronouncements were simply mistaken.

Conservative and liberal evangelical feminists maintained unity in the EWC through the early 1980s, though tensions were mounting over the issue of homosexuality. In 1978 Letha Scanzoni and Virginia Mollenkott, two evangelical feminists, published *Is the Homosexual My Neighbor?*, which argued that homosexuality is consistent with biblical Christianity. To do so, they reinterpreted passages like Romans 1, but they also leaned heavily on science and the personal experience of lesbians to make their argument. Many evangelical feminists disagreed with their position, arguing that the Bible forbids homosexual behavior. After years of tension, the issue of homosexuality eventually split the movement. At the EWC conference in 1986, progressive members of the EWC passed a resolution affirming homosexual people as children of God and recognizing the presence of lesbian members in the EWC. Conservative leaders promptly withdrew from the EWC, and in August of 1987 formed Christians for Biblical Equality (CBE) with Catherine Kroeger as the organization's first president.

The second half of *Evangelical Feminism* traces the theological and organizational developments in the two branches of the evangelical feminist movement after 1986: the traditionalist CBE and the progressive EWC. Cochran argues that the

core difference between the two groups was their view of biblical authority. Progressive evangelical feminists relied on science, reason, and experience as equal and sometimes higher authorities to the Bible and used nonevangelical methods of biblical interpretation such as liberation theology. By contrast, traditional biblical feminists (like those in the CBE) continued to affirm the unique authority and infallible nature of the Bible and used evangelical hermeneutical methods. The doctrinal views of progressives also evolved in nonevangelical ways. For example, they rejected evangelical views of the atonement, sin, the Trinity, and the uniqueness of Christ, while traditionalists retained orthodox views on these doctrines. While progressives began using gender inclusive language related to God, traditionalists supported gender inclusive language related only to humans. Progressive members of the EWC became strong supporters of homosexual rights and abortion rights, broadening their agenda until it was "less bibliocentric . . . and consequently, more accepting of secular feminist social and political agendas" (148). Members of the CBE, on the other hand, opposed abortion and same-sex relationships, remaining inside the evangelical boundaries on these controversial social issues. As a result, "the feminists in [the CBE] played a significant role in the continuing boundary debates of the postwar evangelical coalition," while the EWC became more of a "prophetic voice from outside evangelicalism" (150).

Cochran demonstrates growing support for egalitarian views of gender roles in large segments of evangelicalism, and traces what she calls the "backlash" to evangelical feminism, led by evangelical groups like Focus on the Family, the Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, and the Southern Baptist Convention. Cochran makes the case that a "shift in emphasis from inerrancy to hermeneutics as the symbolic boundary for determining evangelical identity" (163) helped traditionalist evangelical feminists receive acceptance within an increasingly fragmented evangelicalism. Many evangelicals, tired of inerrancy battles, were willing to accept a group like the CBE with their mostly traditional hermeneutics and moderate

social agenda. While evangelicals would continue to debate the issue of biblical authority throughout the 1980s and 90s, the increasing presence of egalitarians in those debates assured that appeals to strict inerrancy, as an evangelical boundary, could not gain traction in evangelicalism as a whole.

This book also argues that evangelical feminism demonstrates the encroachment of America's individualist, therapeutic, and consumerist culture on evangelicalism. The impact of American culture appears in "the way traditionalist evangelical feminism focuses on using the Bible to meet the perceived needs of the individual and in its reliance on individual reason to judge the truth of scripture, without the assistance of an institutional and historical church" (193). This trend shows that "modern ideals of pluralism and individualism have made a greater impact on American religion than previously acknowledged, thereby reducing the scope and force of religious authority in American society." While evangelicalism is growing, "pluralization is now the dominant fact of American religion," and evangelicalism, as demonstrated by the story of evangelical feminism, has contributed to its dominance (194).

Cochran, in writing the first history of evangelical feminism, has produced a clear summary of this movement's primary leaders, institutions, and development. Most importantly, she has written a helpful outline of its theology. Historians often fail to take seriously matters of doctrine when writing about religion, instead opting to interpret religious people and events through sociological, psychological, and cultural grids that are foreign to the subjects of the study. Cochran has rightly judged that theological issues, especially questions of biblical authority, were at the heart of the evangelical feminist movement. As a result, she details the theological arguments of evangelical feminists, tracing their influences and evolution, and giving special attention to questions of biblical interpretation. Cochran explains how evangelical feminists have reinterpreted key passages, such as Genesis 1–3, 1 Timothy 2, Ephesians 5, 1 Corinthians 11, and Galatians 3. The author's detailed attention to exegesis and interpretation makes this a resource

for those wanting to understand some of the ways evangelical feminists have argued for their position from the Bible.

While the book's attention to theological matters is its greatest strength, at times, its theological assessments are flawed. For example, when explaining how Wesleyan theology influenced some feminist theologians, Cochran contrasts Wesleyan concern for social change with the Reformed tradition's failure to advocate social change. Her characterization of the Reformed tradition is not consistent with the evidence provided by the Dutch Reformed, the English Puritans, or Calvin's Geneva, among others.

In several places, Cochran fails to explain adequately the complementation position. For example, in a discussion of functional subordination within the Trinity, Cochran summarizes Rebecca Merrill Groothius's egalitarian argument. She then states that in response, "heierarchalists" began to argue that eternal *ontological* subordination exists within the Trinity (115–16). She offers a brief quote from Wayne Grudem, but the note indicates she is quoting Grudem from Groothius's book, not the original source. In fact, Cochran's bibliography does not include any of Grudem's writings. Cochran's failure to read Grudem's arguments in their context results in her parroting false claims, which were made by evangelical feminists, as the complementarian position. In another place, when discussing the meaning of *kephalē* in Eph 5:23, Cochran presents the egalitarian argument of Berkeley and Alvera Mickelsen, who claim that the word means "source," or "origin." She fails to present counterarguments, not even acknowledging the many articles that complementarian theologians have written, arguing that *kephalē* means "authority over."

Cochran's research is almost exclusively in the papers, journals, and books of the evangelical feminist movement. Her failure to interact more broadly with complementarian writings results in an incomplete and, at times, inaccurate account of the evangelical resistance to evangelical feminism after 1987. Though the readers should keep these weaknesses in mind, they do not negate the central

contribution of the book. Cochran has provided something that exists nowhere else: a lucid, well-sourced, theologically centered, historical account of the evangelical feminist movement. *Evangelical Feminism* is a helpful resource for those wanting to understand more fully the theology, personalities, and institutions of evangelical feminism.

Finally Unconvinced

A Review of John G. Stackhouse Jr., *Finally Feminist: A Pragmatic Christian Understanding of Gender*.
Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005.

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Not long ago I heard a complementarian Christian scholar gently rebuke one of his students for referring to an evangelical egalitarian as a “feminist.” The scholar said the word “feminist” sounded “too pejorative.”

John Stackhouse may disagree. Stackhouse is Sangwoo Youtong Chee Professor of Theology and Culture at Regent College. In his recent work, *Finally Feminist: A Pragmatic Christian Understanding of Gender*, he attempts “to show how one can be both authentically feminist and authentically Christian.” Admitting that the word “can mean several things,” Stackhouse defines feminist as “someone who champions the dignity, rights, responsibilities, and glories of women as equal in importance to those of men and who therefore refuses discrimination against women” (17).

In this work, Stackhouse first lays out his rationale for why a new paradigm for understanding gender roles in the church and home is needed for Christians today (15–32). He then moves on to describe his own paradigm for Christian feminism (33–73). Finally, after responding to what he anticipates to be the most pertinent critiques of his proposal (75–103), Stackhouse includes two appendices, which cover a host of issues related to gender roles (105–129).

In his preface, Stackhouse admits that he hopes that his book “will assist those who genuinely would like to become egalitarians but who cannot see how the Bible supports such a view” (12). The desire to be both feminist and Christian comes up again and again throughout the pages of

Finally Feminist. Indeed, in the first chapter, Stackhouse recounts his own “conversion narrative” to feminism (20).

Growing up in “a Focus on the Family-type home” (20), Stackhouse began to question why his spiritually competent mother could not lead in a worship service while each week “Mr. So-and-So rose to bore us once again with his meanderings through Scripture and Mr. Such-and-Such followed with his interminable prayer” (21). Answers given in his church did not satisfy him, evidenced even in a memorable discussion he had with his future wife over such issues while in college (22).

As societal norms began to shift and Stackhouse’s own egalitarian marriage still seemed a bit theologically groundless (22), he “underwent an explosive paradigm shift” upon realizing that no biblical scholar could provide satisfactory exegesis of 1 Tim 2:11–15 (23). This led Stackhouse—who “wanted to be a feminist all the way” (34)—to the understanding that Christians ought not wait until the exegesis of every relevant passage in all of Scripture is sound in order to make theological assessments on gender. “Instead,” Stackhouse surmises, “we should look at all the texts as open-mindedly as possible and see if among the various competing interpretations there is one that makes the most sense of the most texts and especially the most important ones” (23).

Stackhouse’s own paradigm for understanding gender, then, rests on a number of foundational principles: equality “in every way” between men and women (35), “holy pragmatism” (38), and an

understanding of gender through the lens of the eschatological in-breaking of the new creation (41).

His argument in favor of “holy pragmatism” is perhaps one of the more troubling aspects of Stackhouse’s paradigm. Because “furtherance of the gospel message” is what is of utmost importance to Christians (38), believers at times must sacrifice issues of secondary importance in order to advance the gospel. This is rooted, Stackhouse maintains, in God’s own principle of accommodation—that is, the fact that “God works with what he’s got and with what we’ve got” (39). Therefore, even if Christians enjoy “radical freedom in Christ” (46), historical and even some contemporary situations have demanded that Christian women forgo freedom and wholeness, and instead submit to being “trammled and reduced by patriarchy” (48).

Conceding, for example, that the first five books of the Bible are patriarchal (64) and that the New Testament is replete with hierarchies in the home and the church (50), Stackhouse argues that this was because the writers of Scripture were accommodating to societal norms that the gospel may advance with the fewest impediments. In our current cultural context, however—a context in which our culture “is at least officially egalitarian”—it should be considered scandalous “that the church is *not* going along with society, not rejoicing in the unprecedented freedom to let women and men serve according to gift and call without an arbitrary gender line” (56).

Those familiar with William J. Webb’s redemptive-movement hermeneutic will note similarities between Webb’s proposal for reading the Scripture and Stackhouse’s paradigm for understanding gender. Indeed, Stackhouse acknowledges the similarity in his book’s very first footnote (10). However, Stackhouse’s “double meaning” in the text (63–70) will likely lead to the same result as Webb’s hermeneutic, that is, that God’s people must discern that second of the double meaning inherent within the text—a second meaning which may have been fairly indiscernible to God’s people in every generation since the closing of the biblical canon.

Indeed, throughout the book it is somewhat unclear just how Stackhouse—who writes as a self-

professed evangelical (16)—views ultimately the “supremely authoritative Bible.” For him, biblical interpretation is to take place “with the ongoing guidance of the Holy Spirit of God in the current life of this part of the church.” He asserts that Christians need to be “open to hearing fresh words of God that help this part of the church cooperate with God in the work of his kingdom in its particular situation” (28). Stackhouse even critiques the apostle Paul’s application of Old Testament texts, suggesting he has misinterpreted them (66–68).

Near the end of the book, Stackhouse asks his readers to be clear on the fact that “no one makes up his or her mind about such a set of crucial issues simply on the basis of theological argument” (102). Therefore, he requests that his readers ask of themselves questions such as, “What do I really *want* to believe about gender?” and “What are the voices in my head telling me to decide on one or another alternative, and how do I feel about each one?” (102–03).

With all of this in mind, then, the reader may be left to wonder: for Stackhouse, is Scripture the final authority in matters of faith and practice, or is it not? Most, if not all, complementarians would argue that God has spoken clearly, and in a non-contradictory manner, to the gender issue throughout the pages of Scripture, a clearly spoken word worth submitting to in all ages of the church. Stackhouse, it seems, may argue otherwise.

And regardless of one’s personal convictions on contemporary gender roles, the reader may also be left to wonder: if Stackhouse really believes that patriarchy is evil (92), sinful and oppressive (57), a structure that God “does not like” and yet accommodates to (65), “a deeply problematic drama” (79), “a result of the fall” (93), and comparable to “corrupt governments, with exploitative businesses, and with hypocritical charities” (93–94), should any Christian in good conscience remain in any kind of fellowship with those who advocate it? Are Christians who advocate patriarchy in today’s context to be considered evil, as well?

Indeed, Stackhouse does seem to condone church splits over the gender issue in some situations (99–100). Moreover, splits may also issue in

cases of divorce, “if the patriarchal treatment of the wife is severe enough” (100)—though he speaks only to marriage situations in which the wife is the feminist and the husband the patriarchalist, and not the other way around. And he suggests that Christian feminists ought to move forward on the principles of “activism, realism, vocation, and hope” (97) within the pockets of contemporary society in which the remnants of patriarchy persist.

But these kinds of questions seem especially pertinent due to Stackhouse’s continual tying of patriarchy to race-based slavery. In fact, his argument in favor of the Holy Spirit’s accommodation to the “sinful, oppressive structure” of patriarchy is tied to the Spirit’s doing the same with slavery—another sinful, oppressive structure found in the culturally-contextualized Scripture, according to Stackhouse, but one that has since been abolished (57).

Contrasting first-century bond-servitude addressed in several places in the New Testament with nineteenth-century man-stealing and ownership of other human beings based on the color of their skin seems a poor comparison—though a thorough comparison of the two is outside the scope of this review. If Stackhouse truly sees a one-to-one correlation between today’s complementarians and nineteenth-century slaveholders, shouldn’t Christians be willing to split not only a church and a marriage over the issue of gender, but also an entire nation?

And if Stackhouse’s “fundamental practical question” is what Christians are to do when their surrounding culture moves toward egalitarianism (72), it would seem prudent to ask the reverse—as my friend Christopher Cowan pointed out—as well: for feminists such as Stackhouse, what are Christians to do if their surrounding culture moves *back* to patriarchy?

Stackhouse does seek to address what he perceives to be the most common critiques of his paradigm for gender. He seems to dismiss those who would root complementarianism in the Son’s functional subordination to the mission of the Father, arguing that the Trinity is too mysterious—though it would seem that Stackhouse would have to wrestle here with texts such as 1 Cor 11:3. He relegates

Paul’s rooting of husband and wife relationships in the union of Christ and the church as symbolic language embedded within a culture two millennia past—though he does not seem to deal with passages such as Rev 19:6–10, in which the marriage metaphor seems to be a driving force behind eschatological redemption.

Though Stackhouse admits that a survey of church history does not grant overwhelming warrant for his particular stripe of evangelical feminism, he does refer to the “general misogyny” of the early church fathers (81) and maintains that society today has reached a point in which evangelical feminism is no longer marginalized, as it has been in the past. His paradigm is not merely a bowing to secular feminism, Stackhouse argues, but he does seem to suggest that even secular feminism can bring with it God’s shalom (86). In response to the critique that his paradigm could potentially lead to the legitimization of homosexuality, Stackhouse argues that the Bible is clear in its presentation of homosexual relationships as sinful.

Stackhouse’s two appendices to *Finally Feminist* deal first with the three ways *not* to decide about gender—that is, biblicism, cultural conformity (or nonconformity), and personal intuition—and the place of women in theology and the question of gender-neutral Bible translations.

In the end, what is quite commendable about Stackhouse’s proposal, among other things, is that he recognizes that the kind of biblical proof texting that takes place so often in Christian scholarship doesn’t hold water ultimately in terms of dealing with bigger picture theological issues pertaining to gender roles in the home and church. He does present a creative paradigm for understanding gender, but the question remains whether his paradigm is a bit *too* creative for the Bible. Indeed, *Finally Feminist* seems to raise many more questions than it answers.

Historically, theologically, exegetically, and practically, Stackhouse’s “pragmatic Christian understanding of gender” may not entice many converts to Christian feminism, as his work may even leave many Christians firmly—and perhaps even *finally*—unconvinced.

New Paradigms or Old Fissures?

A Review of Mark Husbands and Timothy Larsen, eds.,
Women, Ministry and the Gospel: Exploring New Paradigms,
Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2007.

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This collection of essays on women in public ministry originated from papers read at the 2005 Wheaton Theology Conference and includes contributions from such notable evangelical scholars as Henri Blocher, Timothy George, and I. Howard Marshall. Together the essays seek to offer new ways of thinking about women and ministry and to do so with humility, nuance, and biblical fidelity. The collection is admittedly modest in scope. One will not find here a thorough expression of either of the traditional positions. There is, e.g., no essay on 1 Timothy 2 from a complementarian perspective (though see p. 10) or Gal 3:28 (to say nothing of Genesis 3) from either a complementarian or egalitarian perspective. Still, while not quite thorough or, for that matter, equally-representative, the collection is nevertheless far-ranging, including contributions from fields as diverse as sociology and pastoral theology. Moreover, the essays are nicely divided into five categories (see below), providing a helpful aid in navigating the various contours of this complex debate.

The book's first section, "New Perspectives on the Biblical Evidence," comprises three essays. The first, "Deborah: A Role Model for Christian Public Ministry," written by Rebecca G. S. Idestrom, looks at Deborah from the book of Judges, a female prophet, judge (see esp. 22–23), and singer-songwriter, who stands out perhaps less for her gender than for her unambiguously positive leadership during a dark period in Israel's history. Granted Idestrom's point that "nothing within the biblical record indicates [Deborah's] female leadership]

was a problem," something more sophisticated than an argument from silence would be needed to extract an unqualified divine commendation of female leadership.

The second essay in this section, "What Women Can Do in Ministry: Full Participation within Biblical Boundaries," written by James M. Hamilton, Jr., argues that God equips or gifts the body (irrespective of gender, 35) and that he instructs the body's members in the use of their gifts. Thus, each member fully participates in ministry by using his or her God-given gift(s) in ways God determines, whether, e.g., according to the divine will expressed for those speaking in tongues (cf. 1 Cor 14:27–28) or that will directing gifted men (Titus 1:7, 9) and women (1 Tim 2:12, 1 Cor 11:2–16 and 1 Cor 14:29–35). Among other salutary points, Hamilton wrestles with the tension between 1 Cor 11:5, 14:34–35, and 1 Tim 2:12. He concludes that prophecy's spontaneous nature distinguishes it from teaching and that what Paul prohibits in 1 Cor 14:34–35 is the evaluation of prophecy, which, Hamilton claims, was implicitly authoritative. What remains slightly unclear, however, is how the authority inherent in prophecy (38) differs from that exercised in evaluating prophecies and that prohibited in 1 Cor 14:34–35 (or 1 Tim 2:12).

The third essay, "Women in Ministry: A Further Look at 1 Timothy 2," is written by I. Howard Marshall and seeks to demonstrate that Paul's prohibition in 1 Tim 2:12 is not an "unchangeable principle" (76) but rather is addressed to a spe-

cific exigency that arose in first-century Ephesus. Women in the church were accomplices in the church's failure in prayer and, Marshall avers, largely responsible for its undoubtedly sullied testimony (61, n. 26; cf. Titus 2:5), both due to their distracting dress and participation in gathered worship. Moreover, their distracting participation stemmed from their transgression of first-century social mores regarding husbands and wives and public roles for women and from their acceptance and (acrimonious or "domineering") propagation of false teaching. Thus, since first-century social mores no longer apply and since only wrong-spirited, false teaching is prohibited, Marshall concludes that women should not be categorically barred from teaching and exercising authority over men in the church. Were it not for 1 Tim 2:13–14, Marshall's point might prove more amenable; however, as it stands the appeal to creation gives the prohibition in verse 12 *prima facie* transcultural significance, notwithstanding the additional questions this appeal raises (see 68–69) or the different social mores of the twenty-first century (though cf. 74, n. 63).

The book's second section, "New Perspectives on the Body of Christ," comprises two essays. The first, "Prophecy, Women in Leadership and the Body of Christ," written by Lynn H. Cohick, argues that 1 Cor 11:2–16 permits women to engage in authoritative, public ministry. While Paul's instructions did accommodate first-century gender mores (e.g., head coverings), they nevertheless also challenged these mores by emphasizing the honor due to the weak (a category presumably including women), the role of the mind (not just spirit) in prophesying, and the interdependence of women and men (cf. 1 Cor 11:11). Paul's reference to the creation account in 1 Cor 11:8 introduced a further challenge, suggesting, Cohick argues, that men and women were cut from the same biological cloth.

The second essay in this section, "Christ's Gifted Bride: Gendered Members in Ministry in Acts and Paul," is written by Fredrick J. Long and argues that ministerial gifting in the new covenant is given irrespective of gender in fulfillment of Joel 2:28–32. Long further argues that prophetic gifting involves authority and leadership, some-

thing seen in both Testaments (103–4). And he likewise insists that New Testament prophecy is active, possessing more than merely derivative authority (104–5).

The book's third section, "New Theological Perspectives on Identity and Ministry," comprises two essays. The first, "Reconciliation as the Dogmatic Location of Humanity: 'Your Life is Hidden with Christ in God,'" is written by Mark Husbands and argues that Christian reconciliation grounds women's full participation in ministry, for in Christ all manner of humanity comes to share a common identity. Husbands argues that creation itself points to this common identity, using the categories of "relational ontology" and "being-in-encounter" to suggest that men and women in *relationship* define what it means to be truly human. In other words, to prohibit the full participation of women in ministry based on essential or ontological (not simply anatomical) differences is a misreading of the creation narrative and has the potential "to deafen our hearing of the divine command made known in Jesus Christ" (141). Here it is at least instructive to mention that not all complementarians make this argument (see, e.g., 73–74; also 36–37). Moreover, why a common identity in Christ would obliterate functional differences in, for example, the church is not at all clear. Perhaps Husbands would insist, as one or two others in this volume imply, that functional differences cannot coexist, at least permanently, with ontological equality (cf. 172, n.1; 93).

The second essay in this section, entitled "Identity and Ministry in Light of the Gospel: A View from the Kitchen," is written by Margaret Kim Peterson and nicely explores the meaning of ministry and the distinction drawn between its public and private exercise. Ministry, Peterson insists, is less about office than activity; it is "meeting the everyday needs of others" (160). Ordained ministry, therefore, simply sets someone apart "to do publicly and officially what any one of us could theoretically do and ought already to be doing privately and unofficially" (158). Moreover, the very distinction between public and private spheres owes less to transparently delineated (much less biblical) boundaries than to industrialization.

The book's fourth section, "New Perspectives from the Humanities and Social Sciences," comprises three essays. The first, "Opposite Sexes or Neighboring Sexes? What Do the Social Sciences Really Tell Us?," written by Mary Stewart Van Leeuwen, concludes that social science research does not unambiguously support essential differences between the genders, something running counter to claims made by both sides in the debate. It is simply too difficult, Van Leeuwen insists, for a study to isolate gender while bracketing out all other influences, whether genetic, environmental, or otherwise (177; cf. 186–87). Added to this, the deviation evident within gender is often greater than between genders, further making "essentialist pronouncements" "naïve at best, and deceptive at worst" (180). What, then, is gender? Van Leeuwen answers this question by appealing to what she calls "a relational approach to gender" (188), an approach similar to *Husbands's* and characterized by elements such as "covenant, grace, mutual empowerment and intimacy" (189). In other words, gender is something that allows for human flourishing, particularly of couples and families, though (apparently) including singles as well (191).

The second essay in this section, "Holy Boldness, Holy Women: Agents of the Gospel," is written by Cheryl J. Sanders and highlights the significant role women have played in the "Sanctified Church" (201; a label which includes the Holiness and Pentecostal traditions). Sanders profiles three exemplary women leaders (Amanda Berry Smith, Rosa A. Horn, and Ida B. Robinson) before turning to critique the sexism and racism, she claims, that persist in her tradition.

The third essay in this section, "Women in Public Ministry: A Historical Evangelical Distinctive," is written by Timothy Larsen and, like Sanders's piece, highlights the role of women leaders, though in this case expanding its purview to comprise all of evangelicalism. Larsen demonstrates that it was not the liberals in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries who advocated, against social norms, for women in public ministry; rather, it was "Bible-believing, gospel-spreading evangelicals" (235). Larsen avers that it was only in the second

half of the twentieth century that this support began to wane, due largely to cultural pressure in the 1950s, the rise of the feminist movement in the 1960s and 1970s, and the elevated weight given to certain biblical passages, namely 1 Tim 2:11–14 and 1 Cor 14:34–36. What is more, Larsen suggests that the advent of Pentecostalism in the twentieth century led many noncharismatic evangelicals to reevaluate their understanding of prophecy, which many had formerly related to preaching, and to relegate its viability to the first-century.

The fifth and final section, "Beyond the Impasse: Toward New Paradigms," includes three essays. The first, "Women, Ministry and the Gospel: Hints for a New Paradigm?," is written by Henri Blocher and argues for a *via media* between complementarianism and egalitarianism. Blocher, for example, argues for something like *Husbands* and Van Leeuwen's non-essentialist ontology, even while affirming, contra Van Leeuwen, "obstinate" "psychological and mental" differences (243) and cautiously suggesting 1 Pet 3:7 in support of such differences. Blocher also suggests that these differences may correspond to the different roles assigned to men and women in Scripture, though he adds, "the decisive element . . . is the order decided by" God (243; cf. 245). Further, Blocher asserts that New Testament (non-canonical) prophecy is, in most cases, roughly similar to preaching, involving "the exposit[ion] and appli[cation of] the Scriptures to the needs of the congregation" (246). What makes the authority inherent in such ministry appropriate for a woman to wield is that it is derivative; it is not "attached to their persons" (247). This, Blocher insists, is what distinguishes it from teaching, which is, due to the teacher's own "thoughtful digestion of what God has said," much less self-effacing (247, emphasis original). (Here one is surely justified to wonder how what the preacher does all week in his study leads to something other than a "thoughtful digestion" on Sunday.) Finally, Blocher insists that gender roles in ministry follow a general order (male leadership) while remaining fundamentally flexible. This, he insists, is the case even though Paul's argument in 1 Timothy 2 may appear to indicate otherwise. In fact, it is only an

appearance of rigidity, as the prohibition contained owes less to inflexible, creation-mandated roles and more to “the harsher tone of [Paul’s] voice,” a tone caused “by the special problems in the Ephesus churches” (247). Thus, God remains flexible to supervene the normal order by extraordinarily gifting some women for teaching and leadership roles. In the end, however, it is hard to understand just what it means when Blocher insists that Paul’s teaching in 1 Tim 2:11–15 was “independent of the situation” and given in a tone caused by the situation. How, for example, does Paul’s tone make female leadership in the church any more or less justifiable, even if only in extraordinary circumstances? Moreover, is Blocher implying that Paul did not mean what he appears to have said? That is, has Paul simply put things badly? If so, how does Blocher know this, and is this a hermeneutical tool we want all Christians to use?

The second essay in this section, “Forging a Middle Way Between Complementarians and Egalitarians,” is written by Sarah Sumner and attempts to reframe the spirit of the debate. Sumner insists that both sides must exercise interpretive humility, do better at listening to one another, and clearly identify common ground. Sumner concludes by suggesting that we do all this together in community.

The final essay in this section, “Egalitarians and Complementarians Together? A Modest Proposal,” is written by Timothy George and, like Sumner’s piece, attempts to put the debate in pastoral perspective. George acknowledges that there are extremes to avoid on either side and admits that both sides legitimately fear the other side’s extremes. Healthy dialogue, he insists, will include open conversation about these fears. George then takes up Roger Nicole’s three-fold advice on engaging in theological polemics and applies it to the current debate, insisting that we must all work hard to understand, be open to learn from, and love those who differ from us. He concludes with nine projects egalitarians and complementarians can engage in to create greater understanding and unity.

Despite the handful of critical remarks and the fact that this volume is decidedly egalitarian

in perspective (Hamilton’s piece is clearly a minority report), these essays succeed in identifying key issues in the current debate and in raising some lingering questions. As such, they deserve a hearing by all those interested in this debate.

Where Faith and Life Meet

A Review of Carolyn McCulley, *Radical Womanhood: Feminine Faith in a Feminist World*.
Chicago: Moody, 2008.

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I have a confession to make. I am slogging through my fourth year of doctoral studies, and there are times when I have a tendency to forget that what I study is about real issues that impact real people. I forget that where the rubber meets the road between faith and practice is the important link between a Christianity that impacts its world or a Christianity that only studies its world. It is hard to remember that fact at times when you wrestle over minute nuances of theology or spend the majority of your time reading works most of the people in your life have never heard about—or would never pick up even if they had. However, the negative impact of feminist theology on churches, universities, and families is a real and urgent issue. It is not some esoteric topic to banter about in a seminar classroom. If one considers the ideas of such feminist theologians as Rosemary Radford Ruther or Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza regarding anthropology or Christology, it is possible to forget that their thinking is impacting men and women right now who have probably never even heard their names. It is a trickle-down effect. Just as many “modern” women may have never read Betty Frieden’s *The Feminine Mystique*, they are still dealing with the repercussions of her ideas in their homes. Should a woman stay at home to raise her children? Are there gender roles in a marriage relationship? These are questions that Frieden’s book voiced and awakened into the American consciousness.

Carolyn McCulley’s work, *Radical Womanhood: Feminine Faith in a Feminist World*, is a wake-up call for anyone who forgets that living according

to God-ordained gender roles is violently under attack in today’s society and has been under attack for many years. The women who surround you—your friends, neighbors, acquaintances—all live out on a daily basis what it means to be uniquely “woman” in the twenty-first century. The married, working mom standing beside you in the grocery line may have never thought about the implications of Ephesians 5 or Colossians 3, but you can bet that she has struggled at times with the meaning and balance of her roles as “mom,” “employee,” “wife,” and simply “human being.” For Christian women today, it is difficult, as McCulley states in her subtitle, to live out a feminine faith in a feminist world. But the world desperately needs to see Christian women living out their faith! A lost woman may not recognize her need, but she will see a difference if a Christian woman commits her life to radical, Christ-like living.

McCulley’s work offers its readers a historical commentary on the feminist movement and its leaders, biblical teachings that counteract the tenets of feminist teachings, and testimonies from contemporary people who have struggled with the issues she examines. McCulley’s own testimony adds credence to the work because she once considered herself a feminist; however, when she came to know the Lord in her thirties, she had to figure out the biblical teachings on womanhood against the backdrop of her formerly feministic worldview. How do biblical teachings on womanhood really work in today’s society? Are gender roles just antiquated concepts better suited for a bygone age?

What do women really think when confronted with the ideas of Scripture? McCulley called herself a tourist “lost in the land of church ladies” (15) soon after becoming a Christian. What she was confronted with in the church caused culture shock, and she says that she never forgot that experience. She wrote this book “for my thirty-year-old-self, the woman who needed to understand why much of what she had been taught in college and read in the media led to a dead end, and why the Bible inspired joy and peace” (16).

McCulley divides her work into eight succinct chapters. In the opening chapter McCulley diagnoses the problem as “dented” femininity created by feminism, and in the final chapter she offers the solution of “biblical” femininity. McCulley acknowledges that for feminism, men are often seen as the “problem.” Yet in Christianity, the problem is sinful humanity. What she learned in her women’s studies classes distorted true femininity. She notes that “all my previous feminist philosophies resulted in merely kicking at the darkness, expecting it would bleed daylight” (26). Darkness can never produce light, just like feminism will never truly be the answer for what ails women. Feminism is partially right—men do sin. But so do women. Sinful humanity needs Jesus Christ, and He is the only answer for what ails women as well as men.

In chapters 2 through 7, McCulley looks at six specific areas where feminism has questioned or outright attacked biblical truths. Chapter two, “Men Aren’t the Problem,” examines the founders of the first wave of feminism like Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Betty Friedan who sparked the second wave of feminism. Both of these women focused on men as the problem source for women, when in fact sin is the problem.

In chapter 3, “Did God Really Say . . .,” the focus shifts to the ideas of marriage and submission. McCulley tells the story of Gloria Steinem, a second-wave feminist who rejected any idea of roles within marriage. McCulley notes that “feminists put a lot of emphasis on roles because they equate roles with inherent worth. But that is not a biblical concept” (61).

Gender differences are examined in “Role Call,” chapter 4. The truth is that there are “fundamental differences” existing between men and women (75). Instead of celebrating this fact, feminists have either androgynized women or turned them into competition for men.

In “There’s No Place Like Home,” chapter 5, McCulley notes that feminists like Linda Hirshman argue that women need to get out of the home and into the workplace. McCulley gives a historical survey of the place of the home and hospitality. However, within the last fifty years, the home shifted from being a place of production to a place of consumption (113), and women found themselves exiting the home for so-called greener pastures.

McCulley examines the impact that feminist ideas have had on motherhood and children in chapter 6—“Mommy Wars.” “Wars” have erupted between stay-at-home mothers and working mothers, but even graver is the impact this has had on children. Children started being viewed as burdens instead of blessings. McCulley also looks at Margaret Sanger and the birth control movement. Unquestionably, second-wave feminism has been the voice for abortion, and the “history of feminist ideology is manifestly anti-mother, anti-child, and anti-Jesus” (142).

Chapter 7, “Raunch Culture Rip-Off,” looks at feminism’s impact on sex. “Sex-positive or porn-positive theories are a large part of third-wave feminism” (164). Instead of empowering women, though, such ideas have reduced women to mere pieces of meat.

The “competing definitions of womanhood” between feminism and the Bible battle for the hearts of women every day. In each chapter, McCulley points to pertinent biblical passages to shine the light of truth on the darkness of feminism. Then, she offers personal testimonies of women who have struggled with mommy wars or role definitions or whatever the issue at hand. This approach is fresh and reminds readers that the issues they are reading about really do impact women. Readers can see where the “rubber meets the road” in applying biblical truth to everyday life. Jesus and the Bible really are the answer, and McCulley demonstrates this in

each chapter. This work also offers a very helpful appendix on abuse.

The strength of this volume is that McCulley clearly understands the tensions of applying a biblical worldview in a post-Christian age. She offers a concise, understandable, and superbly written volume that is an enjoyable read and accessible to any woman who is trying to understand biblical womanhood. McCulley's work is a "new classic" that serves as an excellent introduction to feminism and Christianity. She demonstrates her knowledge of the subject matter, quoting extensively from related sources, and gives her readers an introduction to volumes for further study through her narrative. Most importantly, though, McCulley offers what many volumes have forgotten: a poignant argument for why the faith believed must be the faith lived out. The world is deceived, and Christianity offers the only hope.

Costly Tolerance

A Review of R. Albert Mohler Jr., *Desire and Deceit: The Real Cost of the New Sexual Tolerance*.
Colorado Springs: Multnomah, 2008.

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R. Albert Mohler Jr. opens *Desire and Deceit* with a story from J. R. R. Tolkien. In this story, which takes place in 1941, Tolkien writes a letter to his son John about marriage and human sexuality. In this letter the elder Tolkien pointed to many truths of human sexuality that remain vitally relevant today. Tolkien's primary purpose is to explain to Michael the pitfalls that are present in a sexually charged society. Because of his keen insight into the role of sexuality in society, Tolkien's characters embodied honor, valor and character—virtues which are often lacking in contemporary writing. Mohler uses this introduction to demonstrate how Tolkien's understanding of sexuality differs from most people's today.

In chapters 2–3 Mohler uses this introduction to examine a Christian and secular view of lust. For the secular view, Mohler contends with the writings of philosopher Simon Blackburn. Blackburn wishes to buck the trend of viewing lust from a negative viewpoint, which he believes is rooted in Christianity, and he wants his readers to accept the reality of lust as a part of the human makeup. Against Blackburn, Mohler argues that Christianity alone is able to explain why lust is deadly. In chapter 3 Mohler counters this secular view of lust with a Christian view as found in Joshua Harris's book, *Not Even a Hint*. Whereas Blackburn does not place moral praise or blame upon lust, Harris views lust as an inherently sinful action: "Lust is to want what you don't have and weren't meant to have" (19). Mohler's purpose in this chapter is to demonstrate lust is not the result of biological evolution that is a reality of humanity, but is a result

of the Fall. Within this context sex in marriage is viewed as a good gift of God but is subject to countless distortions because of sin. Mohler ends this chapter with a paradigm in which Blackburn views lust as a virtue, and Harris sees it as a vice. Mohler then adds that lust is not only a vice, but "it is a sin that ignites yet other sins" (25).

In chapters 4–5 Mohler deals with how pornography has affected marriage. He argues that pornography has two distinct influences in today's society. First, it is easily accessible and has become incorporated into the cultural mainstream. Pornography saturates advertising, entertainment, the internet, and a host of other mediums. Second, pornographic images are now celebrated as a good in many sectors of society. To these Mohler adds a third facet that is a result of the previous two. This third factor is that increased exposure to pornographic images leads to an increased need for stimulation. The result is a downward spiral and a hunger that is never satisfied. In chapter 4 Mohler introduces a term coined by Sigmund Freud that is used throughout the book: polymorphous perversity. Mohler's purpose in dealing with pornography at length is that it "represents one of the most insidious attacks upon the sanctity of marriage and the goodness of sex within the one-flesh relationship" (32). In chapter five Mohler responds to the challenge of pornography by defending the sanctity and integrity of Christian marriage. Here he sets forth a brief but effective apology of what marriage should look like in the Christian context.

After tackling the challenge of pornography, Mohler next moves to the subject of homosexu-

ality. In fact, Mohler's response to homosexuality encapsulates the majority of the book. He writes, "The issues of abortion and homosexuality are likely to prove the most divisive issues Americans have faced since the Civil War" (43). For this reason, Mohler explores how tolerance of homosexuality has affected society. Chapter 6 serves as a brief introduction to the roots of the homosexual movement in the twentieth century. Specifically he sees the Stonewall riots of 1969, in which police raided a homosexual bar and the patrons fought back, as a defining moment in the homosexual movement. Proponents of homosexuality moved from a fringe movement looked down upon in society to being a liberation society in which its adherents are viewed as law-abiding citizens with certain rights. Chapter 7 continues this thought by examining the "Hermeneutic of Legitimization" (51). This phrase is rather self-explanatory. It represents the desire for those outside of the homosexual community to view the homosexual's place in society as legitimate and right. This also involves legitimization of homosexuality in the church. In this chapter Mohler addresses homosexual interpretation of pertinent Scriptural passages (Genesis 19; Lev 18:22; 20:13; Rom 1:26–27). Mohler states that the result of this homosexual hermeneutic has been confusion in the church. Mohler ends this chapter by stating that the homosexual hermeneutic has been "stunningly successful in confusing the church" (61).

Chapter 8 sets forth a biblical worldview by which to view homosexuality. One of the challenges of this issue is that the argument has moved from discussing what homosexuals *do* to who homosexuals *are*. The act of homosexuality is no longer discussed as much as the sexual orientation of the person. Mohler cites specific instances in which homosexuality has become legitimized, such as it being removed from the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* in 1973 (65). Mohler spends the rest of the chapter explaining why the legitimization of homosexuality is not an acceptable hermeneutic. Even if homosexuality had a genetic basis, which is unlikely, it would not diminish the moral significance that is associated with the act. Chapter 9 offers a response to the homo-

sexual movement. He places his response primarily upon biblical authority, and secondly upon the use of natural law. He argues that the Bible is clear in its stance against homosexuality, and that this is the final authority on the issue. He also states that natural law reasoning may be useful but is secondary to the unambiguous truth of Scripture.

Chapter 10 discusses how homosexuality has affected relationships, specifically between men. Today it is rare to see men having close intimate friendships without fears of homosexuality. Mohler views the movie *Brokeback Mountain* as a culmination of how homosexuality has affected this relationship. Mohler compares this male friendship phobia to past male relationships such as the fictional characters of Frodo and Sam Gamgee, many of Shakespeare's characters, and the historic relationship of David and Jonathan. Here one finds strong male relationships without a hint of homosexuality. Mohler writes that the "normalization of homosexuality destroys the natural order of friendships among men" (92). After Mohler demonstrates what homosexuality has done to male relationships, he uses chapter 11 to examine the strides homosexuality has made since 1989. He uses this date because of the 1989 publication of *After the Ball: How America Will Conquer Its Fear and Hatred of Gays in the 90's*. In this book Marshall Kirk and Hunter Madsen use psychiatry and public relations to make a case for how homosexuality can come to be accepted by society. One of the strategies of this book that proved effective was portraying homosexuals as victims because of the AIDS epidemic. Kirk and Madsen use this strategy to represent those who oppose homosexuality as the victimizers. Throughout this chapter Mohler analyzes the strategies used in this book to advance the homosexual cause which in time proved to be effective. Mohler believes that Christianity represents the greatest threat to the normalization of homosexuality. This chapter serves to show the Christian what he or she is up against in this debate.

Chapters 12 and 13 examine two figures that have been prominent in the homosexual movement: Alfred Kinsey and Andrew Sullivan. Kinsey is viewed by many as being the father of sexual

research in America. He is often seen in homosexual communities as a man of science who granted credence to homosexuality. Mohler's purpose in this chapter is twofold: to show some of the inconsistencies in Kinsey's research and to show how Kinsey's personal life biased his work. Sullivan is a public intellectual and well-known homosexual who has written much on the topic. Mohler focuses attention on Sullivan's article "The End of Gay Culture" in which Sullivan laments the loss of the distinctiveness of homosexuality as it has become accepted by society. Mohler states that his purpose in analyzing Sullivan's article is to "awaken thinking Christians to the fact that homosexuality is being normalized in the larger culture" (121).

Chapter 14 briefly addresses the subject of homosexual couples raising children. Specifically Mohler writes about the irony of lesbian couples that are raising sons. This chapter demonstrates one example of the polymorphous perversity that is present in society.

Chapter 15 serves as a transition in this work in that Mohler examines the roots of polymorphous perversity in the early twentieth century. This chapter therefore acts to examine the epistemological basis of the homosexual movement. Polymorphous perversity represents a lack of any type of sexual restraint placed upon an individual. This lack of constraint leads to increased deviation from God's purpose in male and female interaction.

Chapter 16 briefly examines seven strategies for facing the challenge of polymorphous perversity. These strategies include psychological, medical, political, legal, educational, cultural, and theological. In each of these examples Mohler examines how they can be used either by secularists or by Christians.

In the final chapter, Mohler sets forth four ways for the believer to combat the polymorphous perversity of the culture. These include fighting on every front, bearing witness to the truth, creating communities of faithful marriages and healthy families, and rescuing the perishing and loving the unlovely. Taking these strategies to heart will certainly help in the recovery from a distorted view of sex. The book ends with a call for believers to stand

for the truth and to combat polymorphous perversity in whatever form it may come.

Mohler has made a fine contribution in *Desire and Deceit*, and this book will serve well to equip Christians to confront rampant sexual immorality in contemporary culture.

New Testament Theology and a Biblical View of Gender

A Review of Thomas R. Schreiner, *New Testament Theology: Magnifying God in Christ*
Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008.

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Over the last thirty-four years, evangelical scholarship has produced a small handful of books offering to expound a “Theology of the New Testament.” Writing a New Testament Theology is no small task. On the contrary, it is colossal. It requires a broad expertise of all twenty-seven NT books and the ability to highlight their diversity and unity. A NT Theology allows each NT author to have his own distinct voice, while also recognizing the one divine Author standing behind each human author who gives the whole NT (the whole Bible!) a unifying storyline. It is no wonder, then, that few evangelical scholars have been qualified—or willing—to step up to the challenge of authoring a NT Theology.

Since an author of a NT Theology attempts to treat the complex variety of issues that the NT addresses, one might ask, “How have the NT texts on manhood and womanhood in the home and in the church fared in these treatments?”

Two of the earliest works by two excellent scholars, George Eldon Ladd (*A Theology of the New Testament*, Eerdmans, 1974; rev. ed. 1993) and Leon Morris (*New Testament Theology*, Zondervan, 1986), are very good in many ways. But their discussion of the roles of men and women is minimal at best—with some NT gender-related texts not even receiving mention.

Two other scholars address the relevant biblical texts more directly. Donald Guthrie (*New Testament Theology*, InterVarsity, 1981) and I. Howard

Marshall (*New Testament Theology*, InterVarsity, 2004) are prolific authors and have produced many fine commentaries on NT books. However, their understanding of passages dealing with manhood and womanhood is consistent with the egalitarian view. For example, both Guthrie and Marshall believe Paul’s prohibition in 1 Tim 2:12 applied only to a local, first-century situation in Ephesus and is not meant for universal application.

A fifth evangelical NT Theology is the exceptional work by Frank Thielman (*Theology of the New Testament*, Zondervan, 2005). Though his discussions on the relevant texts are brief, Thielman affirms that the NT teaches “a divinely appointed ordering of the sexes at creation.” This order of creation “implies distinct roles in the church for each gender” (419). However, Thielman argues that the verb *authentēō* in 1 Tim 2:12 probably means “that women should not exercise *inappropriate* authority over men [in the church], not simply that they should *never* exercise authority over men” (418, n. 40, emphasis added). But in light of Andreas Köstenberger’s study of the sentence structure in this verse in the book *Women in the Church: An Analysis and Application of 1 Timothy 2:9–15* (2d ed.; Baker, 2005, pp. 53–84), this interpretation is very unlikely. Several evangelical egalitarian scholars—and even non-evangelical scholars—have commended Köstenberger’s study for its sound exegesis (see also his article in the Spring 2005 issue of *JBMW*, esp. pp. 47–51).

To these works has now been added Thomas R. Schreiner's *New Testament Theology: Magnifying God in Christ*. In addition to several books and commentaries on the NT, Schreiner has written many articles and essays on the NT gender passages, as well as co-edited *Women in the Church* with Köstenberger. He is a rigorous scholar with a pastor's heart, and his *New Testament Theology* has been greatly anticipated.

Naturally, a NT Theology cannot address every possible topic in lengthy detail. However, when compared to the works mentioned above, Schreiner's book includes a fairly thorough and robust treatment of the texts dealing with manhood and womanhood. According to Schreiner, Scripture clearly teaches the equality of men and women, combined with a distinction in role for each. These two affirmations are not contradictory.

Schreiner discusses the NT understanding of men and women in a chapter on "The Social World of God's People" (755–801). In a section examining the role of women (768–76), Schreiner highlights the prominent role that women play in the NT, particularly in Luke/Acts and John. Women fill vital roles in accomplishing God's purposes, are the recipients of Jesus' compassion, follow Jesus as faithful disciples, and play a significant part in the spread of the gospel. According to Paul's letters, "women were involved in the ministry of the church in remarkable ways," Schreiner writes, and a number of women are identified by Paul as "laborers" and "co-workers" in the gospel (772). Men and women are "one in Christ, and have equal access to the promise of salvation" (774).

Yet this same Paul who declares "the fundamental equality of men and women in Christ" also affirms a difference in role between men and women (774). "The equality between men and women," Schreiner affirms, "does not cancel out a difference in function or role" (775). Paul clearly prohibits women from teaching or exercising authority over men (1 Tim 2:12). Attempts to explain away Paul's directive as a temporary restriction should be rejected, Schreiner contends, "for Paul grounds his directive in the created order—in Adam being formed before Eve (2:13)" (773).

Schreiner argues that, according to Paul, women can serve as deacons but not as elders/overseers. The diaconal ministry is a supportive role, but the "qualifications for pastoral ministry include being apt to teach and the ability to lead (1 Tim 3:2; 5:17; Titus 1:9)—the very two activities prohibited for women according to 1 Tim 2:12" (774). Thus, the new age inaugurated by Christ "clarifies that men and women are equal in Christ" but "did not signal an abolition of all role distinctions" (776).

Schreiner also examines the NT passages on marriage (776–86). He warns that one must not restrict Paul's understanding of the husband-wife relationship "so that it becomes one dimensional." On the contrary, it is evident that Paul understood "that husbands and wives are to relate to one another as equals and co-heirs in the gospel" (781). Once again, though, Paul's teaching on equality and mutuality "does not cancel out the particular responsibilities to which husbands and wives are called" (781).

According to Ephesians, husbands are to show a sacrificial love for their wives. Wives are to "submit" to their husbands because the husband is the "head" of the wife, indicating that the husband's authority is in view. It is significant that Paul points to Gen 2:24 and declares that this husband-wife relationship is a "mystery" that "reflects the relationship between Christ and the church" (782). "Since marriage mirrors Christ's relationship to the church," the specific roles assigned by Paul to husbands and wives "cannot be dismissed as a cultural accretion." Moreover, the fact that the husband's love is to be modeled after Christ's love for the church rules out severity and harshness. "[H]eadship is not to be exercised tyrannically or abusively," Schreiner insists, "since husbands are to nourish and cherish their wives" (782).

Schreiner also observes Peter's admonition to wives to subject themselves to their husbands—even unbelieving husbands (1 Pet 3:1–7), with the hope that they might be won to the gospel. But, this submission "should flow from hope in God rather than fear." In the Greco-Roman world, to worship a God other than one's husband was counter-cultural. A wife's submission, then, is not

absolute. In the most important arena of life, Peter expects wives *not* to follow their husbands, but “to influence husbands by their gentle spirit and godly behavior” (784).

Schreiner’s *New Testament Theology* is a masterful work. Though some complementarians may occasionally disagree with his interpretation or theological perspective on other matters, Schreiner presents a clear, bold, and winsome picture of biblical manhood and womanhood.

Annotated Bibliography for Gender-Related Books in 2008

Compiled and Annotated by Jeff D. Breeding

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In this issue of the journal we profile some of the most significant gender-related books from 2008. 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 between men and women—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

Bond, Douglas. *Fathers and Sons*, 2 vols. Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2008.

Douglas Bond offers a two-volume set of exhortations for fathers and sons on the task of pursuing biblical manhood, subtitled *Stand Fast in*

the Way of Truth (vol. 1) and *Hold Fast in a Broken World* (vol. 2). Solidly rooted in Scripture, Bond provides clear application of biblical truth to such topics as leadership, sports, and masculinity. Bond's intention is to stir up a generation of men who will lead courageously, both in the church and in the home. The chapters are accessible enough for a young man to read, while also providing helpful questions for fathers who wish to distill the truth for young boys. All in all, these two-volumes are a valuable resource for both fathers and sons in the fight to live winsomely as men in a fallen world that is increasingly hostile to biblical teaching on manhood.

Chanski, Mark. *Womanly Dominion: More Than a Gentle and Quiet Spirit*. Merrick, NY: Calvary, 2008.

In 2004, Chanski released *Manly Dominion*, which helpfully outlined biblical manhood for both the church and home. In the same respect, Chanski now offers *Womanly Dominion*, a book designed to help women understand and live out biblical womanhood. Chanski skillfully unpacks biblical womanhood through a thorough theological explanation, along with a survey of womanhood through the OT and NT. Following this exposition, Chanski applies biblical womanhood to such topics as child rearing, marital life, church life, and involvement in the public square. Those seeking help in both understanding and applying biblical womanhood will find a valuable resource in this volume.

Easley, Cindy. *What's Submission Got to Do With It? Finding Out from a Woman Like You.* Chicago, IL: Moody, 2008.

In this book, Easley's intention is to offer helpful teaching on submission by examining how submission works out in a variety of different marital contexts. She includes stories from her own experience, as well as the experiences of other women. The unique aspect of this book is that it attempts to clarify what submission looks like in often overlooked marital contexts, such as a chronically ill husband. Easley's advice in each of these unique situations is rooted in the fundamental assertion that role differences were part of God's good creation. So, as wives submit to their husbands, Easley affirms that they are living in accord with God's original, good design.

Farrar, Steve. *God Built: Forged by God ... in the Bad and Good of Life.* Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 2008.

Farrar contends that men are not naturally born as spiritual leaders in the church and home. Rather, they must be shaped by God and built into such leaders. Drawing on the life of Joseph, Farrar demonstrates how God's process of building men of integrity and leadership is a slow and sometimes difficult process. He helpfully deals with topics such as God's providence in difficult events and how we should relate to those in authority over us. In the end, Farrar concludes that God is using the varied events of life in order to shape men into godly, spiritual leaders.

Köstenberger, Margaret Elizabeth. *Jesus and the Feminists.* Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2008.

Köstenberger surveys the work of feminist scholars regarding the person of Jesus Christ. Her analysis includes the entire spectrum of feminist scholars, from far-left radicals to those who would call themselves evangelicals. Köstenberger's work is not limited to surveying the landscape. She also offers helpful critiques along the way, pointing out how feminist reinterpretations of Jesus fail to square with the biblical picture in the Gospels. She concludes her work by offering a non-feminist

interpretation of the Gospels concerning the person of Christ. This final section is helpful in that it acknowledges the counter-cultural effects of Jesus' ministry upon women, but it does so without rushing to the conclusion that this must mean Jesus removed all distinctions between the genders. All in all, Köstenberger's work is a valuable resource for navigating the varied and often muddled waters of feminist interpretations of Jesus.

Mahaney, C.J., ed. *Wordliness: Resisting the Seduction of a Fallen World.* Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2008.

In this edited volume, the contributors offer helpful chapters on worldliness by relating it to a variety of life contexts. While each chapter is helpful, the chapter dealing with the topic of modesty is particularly helpful for those concerned with biblical manhood and womanhood. As Mahaney points out, this chapter is primarily intended for women, although there are certainly applications for men. The key thought in this chapter is that modesty is integral both for biblical womanhood and for a faithful witness to the gospel. The strength of this section on modesty is that it demonstrates the practicality and wisdom of biblical womanhood for all areas of life.

Martin, Jaye, and Terri Stovall. *Women Leading Women: The Biblical Model for the Church.* Nashville, TN: B&H, 2008.

Martin and Stovall offer a comprehensive guide to women ministering to other women in the church. Their work is thorough, covering the biblical foundations for women leading women and the characteristics of a godly woman leader. The book is also practical, offering their perspective on what this kind of ministry looks like and how it should be carried out. The strength of the work is that Martin and Stovall write from a convinced complementarian perspective. This provides their work with a solid foundation, one that seeks to encourage women in ministry and to honor the teaching of Scripture. The result is a significant contribution to the issue of women ministering in the church.

McCully, Carolyn. *Radical Womanhood: Feminine Faith in a Feminist World.* Chicago, IL: Moody, 2008.

Speaking from both personal experience and extensive research, McCully dispels the myths and deceptions of feminism regarding what it means to be a woman and clearly articulates a biblical vision of womanhood. McCully's presentation of biblical womanhood is winsome and appealing. She highlights that God's design for women is the wise and good way to live, an evidence of God's grace. Running throughout McCully's work is the theme that biblical womanhood is the radical way to live as a woman in this culture. Adopting feminist models of womanhood is both unbiblical and following the standard paths of secular culture. Living a life modeled on the biblical teaching, however, is a radical departure from what culture declares regarding women.

Egalitarian

Beach, Nancy. *Gifted to Lead: The Art of Leading as a Woman in the Church.* Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2008.

Beach, a teaching pastor at Willow Creek Community Church, offers her guidelines for women leading in the church. At the outset of the book, Beach notes that she does not intend to offer an exegetical or theological defense for women leading in the church. Rather, her work is intended as something of a handbook for women who will lead and teach within the church. Unfortunately, Beach's work suffers from the assumption that those who hold to complementarianism do not advocate women serving alongside men within the church. Repeatedly, Beach makes statements implying that egalitarianism is the only way in which women can be completely integrated within the church. She fails to recognize that complementarians do not advocate a male-only approach to ministry within the church.

Haddad, Mimi, Aida Besancon Spencer, and William David Spencer, eds. *Global Voices on Biblical Equality: Women and Men Serving Together in*

the Church. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2008.

In this edited volume, egalitarian authors and scholars offer a compilation of stories and perspectives concerning men and women serving together. The volume is intended to represent a global voice and, in pursuit of that goal, contains articles from authors from each continent. The result is that the volume reads as something of narrative for the movement of so-called biblical equality across the globe. From the outset, egalitarianism is presented as a reform movement in the church, designed with bringing helpful and needed change to the church. This reform motif for egalitarianism is supported by an appeal to the abolitionist movement and its effects on the church. Regrettably, this volume continues to perpetuate many myths often used to misrepresent the complementarian position. For example, egalitarianism is presented as the position that soundly rejects and seeks to deal biblically with abuse and domestic violence. The complementarian position, by implication, is presented as somehow advocating such abuse, despite repeated clarifications and resolute statements against abuse from complementarian authors and leaders. In light of such misrepresentations, it is questionable how "global" the perspective of this volume actually is.

LaCelle-Peterson, Kristina. *Liberating Tradition: Women's Identity and Vocation in Christian Perspective.* Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2008.

LaCelle-Peterson provides an in-depth study of women from a Christian perspective, covering topics such as female identity, body image, and vocation. Much of her analysis reflects standard egalitarian readings of Scripture, including feminist re-interpretations of Jesus' ministry. This leads her to many conclusions concerning the relationship between men and women both in the church and home that complementarians would reject. However, at points, LaCelle-Peterson's work does offer helpful critiques of the predominant cultural views of women, particularly regarding issues of body image. Unfortunately, even at these points, she tends to associate complementarians with those who seek to subjugate and exploit women. Whether due to the fact that she misunderstands

the complementarian position or for some other reason, LaCelle-Peterson's work misses the fact that complementarians advocate and promote a view that honors the dignity and worth of women as co-bearers of the divine image.

McKnight, Scot. *The Blue Parakeet: Rethinking How You Read the Bible.* Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2008.

Noting that too often evangelicals are forced to choose between ideological extremes, McKnight attempts to offer an alternative, middle option for biblical interpretation. Specifically, McKnight hopes to provide Christians with a hermeneutic that avoids both the theological-right of fundamentalism and the theological-left of liberalism. As such, the book reads as something of a hermeneutics manual for the layperson. For example, McKnight covers such topics as the nature of Scripture, how we should approach the text, and what benefit the Bible can provide to Christian lives. In each case, McKnight approaches the topic in an unconventional way, eschewing traditional terminology in favor of more contemporary lingo. The result, in McKnight's opinion, is a "Third Way" of reading the Bible that avoids the pitfalls of other theological perspectives. The unique aspect of this work is that McKnight closes the book by applying his "Third Way" of reading Scripture to the issue of women in the church. He contends that both complementarians and egalitarians seek to avoid certain texts regarding women in ministry, while emphasizing others that fit their particular agenda. McKnight contends that his "Third Way" deals honestly with all of the texts in Scripture. Interestingly, when McKnight comes to his conclusions regarding women in the church, his answers are firmly egalitarian. So, rather than reach his so-called "Third Way," McKnight has actually offered the usual fare of egalitarian hermeneutic presuppositions. For a full review of McKnight's book, see Thomas R. Schreiner's article in *JBMW* 14.1 (Spring 2009).

McLeod-Harrison, Susan. *Saving Women from the Church: How Jesus Mends a Divide.* Newburg, OR: Barclay, 2008.

McLeod-Harrison begins her work by noting that a significant and unnecessary divide exists within the church concerning women and ministry. In her understanding, the church has denigrated women and denied them full-inclusion in ministry. Her book, then, is an attempt to use the ministry of Jesus as a paradigm from bridging this divide. The format of the book involves contemporary fictional stories concerning women in ministry, followed by McLeod-Harrison's fictionalized accounts from Jesus' ministry. In pursuing this format, McLeod-Harrison hopes to demonstrate that Jesus transcended his culture's biases concerning women, and if we would follow his example, the church in our culture could also transcend biases and move towards the full inclusion of women in ministry. McLeod-Harrison's work suffers from caricatures and misrepresentations of the complementarian position. For example, she states that the phrase "equal but different" implies that women are not made fully in the image of God. Furthermore, many of positions betray the influence of feminism, such as advocating feminine God-language.

Stouffer, Austin H. *95 More for the Door: A Layperson's Biblical Guide to Today's Gender Reformation.* Winnipeg: Word Alive, 2008.

Stouffer's work is a compilation of ninety-five theological statements drawn from across the entire canon. Stouffer offers his theses in order to prove that there are at least ninety-five places in the Bible that call for men and women "to be treated, gifted, appointed, or ordained in exactly the same way" (xiii). He proceeds through the canon, commenting on a wide range of texts. Commendably, Stouffer offers his view on most of the texts crucial to the gender debate. So, his work is not uninformed as to the significant areas of interpretation. However, his interpretations of these texts often seem to be driven by presupposed egalitarian conclusions.

Sumner, Jim, and Sarah Sumner. *Just How Married Do You Want to Be? Practicing Oneness in Marriage.* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2008.

This volume, authored by a husband and wife

team, seeks to offer a third perspective on marriage. The other two perspectives, though never explicitly named, are clearly those offered by self-identified egalitarians and complementarians. As such, the authors present their work as something of a corrective to both sides of the gender debate. The book is written from the personal experience of the Sumners. The reader is invited to listen as the Sumners describe how they have come to see marriage as essentially related to the idea of oneness. In fact, oneness is the overriding theme of the work. The Sumners spend two chapters dealing with Ephesians 5 and the topic of headship. Ultimately, the authors conclude that headship has no leadership connotations, but rather is a relational term that denotes oneness. In this regard, they reject the notion that a husband is called by God to be the spiritual leader of his wife. The Sumners are clear that in their minds there is no scriptural command for husbands to lead their wives, especially not in Ephesians 5. Rather, the biblical model of marriage is centered on oneness. What makes this volume intriguing is that the authors are difficult to pin down. They seemingly reject typical egalitarian readings of the text, such as mutual submission. Yet, they also reject clear complementarian interpretations of Ephesians 5. In the end, this results in little more than egalitarianism, albeit an egalitarianism that is clothed in different terms.

Undeclared

James, Carolyn Custis. *The Gospel of Ruth: Loving God Enough to Break the Rules*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2008.

In an engaging look at the book of Ruth, Carolyn Custis James attempts to answer the question of whether or not God is good for women. To answer that question, James walks through the events recorded in the book of Ruth regarding the lives of Naomi, Ruth, and Boaz. In the end, James affirms that God is indeed good for women. Unfortunately, along the way, she seems to misinterpret key points of Ruth's story in an attempt to justify some egalitarian sympathies. For a more detailed consideration of this work, see Jennifer Naselli's

review in *JBMW* 13.2 (Fall 2008).

Hallman, Janelle. *The Heart of Female Same-Sex Attraction*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2008.

Lamenting a lack of resources for counseling women who struggle with same-sex attraction, Hallman, a licensed professional counselor, offers her volume as a potential remedy to the situation. Her work is intended to both correct and prevent certain misunderstandings and presumptions regarding female same-sex attraction. Broadly, Hallman notes that women who struggle with same-sex attraction often have deep longings for love, safety, companionship, and femininity. The book seeks to provide counselors with both the information and training to help women move from same-sex relationships to healthier lives.

James, David E. *God's Truth about Gender: Unraveling the Lies of Modern Human Sexuality, Behavior and Identity*. Sisters, OR: VMI, 2008.

Drawing on his own life experiences, James offers his perspective on gender and sexuality. His work deals primarily with gender identity and sexuality and their relationship with homosexuality. One of James's conclusions is that homosexuality is a distortion of God's design for gender.