

THE JOURNAL FOR BIBLICAL
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MANHOOD & WOMANHOOD

ARTICLES INCLUDE:

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John Piper

A Review of Millard J. Erickson, *Who's Tampering with the Trinity?*

Stephen J. Wellum

A Word to Wives: 1 Peter 3:1–6

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Why Complementarianism Doesn't Work

Kevin DeYoung

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Editorial: Gospel Priorities and Complementarianism

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Scot McKnight recently posted a question on his weblog about the centrality of complementarianism in the theological commitments of the “young, restless and reformed.”¹ In short, he asks whether one must be a complementarian in order to be “gospel-centered”? The gender issue is a divisive one, and so the question is a natural one. Why should “young, restless and reformed” egalitarians be divided from their complementarian counterparts? Since both groups have a similar commitment to the gospel, the penal substitutionary atonement, justification by faith alone, etc., why should they be divided from one another over a secondary issue?

These are fair questions, and they have been addressed by complementarians here and there over the years.² I will attempt an answer here, though I do not claim to speak for any particular group. I offer three observations that may help clarify why the “young, restless and reformed” often

stand apart from reformed egalitarians. While my focus here is on the “young, restless and reformed,” I would argue that these three concerns apply to some extent to all complementarians, not just those who self-identify as reformed.

(1) A ranking of doctrinal priorities is necessary. Albert Mohler wrote a helpful little article on theological priorities that has become somewhat boilerplate among the “young, restless and reformed.” It’s titled “A Call for Theological Triage and Christian Maturity,” and it outlines a three-part framework for understanding theological priorities.³ Mohler’s argument relates directly to the question at hand.

First order issues are those doctrinal points that distinguish Christians from non-Christians. In other words, a rejection of a first order doctrine means a rejection of Christianity. Some doctrines that fall into this category are Nicene Trinitarianism, Chalcedonian Christology, justification by

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faith alone, and the authority of scripture. Differences over these issues are the difference between heaven and hell.

Second order issues are those doctrinal points that distinguish Christians from Christians. In other words, no one's Christianity is necessarily at stake in differences over these issues. Genuine believers can have disagreement on these points, though they will find it difficult if not impossible to do church together. The question of believer's baptism versus paedobaptism falls into this category.

Third order issues are those doctrinal points over which Christians may disagree without any rift in local church fellowship. One's position on the timing of the so-called "rapture" or disputes over the interpretation of specific biblical texts would fall into this category.

Mohler identifies the "women in ministry" question as a second order issue. It's not a doctrinal point that determines whether or not one is a Christian, but it is an issue that keeps Christians from doing local church ministry together (just like baptism). I agree with this assessment, and I assume that many of those in the "young, restless and reformed" group would as well.

(2) Secondary does not mean tertiary. Since second order issues do not distinguish Christians from non-Christians, some people are quick to treat second order issues as *adiaphora*. Many complementarians, however, would argue that such thinking is a mistake. There are many second order issues that directly affect how healthy a church and its members will be. The women's issue is a case in point. For example, an egalitarian perspective on church leadership is often accompanied by an egalitarian perspective on the role of husbands and wives in the family. Differences on this issue lead to radically different definitions of what a healthy Christian home will look like.

For complementarians, leadership and submission in marriage are not insignificant details but reflect our seminal commitment to the gospel itself. According to Ephesians 5, this gospel is either affirmed or denied in how husbands and wives relate to one another. Husbands are to lead with self-sacrificial love, and wives are to follow

that leadership. Discipleship in a complementarian framework means that husbands should be learning how to be leaders, protectors, and providers for their home. In a complementarian framework, families are unhealthy and marriages are at risk where this kind of leadership is absent. Egalitarians say that this kind of leadership is unbiblical and immoral. Complementarians say that this kind of leadership is essential for a husband's faithfulness to Christ. These two perspectives cannot be reconciled with one another in local church ministry. This may be a second order issue, but it is certainly not tertiary or *adiaphora*.

(3) There is such a thing as the slippery slope. This is the argument of Wayne Grudem's helpful little book *Evangelical Feminism: A New Path to Liberalism* (Crossway, 2006). There are a number of hermeneutical and theological moves made by egalitarians that seem to create a slippery slope toward liberalism. That is not to say that all egalitarians become liberals (Millard Erickson and Roger Nicole, for example, remain evangelical stalwarts). It is to say that where egalitarian modes of argument are embraced, subsequent generations are at risk for even greater error. Wayne Grudem notes, for example, that egalitarianism often leads to the denial of anything uniquely masculine, to calling God "our Mother," and to the approval of homosexuality.

This slippery slope is particularly dangerous for those who embrace trajectory hermeneutics like that of William Webb. Webb's hermeneutic creates the conditions for an egalitarian reading of the Bible, but it does so at the expense of the functional authority of scripture (even though Webb and his followers would not agree with this characterization). Where this happens, we've moved from second order territory to first order territory.⁴ Richard Hays is another example of an egalitarian who adopts hermeneutical strategies that grate against the very authority of scripture that he otherwise aims to uphold.⁵

History is a witness of the slippery slope that begins with egalitarianism and then leads into any number of unorthodox, unbiblical directions. It is for this reason (I believe) that the "young, restless,

and reformed” are more reluctant to partner with egalitarians than they are with those who disagree with them on other secondary issues. The hermeneutical and theological associations of egalitarianism are simply more dire than those that attend differences over issues such as baptism.

Churches, homes, and individuals are healthier where a robust complementarian framework prevails. Where it is absent, they are at risk. Moreover, the glory of Christ and his love for his bride is most clearly on display in churches and in marriages that embody Christ’s sacrificial love for and leadership over his bride. Where it is absent, the vision of that glory is diminished. This is not *adiaphora*, and that is why the “young, restless, and reformed” and many non-reformed complementarians have identified the gender issue as a decisive factor in their theological priorities.

Note: Both The Gospel Coalition and Together for the Gospel have explicitly included complementarianism as a foundational part of their theological commitments.

ENDNOTES

¹Scot McKnight, “A Question for The Gospel Coalition” [cited 18 October 2010]. Online: <http://www.patheos.com/community/jesuscreed/2010/09/13/a-question-for-the-gospel-coalition>. The question was actually penned by Dan Stringer, though McKnight brought it to his blog to extend the conversation there.

²Kevin DeYoung, for instance, addressed the issue just last year on The Gospel Coalition website. See Kevin DeYoung, “Why Do the New Calvinists Insist on Complementarianism?” [cited 18 October 2010]. Online: <http://thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/kevindeyoung/2009/07/02/why-do-new-calvinists-insist-on>.

³R. Albert Mohler, “A call for theological triage and Christian maturity,” *The Tie* 74, no. 2 (Summer 2006): 2–3.

⁴So Wayne Grudem, “A Redemptive-Movement Hermeneutic: The Slavery Analogy’ (Ch 22) and ‘Gender Equality and Homosexuality’ (Ch 23) by William J. Webb” *The Journal for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* 10, no. 1 (Spring 2005): 96–120.

⁵I have addressed this in a couple of different places. Denny Burk, “Why Evangelicals Should Ignore Brian McLaren: How the New Testament Requires Evangelicals to Render a Judgment on the Moral Status of Homosexuality,” *Themelios* 35, no. 2 (2010): 217, n.22; “Richard Hays: An Intellectually Honest Egalitarian” [cited 18 October 2010] Online: <http://www.dennyburk.com/richard-hays-an-intellectually-honest-egalitarian>.

Odds & Ends

Feminism and Porn

I recently read an extremely disturbing review article in the UK's *Guardian* newspaper titled, "The Truth About the Porn Industry" (Julie Bindel, "The Truth About the Porn Industry," *The Guardian* [July 2, 2010]). It's about a sociology professor and feminist named Gail Dines who is crusading against pornography in her new book *Pornland: How Porn Has Hijacked Our Sexuality*. [I have to warn readers that this article is disturbing precisely because it describes in no uncertain terms the degradation that has become common fare in today's smut industry. Please beware.]

The reviewer writes,

The book documents the recent history of porn, including the technological shifts that have made it accessible on mobile phones, videogames and laptops. According to Dines's research the prevalence of porn means that men are becoming desensitised to it, and are therefore seeking out ever harsher, more violent and degrading images.

On every other issue, Gail Dines and I would probably be on opposite sides, but not on this one. She argues that pornography is not an expression of sexual liberation but an instrument of degradation. Pornography corrupts everyone it touches. She writes:

We are now bringing up a generation of boys on cruel, violent porn, and given what we know about how images affect people, this is going to have a profound influence on their sexuality, behaviour and attitudes towards women.

She's right about that. But there is one area in which I would respectfully disagree with Ms. Dines. She says that pornography is "the perfect propaganda piece for patriarchy." In other words,

she links the degradation of women in pornography to patriarchy. I believe Ms. Dines and other feminists err by making patriarchy (=rule of the father or male leadership) a synonym for abuse. In truth, I would argue that it is the failure of men to lead that makes women vulnerable to this kind of abuse.

Biblical patriarchy is not abusive but strives toward the protection of women and children. The biblical word for it is not *patriarchy*, but *headship*. The paradigm for this is Christ himself. The apostle Paul writes,

For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body.... Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her.... So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church, because we are members of His body (Eph 5:23–30).

The example for how a husband should treat his wife (and thus for how men should treat women in general) is Christ. Christ is *head* of his bride, the church. He loves her, suffers for her, and even dies for her. He cares for and protects her as he cares for and protects himself. In other words, biblical headship involves male leadership, but it also involves a self-sacrificial giving of oneself for the good of women. It protects them from exploitation and degradation because it cherishes women as fellow heirs of the grace of life (1 Pet 3:7).

Biblically speaking, this kind of selfless leadership is the special responsibility of men, and feminism calls men away from this responsibility. When you couple this abdication with feminism's emphasis on sexual liberation, you can see

how feminism as an ideology can be turned into a basis for the sexual exploitation of women. Ironically, this sad consequence is exactly what Dines chronicles in her book, even though she probably wouldn't concede the points about feminism that I've made here.

In any case, the prevalence of pornography in our culture is yet another sad symptom of the spiritual destitution of men in our culture. In particular, it represents the failure of men to be the men that God has called them to be. So pray for the Lord's mercy and the progress of the gospel in the hearts of men. And, men, let's be the blessing that God intends for us to be to our wives, daughters, and sisters.

– Denny Burk

Did Jesus Affirm a Gay Couple?

A friend recently sent me a news story about a set of billboards in Dallas, Texas, that cite the Bible in support of homosexual relationships. Because you can find all kinds of crazy things on billboards, I initially didn't think much of this report. But I was really intrigued by the picture of one billboard that was included in the story.

The message on the sign reads, "Jesus affirmed a gay couple. Would Jesus Discriminate?" What caught my attention was not the suggestion that Jesus affirmed homosexual conduct. This is standard fare among religious progressives, and I have heard this many times before. What caught my attention was the single Bible text quoted in support of the message—Matt 8:5–13.

I am very familiar with the biblical texts that progressives usually cite in support of homosexual behavior, and this is not one of them. At least it was not one that I was aware of. R. T. France's 2007 commentary on Matthew doesn't mention such an interpretation of that text. Neither Robert Gagnon (2001) nor James DeYoung (2000) respond to any such interpretation in their books debunking pro-homosexual interpretations of key biblical texts. So I had to do some digging. Where was this interpretation of Matt 8:5–13 coming from?

It turns out that the billboard reflects an

obscure interpretation of the text that first appeared in 1978 but that was most recently defended in a 2004 article in the *Journal of Biblical Literature*: "Mistaken Identities but Model Faith: Rereading the Centurion, the Chap, and the Christ in Matthew 8:5–13" by Theodore Jennings and Tat-Siong Liew (pp. 467–94). But what I found in this article does not support the message contained on this billboard. The billboard suggests that Jesus affirms gay relationships—presumably between consenting adults—and that an example of his approval appears in Matt 8:5–13. But this is not at all what Jennings and Liew argue.

In the article, the "gay couple" that Jesus affirmed was a Roman soldier and his young boy sex-slave. In short, Jennings and Liew argue that the Greek word *pais*—usually rendered as "servant" in verse 6—is actually a mistranslation. Jesus didn't heal the centurion's "servant." Rather, Jesus healed the centurion's "boy-love" (468). The paralytic is a young boy who was the sexual plaything of a Roman centurion. The authors contend that such "forced pederastic relations" between Roman soldiers and young boys were both "legally permissible and socially prevalent" during Jesus' time (486). They argue further that the centurion is worried that Jesus will steal away the paralytic as his own "boy-love," and that is why the centurion doesn't want Jesus actually to come to his house (vs. 8, "I am not worthy for You to come under my roof"). Because Jesus "marvels" at the "great faith" of the centurion in verse 10, the authors conclude,

The way Matthew's Jesus seems to affirm the centurion's pederastic relationship with his *παῖς*, we contend, may also be consistent with Matthew's affirmation of many sexual dissidents in her Gospel (492).

The other sexually dissident behavior that Jesus affirms includes adultery, prostitution, and perhaps lesbianism (493).

The problems with this article and with the billboard are manifold. First, it's blasphemous and outrageous to suggest that Jesus supported this kind of behavior. In the Sermon on the Mount alone

(a favorite text among progressives), Jesus unambiguously condemns sexual immorality (Matt 5:28) while affirming the sanctity of the marital union (Matt 5:32). Are these authors seriously going to suggest that Jesus goes against the Old Testament and his own teaching to affirm the alleged homosexual conduct of the centurion and his sex-slave? The whole suggestion strains credulity at every level.

Second, I'm not alone in finding this reading to be completely implausible. Jennings' and Liew's novel interpretation of Matt 8:5–13 has not been widely received in scholarship and was subsequently debunked in the same journal on historical grounds (see Saddington, 140–42). There was a reason that I couldn't find the interpretation mentioned in France's commentary. It is so out of the mainstream that it didn't even bear mentioning.

Third, even if Jennings' and Liew's interpretation were correct, it would prove more than what this billboard probably intends to prove. Do the authors of this billboard really wish to suggest that Jesus supports forced sexual predation of older men upon underage boys? I certainly hope not.

In any case, it is very clear that the message of this billboard is absurd, and its supposed biblical basis is a farce. For any readers who may come upon a message such as this one, be assured that the claim is absolutely baseless. This is the kind of revisionist historicism that supports progressive interpretations of key texts. It's not serious, though it is seriously damning, and people should pay no heed to it.

– Denny Burk

The Case Against Marriage, Courtesy of *Newsweek*

“Once upon a time, marriage made sense.” So write Jessica Bennett and Jesse Ellison in the June 11, 2010, edition of *Newsweek* magazine. The two women who wrote the article are both young adults who identify themselves as “committed to our careers, friendships, and, yes, our relationships.” But, as for marriage, not so much.

As Bennett and Ellison explain their case,

marriage once made sense, at least for women, because it “was how women ensured their financial security, got the fathers of their children to stick around, and gained access to a host of legal rights.” But now, thanks largely to the feminist movement, they claim, the financial and legal rights are theirs without marriage. They never actually get around to saying much about fathers sticking around to take responsibility for children.

The *Newsweek* article represents what may be the most direct journalistic attack on marriage in our times. Though only an op-ed column, it presents arguments that had to date been made largely, if not exclusively, outside of mainstream circles. Consider this column an opening salvo in a battle to finish marriage off, once and for all.

Both women identify themselves as secular, and their rejection of marriage reflects the inevitable crumbling of a marriage culture in the wake of a moral revolution. As they explain, reserving sex for marriage is simply unthinkable to them and their peers. “And the idea that we’d ‘save ourselves’ for marriage? Please.” Interestingly, they quote a young man who makes a remarkable case for why the loss of moral stigma for premarital sex breaks down the institution of marriage itself: “If I had to be married to have sex, I would probably be married, as would every guy I know.”

And when it comes to having children without marriage: “We know that having children out of wedlock lost its stigma a long time ago.” They then point with envy to Scandinavia, where a majority of children are now born out of wedlock, but parents claim to spend more time with their children than parents of other nations.

The secular worldview represented by Bennett and Ellison is joined to their status as young professionals. Marriage does not enhance professional prospects, they argue. Women who take their husbands last name are considered less professional, less competent, and less ambitious than women who keep their own names.

As they explain, “We are also the so-called entitled generation, brought up with lofty expectations of an egalitarian adulthood; told by helicopter parents and the media, from the moment

we exited the womb, that we could be ‘whatever we wanted’—with infinite opportunities to accomplish those dreams. So you can imagine how, 25 years down the line, committing to another person—for life—would be nerve-racking.”

And just who are they seeking as partners, anyway? They explain that their generation of young women is looking for a “soulmate”—a fantasy they admit is hard to define and even harder to find.

And an adult lifetime is just too long for any realistic commitment, they insist. “With our life expectancy in the high 70s, the idea that we’re meant to be together forever is less realistic.” So while their generation of young women is, by their admission, unrealistic in what they are looking for in a partner, they are supposedly cold sober realistic when it comes to calculating the value of marriage, and finding it wanting.

This duo of young women go so far as to claim that “the permanence of marriage seems naive, almost arrogant.” Others, of course, might be forgiven for seeing unbridled arrogance in dismissing an institution that has been central to human flourishing for thousands of years.

They cite authorities who make the predictable arguments that humans are not hardwired for monogamy, anyway. Bennett and Ellison propose that perhaps a series of short, mostly monogamous relationships is best. “For us, it’s not that we reject monogamy altogether—indeed, one of us is going on six years with a partner—but that the idea of marriage has become so tainted, and simultaneously so idealized, that we’re hesitant to engage in it,” they explain.

In their essay, Bennett and Ellison cite a considerable body of research on marriage and make reference to our disastrous divorce rate. Nevertheless, it never seems to cross their minds that the very social trends they celebrate were the cause of marital decline — both in terms of individual marriages and the institution of marriage itself.

The moral revolutions of the late-twentieth century brought personal autonomy to preeminence. These moral revolutions included the rise of “no fault” divorce and a host of other developments that subverted marriage. Chief among these was

the “liberation” of sex from marriage. Once sexual intercourse was no longer limited to married couples, marriage lost respect and binding authority, becoming more like a mere legal contract. Once having children out of wedlock was normalized (at least in many sectors of the society), marriage became a lifestyle option, and little else.

There is an amazing lack of humility in the article by Bennett and Ellison, and a breathtaking lack of concern for other women as well. What about women who are not so professional, so secular, and so liberated from a desire for marriage? They are simply thrown under the bus, run over by the very social trends and moral revolutions these women champion and celebrate.

The Christian church should take careful note of this essay, not because its arguments are unprecedented, but because its distillation of these arguments in one of the nation’s two major newsweeklies must not escape attention. Christians see marriage, first of all, as an institution made good and holy by the Creator. Its value, for us, is not established by sociology but by Scripture. We also understand that God gave us marriage for our good, for our protection, for our sanctification, and for human flourishing.

– R. Albert Mohler

Why Complementarianism Doesn't Work

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From time to time it's wise to re-visit the arguments for male leadership in the church and in the home. First, because the cultural pressure is decidedly against complementarianism. We need our spines stiffened by Scripture more frequently than we realize. And second, because there may be readers (or those you know) who struggle with this issue and are looking for help. There may even be mild egalitarians open to being persuaded.

That is why I would like to review some of these arguments by examining what John Stott says about the issue in chapter 12 ("Women, Men and God") of his book *Issues Facing Christians Today* (4th ed.; Zondervan, 2006). I choose John Stott because: (1) I have the utmost respect for his ministry and general handling of the Scriptures, and (2) I know solid evangelicals who find his mediating, not-quite-egalitarian-not-quite-complementarian view very attractive. As a general rule, when Stott speaks, evangelicals should listen. So if anyone could present a strong case for women elders and pastors, or something less than full blown complementarianism, surely John Stott could.

But in actuality, a close examination of Stott's exegesis shows just how weak the middle-of-the-road position (not to mention the egalitarian position) really is.

Framing the Debate

Stott frames the gender debate, as he frames most debates, as an opportunity to find the golden

mean between two extremes. On the one hand, women have long been oppressed by a male-dominated society so we must try to "understand their hurts, frustration and even rage" (325). In other words, we must listen to women. On the other hand, we must listen to Scripture too. The goal is to avoid denying the teaching of Scripture just to be relevant while also avoiding insensitivity to the people most affected by these issues.

Of course, every Christian should eschew insensitivity. That's a fine caution. But when Stott goes on to quote approvingly (for two pages) several feminist authors, while also bemoaning the fact that there aren't enough women in Congress, you get the distinct impression that Stott is going to try hard to make sure Scripture is not too offensive to those with feminist sensibilities. Because Stott sets out to steer a course between Scripture and women's pain, he commits himself to avoiding any conclusions that might add to that pain. Whether this middle path is the right path remains to be seen.

Equality

Stott, with typical clarity and organizational skill, focuses on "four crucial words" (327). The first word is *equality*. Not surprisingly, Stott starts in Genesis, arguing from 1:26–28 that neither sex is more like God than the other or more responsible for the earth than the other (328). He goes on to show how Jesus honored women and treated them

as equals. Later, Stott deals with Gal 3:28. This passage, he says, does not eradicate all differences between men and women, but rather is a statement about our standing before God. The context is justification. All who by faith are in Christ are equally accepted by God and equally his children. No sex is superior or inferior to the other (332).

So far so good. But under this heading of equality Stott also makes a number of dubious claims.

(1) In referencing some of the maternal language about God, Stott concludes that God “was simultaneously Israel’s Father and Mother” (329). I understand that Stott wants to do justice to the passages “which speak of God in feminine—and especially maternal—terms,” but he’s not careful in how he does so. To recognize that Scripture sometimes uses maternal metaphors is not the same as saying Yahweh was Israel’s Mother. Naming is different than analogy or metaphor. God is a Father who gave birth to Israel and loves us like a nursing mother. But this does not make God “Mother” any more than Paul would have been called “Mother” after comparing himself to a gentle nursing mother among the Thessalonians (1 Thess 2:7).

(2) While Stott rightly points out that “the domination of woman by man is due to the fall, not to the creation” (330), he fails to make explicit that the desire by woman to rule man is also a result of the fall (Gen 3:16; 4:7).

(3) Most critically, Stott understands Pentecost to have caused the undoing of the effects of the fall and a restoration of creation-equality between the sexes. This point will loom large in the rest of his argument. Stott believes that what was perverted by the fall was recovered by redemption in Christ such that the original equality was re-established (332). I have no problem at all affirming the creation-equality of the sexes, but I’m not sure it was eradicated and then re-created. The relationship between men and women faces difficulties, and always will, because the whole creation still labors under the curse. I don’t think Stott’s Pentecost argument can carry the weight he wants it to carry.

Complementarity

We now come to the second word: *complementarity*. Stott once again starts off on solid ground. He affirms that “equality of worth is not identity of role” (333). But then he quickly adds the caveat that “we must be careful not to acquiesce uncritically in [the] stereotypes” (333). After two paragraphs of this caveat (including a favorable quote from Betty Friedan), he turns to Gen 2:18–22 where we see men and women are “equal but different” (334). They are equal in dignity and yet possess distinctives.

Just when you think Stott will explain those distinctives, he quickly retreats again to explain that defining these distinctives is very difficult. He rejects Mars and Venus kinds of stereotypes. He denies that there is a certain masculine personality. Eventually he turns to Mary Stewart Van Leeuwen and her notion that “Christian men must be ready to substitute biblical notions of responsibility and service for the dubious ideals of the male code of honour that keeps reinventing itself, Hydra-like, in every generation” (336). After more criticism of “the honour code of the warrior,” Stott finally comes around to his definition of complementarity: men and women both guard shalom. “Here we come back to the complementarity of men and women as well as to their equality, for it is only when we recover the fact that the creation and the cultural mandate is given to both, and when men reject the concept of unlimited economic growth, that we will create the space for the gifts of women, the importance of family life and the rightful place of the gifts of God to the world of *shalom*” (336). In the end, Stott concludes we should not think of “opposite sexes” but neighboring sexes.

What happened here? Stott never talked about the pertinent Scriptures in Genesis 1–3, that Adam’s name was given for humanity, that Adam had responsibility for naming the animals, that Adam was created first, that Adam was held responsible for couple’s sin, that Eve was designated a helper for Adam and not the other way around. Instead of finding his definition of complementarity in the text, Stott goes out of his way to make sure we don’t have too rigid of a view of

gender distinctions. And he concludes by urging us to guard shalom together as neighboring sexes. He's done nothing to demonstrate how men and women are different and everything to back away from the implications of the differences he says he affirms. His commitment to a vague, overarching equality has blinded him to the glorious particularities of complementarity.

Responsibility

Equality was the first of Stott's four key words. *Complementarity* was the second. The third word is *responsibility*. In this section we see clearly how general categories in the debate (like equality) are often used to mute or negate specific scriptural texts. We also see in this section Stott at his most conflicted. He's too good an exegete to buy the typical egalitarian arguments that headship is based on the fall, or that culture or a specific situation dictated Paul's teaching in Ephesians 5 and 1 Corinthians 11, or that submission to husbands can be dismissed because slavery has been discredited. And yet, time and again Stott backs away from any understanding of headship that doesn't conform with the broad, controlling category of equality.

Let me walk you through Stott's argument and point out a number of missteps.

(1) Stott claims that Paul "adds" the idea of masculine headship. Genesis only taught equality and complementarity, but now the Apostle adds the new idea of headship. This claim, however, does not do justice to the specifics of Genesis 2 that we enumerated above (336).

(2) He is always looking for a third way, here a third way that can harmonize headship and equality. While this sounds alright on paper, what it forces him to do is take a secularized version of equality and use it to disregard *a priori* any strong notions of male authority. So when Stott sets out to explain headship he starts with the first option he calls "traditionalist" or "hard-line." This "lordship" position "understands Paul's prohibition of women speaking in church or teaching men, and his requirement of female submission and silence, as literal, permanent and universal injunctions. It therefore deduces that, although women do have

ministries, leadership and decision-making in both the church and the home are male prerogatives" (337). Now, I might want to clarify a few points in that explanation, but basically this is the complementarian position. Amazingly, Stott simply dismisses this view in one sentence, saying it "seems impossible to reconcile [this kind of thinking] with the full equality of the sexes which has been established by creation, redemption and Pentecost" (337).

Later, with a similar wave of the hand, Stott asserts that we certainly have to reject any language of hierarchy, patriarchy, or subordination (342). It's as if Stott can't fathom headship actually having "teeth" to it. I think it is telling that Stott spends most of his time trying to defend *some* element of headship. In this effort his exegesis is tight and he sticks closely to the text. Clearly Stott is writing to bring those on his left just a bit more to the right. But it's as if he can scarcely conceive of anyone really making a good case to be further on the right. Stott deals carefully with egalitarian objections, but routinely dismisses full-blown complementarianism without critical reflection. His "third way" approach hems him in and prevents him from letting the text lead him to conclusions he's already determined are unpalatable.

(3) Stott asserts, without any supporting evidence, that *authenteō* in 1 Tim 2:12 means to "domineer" (341). Besides the fact that no modern English translation renders *authenteō* this way, H. Scott Baldwin has in recent years demonstrated from exhaustive research of the word in ancient Greek literature that *authenteō* can mean to rule, to control, or to be responsible but that it does not carry the negative sense of "to usurp" or "to domineer."¹ The unifying concept is that of authority. In other words, Paul is not prohibiting women from abusing authority, something he would not permit for men either (and all the problematic teachers in the Pastoral Epistles are men). Rather, he is, as a general rule, prohibiting women from having authority over men in the church.

(4) The headship espoused by Stott ends up, on a practical level, evacuated of any notion of authority. Once again, Stott argues for a third way.

He shows little sympathy for recent attempts to redefine *kephalē* as “source.” He even claims that headship “seems clearly to imply some kind of ‘authority’, to which ‘submission’ is appropriate” (343). But then he quickly warns that “we must be careful not to overpress this” (343). So in the next paragraph he sidesteps the lexical debate between “source of” and “authority over” and argues for a “third option which contains an element of both” (343). Headship implies “some degree of leadership,” but this is not best expressed as authority but as responsibility (343–44). Thus, male headship means husbands have the responsibility to love sacrificially and to care selflessly.

Of course this is right, but we must say more. If headship is simply the responsibility to love sacrificially and care selflessly, what makes this a distinctive command for men? Are women not also meant to love sacrificially and care selflessly? Headship certainly implies sacrificial, selfless leadership, but it also implies authority. The husband is a first among equals in the marriage relationship. He is not told to submit to his wife (the participle *hupotassomenoi* in Eph 5:21 being a general statement about various relationships where submission is called for). Headship cannot be divorced from authority.

And yet, Stott concludes his responsibility section with a view of headship that focuses more on the wife’s need for self-actualization than on the biblical command to submit.

The resolute desire of women to know, be and develop themselves, and to use their gifts in the service of the world, is so obviously God’s will for them that to deny or frustrate it is an extremely serious oppression. It is a woman’s basic right and responsibility to discover herself, her identity and her vocation. The fundamental question is, in what relationship with men will women find and be themselves? Certainly not in a subordination which implies inferiority to men and engenders low self-esteem. Only the biblical ideal of headship, which because it is selflessly loving may justly be called “Christlike,” can convince them that it will facilitate, not destroy, their true identity (345).

Biblical headship which is Christlike will be

selflessly loving. No doubt about that. But Stott has practically turned submission on its head (no pun intended). His anchor is not the meaning of the Greek word *kephalē*, nor the context of Ephesians 5 and 1 Corinthians 11. His anchor is the desire of women to develop and use their gifts. His anchor is woman’s basic right to discover herself and her vocation. His anchor is that we must not accept any principle that smacks (to us) of inferiority or gives women low self-esteem. Don’t get me wrong, I love my wife deeply and want for her to flourish and use her gifts. I would shudder to think that my headship was a crushing burden to my wife. But none of this should determine our exegesis of disputed texts.

Ministry

The fourth word, following *equality*, *complementarity*, and *responsibility*, is *ministry*. In this section Stott looks at the implications of headship for ministry. Here again we see Stott hesitating between two positions. On the one hand, he rejects the efforts of those who want to limit 1 Tim 2:8–15 because of a never-seen-in-the-text heretical feminist movement in Ephesus. Stott believes the principle of submission is rooted in creation (“for Adam was formed first, then Eve”). Yet on the other hand, he thinks the requirement of silence is a culture-bound application of submission similar to head coverings (349). Stott figures the prohibition in 1 Corinthians 14 might have been addressed to talkative women as opposed to all women (348). He never considers that the silence in the second half of 1 Tim 2:12 is Paul’s explanation of “I do not permit a women to teach” in the first half of the verse. Likewise, he doesn’t consider the argument that 1 Corinthians 11 (women praying and prophesying) is not at odds with 1 Corinthians 14 (let them keep silent) when you consider the context of the latter is the authoritative weighing of prophecy (14:29).

In the end, Stott’s position is a half-way house between egalitarianism and complementarianism. He believes because the Spirit is bestowed on both sexes, no gifts are restricted to one or the other, and therefore, there should be no limitations on the exercise of those gifts (348). But the logic of this

position runs into Stott's exegesis when later he requires that women can teach men "provided that in so doing they are not usurping any improper authority over them" (349). With the right explanations, complementarians agree that it is not wrong for women to teach. Women can certainly teach other women, and they should instruct children (Titus 2). The example of Priscilla and Aquila correcting Apollos may suggest a scenario in which a woman teaching a man is legitimate (though complementarians are careful to warn against unwarranted inferences from Acts 18:26²). The point is, women are not forbidden to teach nor are they prohibited from exercising their gifts. But they must teach and exercise those gifts in their God-given roles. The Bible allows for, gives examples of, and even expects lots of ministry from women. Imagine how impoverished the church would be without the contributions of women! But what Scripture does not allow is for women in the church to teach or have authority over men. Preaching, governing, and eldering are the work of qualified men.

So there is a complementarian way to affirm the ministry of women while still maintaining God's design for men and women. But this isn't how Stott explains his proviso. Instead he gives three conditions women must meet in order to teach men. (1) The content must be true. (2) The teaching should be in a team context. (3) And the women must not be rude swashbucklers. These are fine conditions, but with the possible exception of the second one, they are conditions for any teacher, not just for women. It's hard to see how these conditions do anything to guard the authority men are to exercise in the church. Even the requirement for team teaching feels arbitrary. Are we really to think that if Paul saw a woman preaching in Timothy's church he would have said, "Don't worry about it. She's part of a team that includes men"? Over the long run, this attempt to meet the culture halfway will just get us into more trouble. Our rules—that the senior pastor must be a man or that the woman preaching must be under the authority of the elders—will seem like meager attempts to get the letter of the law right without abiding by any of the spirit of it. We'll look like the boyfriend and

girlfriend trying to justify making-out into the wee hours of the morning in a dark, empty room because they "didn't go all the way." The logic, not to mention the restraint, won't hold for very long.

Conclusion

I love John Stott. He's done more for the Lord than I could ever dream. But this chapter felt like a convoluted effort to rationalize a ministry direction that can't be supported in the text. Stott takes big categories like equality and servant leadership and then uses them to negate the particulars of Scripture. So he concludes that "what is forbidden women is not leadership but domineering over men" (353). Likewise, he asserts, "the central issue is not what *offices* are open to women (presbyter, rector, bishop), but whether their leadership *style* is consistent with Jesus' teaching on servanthood" (353). But Genesis 1–2, Ephesians 5, 1 Corinthians 11 and 14, 1 Timothy 2 and 3 are not about style at all. They are about the roles of men and women. To say the Bible is only concerned about how women teach not only begs the question, "Why these special instructions for women when men are to be servants too?" but also twists the pertinent passages into a discussion of matters palatable to us but foreign to the texts themselves.

Complementarianism is a big deal not just because the roles of men and women matter and ordering the church God's way matters, but complementarianism matters, perhaps most of all, because how we handle the Scriptures matters. I know, love, and respect many egalitarians. But the sloppy exegesis, special pleading, and hermeneutical sidestepping required to get to Stott's modified complemegalitarianism (not to mention positions far to the left of his) are troubling. They make the text get where the text just ain't supposed to go. And that's not the way forward in ministry, whether it's a third way or not.

ENDNOTES

¹Henry Scott Baldwin, "An Important Word: *ἀποεντέω* in 1 Timothy 2:12," in *Women in the Church: An Analysis and Application of 1 Timothy 2:9-15* (2d ed.; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005), 39–52.

²E.g., John Piper and Wayne Grudem, "An Overview of Central Concerns: Questions and Answers," in *Recovering Biblical Manhood & Womanhood: A Response to Evangelical Feminism*

(Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2006), 68–69: “Our understanding of what is fitting for men and women in that kind of setting is not an oversimplified or artificial list of rules for what the woman and man can say and do. It is rather a call for the delicate and sensitive preservation of personal dynamics that honor the headship of Aquila without squelching the wisdom and insight of Priscilla.”

The Ultimate Meaning of True Womanhood¹

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My aim in this essay is to clarify from God's Word the ultimate meaning of true womanhood, and to motivate women, by God's grace, to embrace it as their highest calling. What I will say is foundational to the "True Woman Manifesto"² which I regard as a faithful, clear, true, and wise document.

I would like to begin by stating one huge assumption that I bring to this article. I mention it partly because it may give you an emotional sense of what I hope you become. And I mention it partly because it explains why I minister the way I do and why this message sounds the way it does.

My assumption is that *wimpy theology makes wimpy women*. And I don't like wimpy women. I didn't marry a wimpy woman. And with Noël, I am trying to raise my teenage daughter Talitha not to be a wimpy woman.

Marie Durant

The opposite of a wimpy woman is not a brash, pushy, loud, controlling, sassy, uppity, arrogant Amazon. The opposite of a wimpy woman is fourteen-year-old Marie Durant, a French Christian in the seventeenth century who was arrested for being a Protestant and told she could be released if she said one phrase: "I abjure." Instead, she wrote on the wall of her cell, "Resist," and stayed there thirty-eight years until she died, doing just that.³

Gladys and Esther Staines

The opposite of a wimpy woman is Gladys Staines who in 1999, after serving with her husband Graham in India for three decades learned that he and their two sons, Phillip (10) and Timothy (6), had been set on fire and burned alive by the very people they had served for thirty-four years,

said, "I have only one message for the people of India. I'm not bitter. Neither am I angry. Let us burn hatred and spread the flame of Christ's love."

The opposite of a wimpy woman is her thirteen-year-old daughter Esther (rightly named!) who said, when asked how she felt about her father's murder, "I praise the Lord that He found my father worthy to die for Him."⁴

Krista and Vicki

The opposite of a wimpy woman is Krista and Vicki, friends of ours in Minneapolis, who between them have had over sixty-five surgeries because of so-called birth defects, Apert Syndrome and Hypertelorism, and who testify today through huge challenges, "I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well"; and this: "Even though my life has been difficult, I know that God loves me and created me just the way I am. He has taught me to persevere and to trust Him more than anything."

Joni Eareckson Tada

The opposite of a wimpy woman is Joni Eareckson Tada, who has spent the last forty-one years in a wheel chair, and prays, "Oh, thank you, thank you for this wheel chair! By tasting hell in this life, I've been driven to think seriously about what faces me in the next. This paralysis is my greatest mercy."⁵

Suzie

The opposite of a wimpy woman is Suzie, who lost her husband four years ago at age fifty-nine, found breast cancer three months later, then lost her mom and writes, "Now I see that I have

been crying for the wrong kind of help. I now see that my worst suffering is my sin—my sin of self-centeredness and self-pity.... I know that with His grace, His loving kindness, and His merciful help, my thoughts can be reformed and my life conformed to be more like His Son.”

Wimpy Theology Makes Wimpy Women

Wimpy theology makes wimpy women. That’s my assumption that I bring to this chapter. Wimpy theology simply does not give a woman a God that is big enough, strong enough, wise enough, and good enough to handle the realities of life in a way that magnifies the infinite worth of Jesus Christ. Wimpy theology is plagued by woman-centeredness and man-centeredness. Wimpy theology doesn’t have the granite foundation of God’s sovereignty or the solid steel structure of a great God-centered purpose for all things.

The Ultimate Purpose for the Universe

So I turn to my main point, the ultimate meaning of true womanhood, and start by stating this great God-centered purpose of all things:

God’s ultimate purpose for the universe and for all of history and for your life is to display the glory of Christ in its highest expression, namely, in His dying to make a rebellious people His everlasting and supremely happy bride.

To say it another way, God’s ultimate purpose in creating the world and choosing to let it become the sin-wracked world that it is, is so that the greatness of the glory of Christ could be put on display at Calvary where He bought his rebellious bride at the cost of His life.

I base this statement of God’s ultimate purpose on several texts. For example, Rev 13:8 where John refers to God’s writing names “before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain.” So in God’s mind Christ was already slain before the creation of the world. This was His plan from the beginning. Why?

Because in being slain “to make a wretch His treasure”—to make a rebel His bride—the glory of

His grace would shine most brightly, and that was His ultimate purpose according to Eph 1:4–6, “In love he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ ... *to the praise of the glory of his grace.*”

The Glory of Christ at the Cross

From the very beginning, God’s design in creating the universe and governing it the way He does has been to put the glory of His grace on display in the death of His Son for the sake of His bride. “Husbands, love your wives, *as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her*, that he might sanctify her ... that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish” (Eph 5:25–27). The ultimate purpose of creation and redemption is to put the glory of Christ on display in purchasing and purifying His bride, the church.

True Womanhood: At the Center of God’s Purpose

Now where does this take us in regard to the ultimate meaning of true womanhood? It does not take us to wimpy theology or wimpy women. It is not wimpy to say that God created the universe and governs all things to magnify His own grace in the death of His Son for the salvation of His bride. That’s not wimpy. And it doesn’t lead to wimpy womanhood.

But it does lead to womanhood. True womanhood. In fact, it leads to the mind-boggling truth that womanhood and manhood—masculinity and femininity—belong at the center of God’s ultimate purpose. Womanhood and manhood were not an afterthought or a peripheral thought in God’s plan. God designed them precisely so that they would serve to display the glory of His Son dying to have His happy, admiring bride.

Created to Display Jesus’ Glory

Genesis 1:27 says, “God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.” Sometimes we make the mistake of thinking God created us this way, and then later when Christ came to do His

saving work, God looked around and said, “Well, that’s a good analogy, man and woman. I’ll describe my Son’s salvation with that. I’ll say it’s like a husband dying to save his bride.”

It didn’t happen like that. God did not look around and *find* manhood and womanhood to be a helpful comparison to His Son’s relation to the church. He *created* us as male and female precisely so that we could display the glory of His Son. Our sexuality is designed for the glory of the Son of God—especially the glory of His dying to have His admiring bride.

In Eph 5:31, Paul quotes Gen 2:24, “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” And then he adds this, “This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.” In other words, from the beginning, manhood and womanhood were designed to display the glory of Christ in His relationship to the church, His bride.

A Distinctive Calling to Display the Glory of Christ

In other words, the ultimate meaning of true womanhood is this: It is a distinctive calling of God to display the glory of His Son in ways that would not be displayed if there were no womanhood. If there were only generic persons and not male and female, the glory of Christ would be diminished in the world. When God described the glorious work of His Son as the sacrifice of a husband for His bride, He was telling us why He made us male and female. He made us this way so that our maleness and femaleness would display more fully the glory of His Son in relation to His blood-bought bride.

This means that if you try to reduce womanhood to physical features and biological functions, and then determine your role in the world merely on the basis of competencies, you don’t just miss the point of womanhood, you diminish the glory of Christ in your own life. True womanhood is indispensable in God’s purpose to display the fullness of the glory of His Son. Your distinctive female personhood is not incidental. It exists because of its God-designed relationship to the central event of

history, the death of the Son of God.

So let me say a word about what that looks like if you are married and if you are single.

A Word to the Married

First, a word to the married. Paul says in Eph 5:22–24, “Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands.”

The point here is that marriage is meant to display the covenant-keeping love between Christ and His church. And the way it does this is by men being men and women being women in marriage. These are no more interchangeable than Christ is interchangeable with the church. Men take their cues from Christ as the head, and women take their cues from what the church is called to be in her allegiance to Christ. This is described by Paul in terms of headship and submission. Here are my definitions of headship and submission based on this text:

- *Headship* is the divine calling of a husband to take primary responsibility for Christ-like, servant leadership, protection, and provision in the home.
- *Submission* is the divine calling of a wife to honor and affirm her husband’s leadership and help carry it through according to her gifts.

The point here is not to go into detail about how this gets worked out from marriage to marriage. The point is that these two, headship and submission, are different. They correspond to true manhood and true womanhood, which are different. And these differences are absolutely essential by God’s design, so that marriage will display, as in a mirror dimly, something of the glory of the sacrificial love of Christ for His bride and the lavish reverence and admiration of the bride for her husband.

I know this leaves a hundred questions unanswered—about unbelieving husbands, and believ-

ing husbands who don't take spiritual leadership, and wives who resist their husbands' leadership, and those who receive it but don't affirm it. But if you—you married women—embrace the truth that your womanhood, true womanhood, is uniquely and indispensably created by God to display the glory of His Son in the way you relate to your husband, you will have a calling of infinite significance.

But what if you aren't married?

A Word to Singles

The apostle Paul clearly loved his singleness because of the radical freedom for ministry that it gave him (1 Cor 7:32–38). One of the reasons he was free to celebrate his singleness and call others to join him in it, is that, even though marriage is meant to display the glory of Christ, there are truths about Christ and His kingdom that shine more clearly through singleness than through marriage. I'll give you three examples:

(1) *A life of Christ-exalting singleness bears witness that the family of God grows not by propagation through sexual intercourse, but by regeneration through faith in Christ.* If you never marry, and if you embrace a lifetime of chastity and biological childlessness, and if you receive this from the Lord's hand as a gift with contentment, and if you gather to yourself the needy and the lonely, and spend yourself for the gospel without self-pity, because Christ has met your need, then He will be mightily glorified in your life, and particularly so because you are a woman.

(2) *A life of Christ-exalting singleness bears witness that relationships in Christ are more permanent, and more precious, than relationships in families.* The single woman who turns away from regretting the absence of her own family, and gives herself to creating God's family in the church, will find the flowering of her womanhood in ways she never dreamed, and Christ will be uniquely honored because of it.

(3) *A life of Christ-exalting singleness bears witness that marriage is temporary, and finally gives way to the relationship to which it was pointing all along: Christ and the church—the way a picture is no longer needed when you see face to face.* Marriage is a beautiful thing. But it is not the main thing. If it

were, Jesus would not have said, "In the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven" (Matt 22:30). Single womanhood, content to walk with Christ, is a great witness that He is a better husband than any man, and in the end, will be the only husband in the universe.

In other words, true womanhood can flourish in marriage and singleness.

True Womanhood for the Glory of Christ

I commend to you this truth: The ultimate purpose of God in history is the display of the glory of His Son in dying for His bride. God has created man as male and female because there are aspects of Christ's glory that would not be known if they were not reflected in the complementary differences of manhood and womanhood. Therefore, true womanhood is a distinctive calling of God to display the glory of His Son in ways that would not be displayed if there were no womanhood.

Married womanhood has its unique potential for magnifying Christ that single womanhood does not have. Single womanhood has its unique potential for magnifying Christ which married womanhood does not have.

So whether you marry or remain single, do not settle for a wimpy theology. It is beneath you. God is too great. Christ is too glorious. True womanhood is too strategic. Don't waste it. Your womanhood—your true womanhood—was made for the glory of Jesus Christ.

ENDNOTES

¹This essay is reprinted from *Voices of the True Woman Movement: A Call to the Counter Revolution* (Chicago: Moody, 2010). It is based on a message delivered at the True Woman '08 conference and appears here with permission.

²Available online at <http://www.truewoman.com/?id=980>.

³Karl Olsson, *Passion* (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1963), 116–17; also: "Marie Durand Released at Last," *Glimpses of Christian History*. Online: <http://www.chinstitute.org/DAILYF/2002/12/daily-12-26-2002.shtml>.

⁴Randy Alcorn, "The World Was Not Worthy of Them." Online: http://www.epm.org/artman2/publish/persecuted_church/The_World_Was_Not_Worthy_of_Them_Martyrs_for_Christ.shtml.

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The End of Men

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Is our postmodern, postindustrial society simply better suited to women than to men? Hanna Rosin makes the case for this claim in the July/August 2010 issue of *The Atlantic*, and her article, “The End of Men,” demands close attention. Men, she argues, are simply falling behind women in almost every sector of cultural influence and economic power. This shift, she understands, is nothing less than unprecedented in the span of human history.

Rosin begins her article with the fact that sex-selection technologies in the West are now more often used to select a preference for girls than for boys, reversing the historical trend. Why? She explains, “Man has been the dominant sex since, well, the dawn of mankind. But for the first time in human history, that is changing—and with shocking speed. Cultural and economic changes always reinforce each other. And the global economy is evolving in a way that is eroding the historical preference for male children, worldwide.”

Rosin’s article is well documented and forceful in argument. The bottom line is the claim that the trend and trajectory of the global economy have for some time now been headed toward female skills and talents. At the most basic level, this means a shift from physical strength to intellectual energies and education. At the next level, it also means a shift from leadership models more associated with males toward the nurturing leadership more associated with women. In any event, the changes are colossal.

Nothing has brought this into clearer sight than the current global recession. In the United States, the recession has been dubbed a “he-cession,” due to the fact that three-quarters of the 8

million jobs lost were lost by men. Even more devastating to men, most of these jobs will not return, given the vast changes the recession has brought about. “The worst-hit industries were overwhelmingly male and deeply identified with macho: construction, manufacturing, high finance. Some of these jobs will come back,” Rosin predicts, “but the overall pattern of dislocation is neither temporary nor random.”

It’s not just the United States, either. In Iceland, Prime Minister Johanna Sigurdardottir (the first openly-lesbian head of state) ran her campaign for office with a pledge to end the “age of testosterone.”

But the picture in the United States is particularly striking. For the first time in the nation’s history, women now outnumber men in the workforce. The working class, “which has long defined our notions of masculinity,” Rosin argues, is “slowly turning into a matriarchy, with men increasingly absent from the home and women making all the decisions.”

Why? “The postindustrial economy is indifferent to men’s size and strength. The attributes that are most valuable today—social intelligence, open communication, the ability to sit still and focus—are, at a minimum, not predominately male.”

Rosin actually makes two main points, and both demand attention. The first has to do with what is taking place in working class families. The matriarchy Rosin describes is now coming more fully into view. In many cases, it is husbands and fathers who are unemployed and wives and mothers who have paying jobs. This means a huge shift in male function, and many men just exit the family process or forfeit decision making. Rosin refers to

these men as “casualties of the end of the manufacturing era.” Across the nation, older men are increasingly unemployed and younger men face little hope of a job in this sector—the virtual birth-right of previous generations.

Of the fifteen job classifications marked for future growth, men dominate only two: janitorial services and computer engineering. The same pattern is now extending to managerial and professional roles, where women currently hold 51.4 percent of jobs. Why are women gaining and men falling behind? Rosin explains,

They make up 54 percent of all accountants and hold about half of all banking and insurance jobs. About a third of America’s physicians are now women, as are 45 percent of associates in law firms—and both those percentages are rising fast. A white-collar economy values raw intellectual horsepower, which men and women have in equal amounts. It also requires communication skills and social intelligence, areas in which women, according to many studies, have a slight edge. Perhaps most important—for better or worse—it increasingly requires formal education credentials, which women are more prone to acquire, particularly early in adulthood.

Beyond the numbers, Rosin reports that office environments and corporate cultures are adapting to women, as well, reshaped by the gender transformation of the last twenty-five years.

And yet, even after all this, Rosin makes her most powerful argument when she looks, not at the current workforce, but at what is happening on America’s college and university campuses. There, she explains, “We can see with absolute clarity that in the coming decades the middle class will be dominated by women.”

She continues,

We’ve all heard about the collegiate gender gap. But the implications of that gap have not yet been fully digested. Women now earn 60 percent of master’s

degrees, about half of all law and medical degrees, and 42 percent of all M.B.A.s. Most important, women earn almost 60 percent of all bachelor’s degrees—the minimum requirement, in most cases, for an affluent life. In a stark reversal since the 1970s, men are now more likely than women to hold only a high-school diploma. “One would think that if men were acting in a rational way, they would be getting the education they need to get along out there,” says Tom Mortenson, a senior scholar at the Pell Institute for the Study of Opportunity in Higher Education. “But they are just failing to adapt.”

While many theories to explain this pattern have been offered, no one can argue with the numbers. Boys are clearly falling behind girls in both educational achievement and aspiration. The long-term consequences of this shift are momentous and virtually impossible to reverse in a single generation. This pattern has vast implications for marital prospects, since women express a strong preference to marry a man of equal or greater educational and professional potential. The collapse of the marriage culture within the working class, Rosin argues, is due to the fact that women are in control and have set expectations “too high for the men around them to meet.”

Hanna Rosin’s article is not the first salvo of information on these troubling trends, but the fact that *The Atlantic* chose her essay as a cover story is itself evidence of how this phenomenon is taking hold of attention, even among the elites.

For Christians, the importance of this article is even greater. God intended for men to have a role as workers, reflecting God’s own image in their vocation. The most important issue here is not the gains made by women, but the displacement of men. This has undeniable consequences for these men and for everyone who loves and depends on them.

The failure of boys to strive for educational attainment is a sign of looming disaster. Almost anyone who works with youth and young adults will tell you that, as a rule, boys are simply not growing up as fast as girls. This means that their transition

to manhood is stunted, delayed, and often incomplete. Meanwhile, the women are moving on.

What does it mean for large sectors of our society to become virtual matriarchies? How do we prepare the church to deal with such a world while maintaining biblical models of manhood and womanhood?

The elites are awakening to the fact that these vast changes point to a very different future. Christians had better know that matters far more important than economics are at stake. These trends represent nothing less than a collapse of male responsibility, leadership, and expectations. The real issue here is not the end of men, but the disappearance of manhood.

Breaking the Marital Impasse: How Authority and Submission Work When Spouses Disagree

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Ted and Elizabeth had been members of a church I pastored for many years. Both lived committed Christian lives and were integrally involved in ministry for our congregation. One morning Elizabeth requested a meeting with me to discuss a “very difficult” issue in their marriage. I met with her and Ted that afternoon. As we talked it became clear that the problem concerned Elizabeth’s leadership of our church’s preschool ministry. Elizabeth loved the work, but life in their home was crazy. Ted was forced to work longer hours at work, their family was growing, and another ministry they shared in the church was quickly multiplying. Ted did not believe it was wise for Elizabeth to continue to supervise the preschoolers.

They had been discussing this issue for weeks, but could not agree on a course of action. Finally, Ted “put his foot down” and made the final decision. Elizabeth would have to resign from the ministry. Elizabeth was stunned, angry, and hurt. In her anger she told him she would never quit. After 24 hours of conflict, Elizabeth called me for help.

How should complementarians evaluate this situation? With regard to the issues of headship and authority in marriage, biblically responsible complementarians have been faithful to articulate that wives must not submit to their husbands when to do so would lead them into sin. That qualifica-

tion is good and biblical.¹ It does not, however, answer all of the questions. What about the kinds of situations where the black and white of sin and righteousness blend into the muted gray of ambiguity? What would wise, biblical counsel sound like in real-life situations where conservative Christian spouses disagree about the nature of submission and the parameters of marital authority? What is a wife to do when she feels uncomfortable submitting to her husband in an area, but cannot quote “chapter and verse” that it is a sin. Any faithful pastor can attest that these are the kinds of issues that couples face every day as they try to work out a complementarian structure of marriage in the context of real life. How can Christians striving to be faithful to the biblical teaching on authority and submission in marriage work through these issues?

Steven Tracy raises these same concerns in his article, “What Does ‘Submit in Everything’ Really Mean? The Nature and Scope of Marital Submission,” in a 2008 issue of *Trinity Journal*.² Tracy calls himself a non-egalitarian because he disagrees with egalitarians by seeing legitimate authority in the marriage relationship, but disagrees with complementarians for—he says—not thinking carefully enough about how to protect women from the sinful abuses of authority in marriage. In his article, Tracy explains six parameters of submission. Tracy

seeks to protect women from husbandly abuses of authority by saying that a wife should not submit to her husband when, (1) obedience to him would violate a biblical principle (not just a biblical statement); (2) obedience to him would compromise her relationship with Christ; (3) obedience to him would violate her conscience; (4) obedience to him would compromise the care, nurture, and protection of her children; (5) obedience to him would enable (facilitate) her husband's sin; (6) obedience to him would constitute submission to physical, sexual, or emotional abuse.

With regard to our couple, Ted and Elizabeth, Tracy's principles would seem to indicate that Elizabeth does not have to submit to her husband in this area. He is seeking to "dictate" her relationship with Christ.³ Ted might be trying to make a wise decision for his family. He may even be doing it out of love for his wife, but he has overstepped his authority.

Tracy makes a good point about the need to have a strategy to work through the interplay between authority and submission in complex marital matters. Unfortunately, there are a number of problems with his individual parameters. I have outlined some of these in a previous article.⁴ In addition to the issues detailed in that article, there are a number of other problems with Tracy's approach. While the goal of Tracy's article is to lay out six qualifications to headship and submission, his approach effectively describes six categories in which a wife knows, *prima facie*, that she does not have to submit to her husband. Sometimes this is okay. For example a wife can know, in advance, that she does not have to submit to her husband when it involves sin. Many of Tracy's categories are concrete examples of this principle (e.g., violations of conscience, facilitating sin, enduring abuse). Most of Tracy's principles, however, are much more harmful to those desiring to embrace the Bible's teaching on authority and submission.

Tracy has the best of intentions, but ultimately his principles demonstrate a failure to think biblically and carefully about how to engage complex situations. This is the case for a number of reasons. First, ministry in thorny situations within marriage

is necessarily specific. Tracy, however, provides general answers to particular questions. In this way, Tracy's parameters are too simplistic to engage the complex issues he raises. Second, the goal of Tracy's parameters are to lay down six specific examples where a wife knows—up front—that she does not have to submit to her husband. There are so many problems with this. One is that it does not match the tenor of Scripture's teaching. The Bible *emphasizes* the requirement of a wife to submit to her husband, but also includes instruction qualifying this emphasis to regulate abuses by sinful people in a sinful world. Tracy's article, on the other hand, does the opposite and emphasizes the qualifications to authority. Another problem is that the approach does not rightly understand the sinful tendencies of women (and all people!) to resist authority. A final problem is that it answers a matter before hearing it, and so is bound to end in folly and shame (Prov 18:13). Wise spouses (and the ministers who help them) will always want to hear a matter carefully, and not decide a complicated issue before all the details have been uncovered. For most of the last ten years I have been doing marriage counseling, and I do not think Tracy's approach will help couples think biblically about the matters he addresses.

I want to do more here, however, than just throw rocks. Like Tracy, I also want to protect women from abuse. The question to pose here is: Can we establish a better way? A wife must never follow her husband into sin, but what about the more complicated matters when a wife is unsure? Here, I wish to do what I did not have space to do in my previous article and explain what I pray is a more biblical alternative to the proposals Tracy outlines.

What we need is a strategy that avoids leading women to say "no" up front, but instead encourages all involved to think through complex issues in a careful way. I would propose five guidelines to help couples and the ministers who counsel them think through these issues. Don't expect easy answers here. Life in a sinful world with two sinful people will always be complex. Instead, expect biblical guidelines to help navigate our thinking, and provide a framework to help both members in the

marriage relationship avoid sin by thinking carefully about the issues of authority and submission.⁵

Guideline #1: A wife must submit to her husband in all areas except sinful ones.

We must start here. The command for wives to submit to their husbands “in everything” is given emphatic attention in the Scriptures, and so must be given emphatic attention in our marriages (Eph 5:22). The Bible goes on to note that there are qualifications to every human authority (e.g., Acts 5:29). This means that in a sinful world, we will want to have a way to work through exceptions, but we should not *begin* with exceptions.⁶ A husband’s loving authority extends to all areas of the wife’s life and is meant to serve her, protect her, and be a catalyst for her growth in Christ-likeness. Any effort to work through challenging issues in headship and submission must begin with this clear principle.

Guideline #2: The distinction between “during the day,” and “the end of the day.”

My wife and I are committed to a complementarian vision for our home. I want to lovingly lead our home, and Lauren wants to submit to my authority. We believe that my loving leadership involves listening to the thoughts, ideas, and suggestions of my wife. I trust my wife. She is one of the brightest and most insightful people I have ever met in my life. One of the reasons I married her is because of the profound gift of wisdom she has received from the Lord. But sometimes we disagree. Because this is true, we need to talk about those things that we see differently. “During the day” is the phrase we use to refer to the decision making process. “During the day” we talk and listen to one another. We ask questions, express concerns, and push-back on what the other one is thinking. “During the day” is the time when a husband listens to his wife (Jas 1:19), seeks to lovingly serve her (1 Cor 13:5), and live understandably with her (1 Pet 3:7).⁷

“The end of the day” is the phrase we use to refer to the actual decision as it is made. At “the end of the day” I am the one responsible before God to make a decision that suits the best interests of our

family. I know that, and Lauren knows that. At “the end of the day” there have been times when Lauren and I have disagreed regardless of what happened “during the day.” At that point, with great sobriety, I exercise authority, and Lauren engages in the act of submission saying, “Honey, the Lord has made you responsible for our home. I think you have listened to me, and understood me. I would make a different choice, but I am happy to support your decision on this matter.”⁸

Guideline #3: A wife is also a sister in Christ to her husband.

In Christian marriage, the spousal relationship is not the only one that characterizes the involvement of a man and wife. For Christians, a wife is married to her brother in Christ. All the passages in Scripture about marriage are relevant to a Christian wife, but all the passages about walking with a brother in the Lord are also relevant to her.⁹ This means a wife will not be a good sister in Christ if she engages in behavior that tends to lead her husband into sin (Rom 14:23), or if she avoids rebuking her husband in his sin (Luke 17:3; Gal 6:1-2).¹⁰ One of God’s greatest gifts to me is a sister in Christ who sees me more closely than anyone else and, so, is equipped to point out sin in my life that nobody else sees. Marital submission does not mean that a wife ceases to be a fellow Christian along with her husband. Likewise, marital authority does not insulate a man from being helped in his sanctification by his wife. Because a wife is called to submit to her husband she will need to think about how to engage her husband in a respectful way, but she must not avoid it all together. If a husband sins against his wife “during the day” she should talk to him about it and rebuke him with respect.

Guideline #4: A husband is not the only authority to whom his wife is accountable.

The Bible teaches triadic authority. That is to say that the sovereign God mediates his authority through three institutions: the family, the church, and the state.¹¹ This means that, in addition to her husband, a wife should also submit to the authority of her church leadership (Heb 13:17), and the

civil authorities (Rom 13:1). Headship in marriage occurs in the context of authority in other areas of a woman's life as well. This guideline protects women in two ways. First, it protects them from a potential sinful abuse of a husband's authority by giving a woman other authorities to whom she may appeal. Second, it protects the woman from a sinful autonomy that seeks to spurn a husband's authority merely to do whatever she wants.¹² Whenever it becomes necessary for a woman to avoid submitting to her husband she should never do this for reasons motivated by selfish ambition (Jas 3:16). Instead, it should flow from a desire to be submissive to *some* authority (ultimately the authority of the Lord as he mediates his sovereignty through the church or the state).

What this means very practically is that if a husband is sinning against his wife and will not heed her rebuke, a wife has a responsibility to report her husband's sin to the pastors in her church (Matt 18:15–20). A wife also may report illegal conduct to the police. A husband should not expect his wife to submit to his demands to keep a sinful matter between the two of them. In such a situation, the Bible prescribes other authorities to whom a woman must submit as a Christian, and a citizen.

Guideline #5: Wise ministry engages both the husband and the wife in marriage.

Tracy's parameters only address the woman in the marital equation. This is a problem for two reasons. First, it is one-sided when marriage is, by definition, two-sided. Second, it runs the risk of short-circuiting what God wants to do in the woman's life as he sanctifies her. These two problems will tend to encourage a sinful autonomy as women seek to decide, automatically and on their own, when they will and will not submit to their husbands. This is not wise or realistic. In real life, couples need help sorting through issues when the previous guidelines have been observed but have not led to a solution. This means that wise pastoral counsel will engage both members of marriage and seek to discern how each can serve the other and grow in the grace of sanctification. A wise bibli-

cal counselor will not deal only with women and say, "You must submit," or "You must not submit." Neither will a wise minister deal only with the man and say, "You must assert your God-given authority as the head." No. Good ministry listens to and engages both parties, understanding that husbands and wives may each sin as they work out the details of authority and submission.

The biblical call for husbands to lead and wives to submit will require couples to navigate numerous potential difficulties that are part of life in this sinful world. As couples seek, by grace, to do this there is a logical progression to each of the guidelines presented here. A wife should be willing to submit to her husband (guideline #1), but a couple should expect to discuss issues and sort out difficulties as they live life together as husband and wife (guideline #2). As they do this, however, sin can and will happen. When sin happens wives should understand that the call to submit does not neutralize their call to engage their husband's sin (guideline #3). Often, couples will be able to resolve difficulties at this point without going any further. If they cannot, however, a wife does have the right and responsibility to report unrepentant sin to other authorities to whom she is accountable and receive help from them (guideline #4). Once involved, church authorities in particular should expect to deal with a complex rather than a simplistic situation. They should expect to see sin on both sides and be equipped to minister to each member of the marriage so that each grows in grace to look more like Christ (guideline #5).

How can Christians use these principles to help real couples like Ted and Elizabeth? With regard to guideline #1, it is clear that Elizabeth's involvement in the preschool ministry does fall within the radius of Ted's role as the leader of their home. Ted is Elizabeth's spiritual leader (Eph 5:26–27). Also her involvement in the ministry is having serious consequences for their relationship as a couple, for Elizabeth's work as a mom, and in their other ministries together. Ted would be a poor leader indeed if he did not help his wife think through an issue of such importance in her life and their life together.

Ted and Elizabeth wisely took time to discuss this issue together. One of the things that happened “during the day” as Ted and Elizabeth discussed, was that Elizabeth began to sense that Ted was not really listening to her. She was aware that he had made up his mind before they talked. She discussed this issue with him, but he never really engaged the matter before making the decision that she must quit. Ted and Elizabeth thus made a fleeting and failed attempt at guidelines #2 and #3.

That is when guideline #4 kicked in and Elizabeth sought help from her pastor. She was right to do this because as a believer she is under pastoral authority as well as husbandly authority. She also had grounds because she believed she needed help in engaging a sin issue with her husband.

Ministry to this couple began at guideline #5. As I spoke with Ted and Elizabeth it became clear that they were both right, and they were both wrong. Ted was correct that he had authority to make a decision regarding Elizabeth’s ministry commitments that were doing damage to her and her family and needed to be streamlined. He was incorrect in the *way* he executed his leadership. In fact, Ted had not listened to his wife. He did not shepherd her well. Repentance for Ted meant confessing that he had been quick to speak and slow to listen, and that he had been unloving in demanding his own way, thus violating the law of love.

On the other hand, Elizabeth was correct that her husband had treated her in an unloving way, but was wrong in that she used his sin as a legal loophole to squirm out of submission. She approached the decision about her ministry as an exercise in personal autonomy, rather than glad-hearted submission to authority. For her, repentance meant learning to put off an arrogant spirit and trust God who gives authority for our protection and sanctification. At the end of the day, Ted and Elizabeth each repented to God and each other for their sin, and agreed that Elizabeth should submit to Ted’s leadership on this matter. That is exactly what happened, and both still believe they made the right decision.

This is one example.¹³ I hope it is enough to show that in marriage we need more than facile

answers to complex problems. My goal is that the principles here will not only protect women from sinful treatment in their marriages, but also from a sinful rejection of authority. I hope the guidelines here form a framework that is complex, careful, and biblical enough to measure up to the many complicated difficulties of marriage in a sinful world.

ENDNOTES

¹The Bible teaches that Jesus Christ is the only true King and Lord of life to whom all lesser authorities must ultimately submit (Col 1:15-20; Acts 5:29; Exod 1:15-21) and complementarians have consistently noted this truth. In fact, from the earliest days, the Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood has condemned abuse as a “cruel use of power.” Complementarians have addressed this issue with crystalline clarity saying, “We believe that abuse is sin. It is destructive and evil. Abuse is the hallmark of the devil and is in direct opposition to the purposes of God. Abuse ought not to be tolerated in the Christian community.” See “CBMW Issues Abuse Statement,” *CBMW News* 1, no. 1 (August 1995): 3.

²Steven R. Tracy, “What Does ‘Submit in Everything’ Really Mean? The Nature and Scope of Marital Submission,” *Trinity Journal* 29 (2008): 285–312. Tracy’s concerns in this article are noble. He says, “The abuse of authority and the dilemma of submission are particularly acute since even the more extreme forms of male abuse of power are common” (287). He is afraid that, “Many of the ugly situations that thousands of Christian women continually deal with are completely ignored in the non-egalitarian literature, leaving Christian women to fend for themselves when seeking to discern what obedience to Scripture looks like in their real world” (287). Of particular importance to him is his concern that, “Virtually none of the non-egalitarian marriage literature relates marital submission to the specific behaviors that pornography has influenced men to request or demand from their wives or to the way pornography programs men to demean and objectify women” (289). I share Tracy’s concern to protect women but believe it is possible to be more faithful to the Bible’s teaching regarding how to do it.

³*Ibid.*, 307. Tracy elaborates on what it means for a husband to dictate his wife’s relationship with Christ when he says, “Modern Christian wives must recognize that their first allegiance is to Christ. Their husband is neither their priest nor their lord. While most non-egalitarians would agree that a husband’s leadership includes taking the initiative to help his family grow spiritually, we must also affirm that a wife is responsible to nurture her own spiritual life.”

⁴Heath Lambert, “A Lack of Balance: A Review of Steven R. Tracy, ‘What Does “Submit in Everything” Really Mean? The Nature and Scope of Marital Submission,’” *The Journal for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* 15, no. 1 (2010): 51–54.

⁵Setting up such guidelines to direct persons in particular situations is the same project that other complementarians have commended. See Wayne Grudem, “But What *Should* Women Do in Church?” *CBMW News* 1, no. 2 (November 1995): 4. There, he says, “We must simply recognize the fact that God in his wisdom has given us a Bible which specifies many principles for conduct, and does give some specific examples of application. But by its very nature the Bible cannot speak in specific detail to the thousands, and even millions of real life situations that people will encounter throughout the centuries.”

⁶In his article Tracy is critical of the work of Mary Kassian. He quotes her saying, “Practically, there may be situations in which submission to authority is limited. However, these situations are few and far between. Our focus should be on humility and obedience to authority in all circumstances. Submission may indeed have limits, but these limits are the exception rather than the rule. Obedience to God generally means obedience to those in authority over us” (Mary Kassian, *Women, Creation, and the Fall* [Winchester, IL: Crossway, 1990]), 38). He then comments on the prevalence of abuse against women and says in light of that fact that, “Kassian’s presupposition, that submission to authority need not be qualified since situations requiring such a need are exceedingly rare, is utterly divorced from reality” (Tracy, “What Does ‘Submit in Everything’ Really Mean?,” 287). In fairness to Kassian, however, Tracy’s interaction with her work is unfair. First of all, she did not say that submission “need not be qualified.” She admits that such a qualification is necessary within the very quote he references. Secondly, in the very same section as the one Tracy quotes Kassian is clear that persons should appeal to God as supreme authority when a human authority contradicts his own (See Kassian, *Women, Creation, and the Fall*, 37–38). She does the same thing again later in the book when she agrees with Tracy’s position that women should flee abusive situations (Ibid., 69). Tracy, therefore, mischaracterizes Kassian’s position who, I think, is making essentially the same point as the one here. There are situations where a husband’s authority is qualified. We should think those through carefully. We should not begin with those exceptions, however, because they prove the rule.

⁷See Tracy, “What Does ‘Submit in Everything’ Really Mean?,” 306, 308. Tracy is rightly concerned that a woman not submit in an area that she believes might be sinful. Though he is imprecise in how he deals with this (see, Lambert, “A Lack of Balance,” 53), the Bible does teach that it is a sin to violate one’s conscience (Rom 14:23). The guideline here embraces that biblical theme, and improves upon Tracy’s parameters by not throwing off submission up front. It also gives couples an opportunity to think through confusing and controversial matters. A husband should not demand that a wife violate her conscience, but should minister to her and sort through her concerns “during the day.”

⁸It should be noted that there will be times when the necessity of a quick decision precludes the kind of deliberation that is necessary in this guideline. Though this is true most decisions in marriage do afford the kind of time this takes. When husbands and wives practice leadership and submission during these routine times, it makes it possible to approach the unique times when a decision must be made quickly from a standpoint of trust.

⁹Martha Peace gets at this same idea when she encourages wives to “Submit to and participate in the process of mutual sanctification” with her husband. The role of wife does not exempt a wife from being used by God to make her husband more like Christ. See *The Excellent Wife* (Bemidji, MN: Focus, 1999), 36–44.

¹⁰Tracy, “What Does ‘Submit in Everything’ Really Mean?,” 309. Tracy is correct that a wife must not enable or facilitate the sin of her husband.

¹¹Christians have consistently taught that each of these three institutions are ordained by God and have endemic authority. Among many possible sources see David Clyde Jones, *Biblical Christian Ethics* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994), 166–69; J. L. Dagg, *Manual of Church Order* (Harrisonburg, VA: Gano, 1990), 83; 263–66; 273–74; John Jefferson Davis, *Evangelical Ethics: Issues Facing the Church Today* (Philippsburg, NJ: P&R, 1993), 191–94.

¹²Tracy, “What Does ‘Submit in Everything’ Really Mean?,” 306–12.

One of the problems with Tracy’s parameters is that it makes a woman an authority unto herself. Because we are aware both of God’s love for authority and the rebellious search for autonomy in our own hearts, all Christians should be concerned about this. Whereas Tracy’s parameters encourage the flight from authority, the guideline here encourages the embrace of other authorities to balance abuses of power.

¹³The example here is relatively tame as marriage problems go. The guidelines here can also be used in the more extreme problems like abuse in marriage or complex sexual matters. For example, a wife who believes she is being asked to submit to sexual practices that she is uncomfortable with should appeal to her husband to discuss the matter “during the day.” If he refuses or will not answer her objections, she should seek help from outside authority.

Discussion of 1 Timothy 2:12 with Philip B. Payne and Andreas J. Köstenberger

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Editor's Note: In 2005, the second edition of *Women in the Church: An Analysis and Application of 1 Timothy 2:9–15* (Baker Academic) was published, and it contained Andreas Köstenberger's watershed essay on the syntax of 1 Timothy 2:12.¹ In short, Köstenberger argues that οὐδέ in 1 Timothy 2:12 joins two related but distinct ideas. In 2008, Philip Payne published an article in *New Testament Studies* contesting Köstenberger's earlier thesis. Köstenberger issued two rejoinders in this journal—a brief one in 2008 and a longer one in 2009.² What follows below is one last interaction between Payne and Köstenberger on the syntax of 1 Timothy 2:12. Payne's surrejoinder is first, and Köstenberger's is second. Payne interacts primarily with Köstenberger's 2009 rejoinder.

Surrejoinder by Philip B. Payne

Professor Köstenberger's rejoinder sixteen times misrepresents my *New Testament Studies* "οὐδέ" article, henceforth cited as "NTS."

(1) Köstenberger claims, "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." Yet my NTS article never states that 1 Tim 2:12 refers

only to "improper" authority. All early examples of αὐθεντεῖν with a clearly identifiable meaning related to authority refer to assumption of undeligated authority. However, αὐθεντεῖν does not necessarily entail "improper" assumption of authority, as BGU 1208 shows (see my *Man and Woman, One in Christ*, 365–70). Not even Baldwin (*Women in the Church*, 51) includes the meaning Köstenberger alleges, "exercise authority," in "the range of meanings that might be appropriate in 1 Timothy 2:12."

(2) Köstenberger also says, "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 [*sic*] under the head word διδάσκειν, with the resultant meaning 'to teach men by assuming independent authority.'" Yet my article never claims that a pseudepigrapher may have written this letter or these verses (see point 8).

(3) Whereas Köstenberger writes, "Payne claims ... subordinating ...," I argue to the contrary on page 240 of my article, "The fundamental function of οὐδέ, in these cases is not to subordinate one expression to another, but simply to merge them together to convey a single more specific idea."

(4) Never does my NTS article state or imply

that αὐθεντεῖν is “subsumed” under διδάσκειν, (5) that διδάσκειν is the “head word” or anything related to this, or (6) that οὐδε, implies “by assuming.”

(7) In footnote 1 of Köstenberger’s rejoinder, he states, “Payne originally argued that the two infinitives form a *hendiadys* (P. B. Payne, ‘Οὐδε in 1 Timothy 2.12’ [unpublished paper presented at the 1988 annual meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society]).” This is not true. My ETS paper, which was presented in 1986, not 1988, never used the word “hendiadys.”

(8) In footnote 2 of Köstenberger’s rejoinder, he states, “However, it is hard to see how it is meaningful to speak of ‘Paul’s use of οὐδέ’ ... if the Pastorals were written by someone other than Paul (especially a pseudepigrapher), as Payne suggests as a possibility.” In fact, both my article and my book argue that Paul authored the Pastorals.³ It should be obvious “how it is meaningful to speak of Paul’s use of οὐδέ” since *NTS* pp. 241–42 identifies sharp contrasts between Luke’s and Paul’s patterns of usage.

(9) In paragraph 2 of Köstenberger’s rejoinder, he states, “Strikingly, in none of the examples he cites on the following pages does οὐδε, link infinitives!” This is false. *NTS* 236, 239, 241, and 244–53 cite οὐδέ linking infinitives.

(10) (11) (12) Paragraph 3 of Köstenberger’s rejoinder gives the false impression that my *NTS* article construes one word “being modified by a negative one, αὐθεντεῖν [*sic*] ... with the second word subordinated to the first by way of hendiadys.” *NTS* never construes one word “modified” or “subordinated” “by way of hendiadys.”

(13) Paragraph 5 of Köstenberger’s rejoinder asserts, “two corresponding aspects of the ‘one single idea’ Payne is affirming” in 2 Cor 7:12. To the contrary, *NTS* 240 specifically identifies 2 Cor 7:12 as expressing “naturally paired but clearly-distinguishable ideas focusing on the same verb,” namely category four. *NTS* specifically identifies only the first three categories as expressing a single idea but the fourth category as expressing “ideas” plural on page 237, in each category’s description on pages 237–41, and in their separate grouping in the table on page 242, “to express one idea” as distinct from

“to express two ideas.” This and Köstenberger’s different use of “one idea” elsewhere indicate that he has not comprehended the central message of my article.

(14) Köstenberger criticizes *NTS* for “failing to note the ‘faithful husband’ requirement in the following verse.” In fact, *NTS* 240 note 38 states,

“One woman man” clearly excludes polygamists and probably adulterers. It must be an exclusion only, not a requirement that all overseers be married, since that would exclude unmarried men like Paul (1 Cor 7.8). It is unwarranted to extract the single word ‘man’ from what is clearly an exclusion and turn it into a positive requirement that all overseers must be male. Similarly, “having children in subjection” must be an exclusion only, not a requirement that overseers have at least two children.

1 Tim 3:1–13 and Titus 1:5–9 contain no masculine pronouns in Greek.

(15) Footnote 10 of Köstenberger’s rejoinder states, “Payne does not support this assertion,” “that the present tense form of ‘I do not permit’ in 1 Tim 2:12 fits a current prohibition better than a permanent one.” *NTS* 247–49 does, indeed, support this.

(16) Finally, Köstenberger’s rejoinder states, “Payne suggests [that] wine ‘getting the best’ of someone is viewed positively by the writer.” To the contrary, *NTS* 252 identifies, “the harm wine causes when it gets the best of someone.”

Surrejoinder by Andreas J. Köstenberger

(1) Payne says that “[n]ever does my article say that 1 Tim 2:12 is referring only to ‘improper’ authority.” To go no further, in his conclusion on p. 253, Payne says that the *oude* construction “makes best sense as a single prohibition of women *teaching with self-assumed authority* over a man.” As he makes clear throughout his article, teaching “with self-assumed authority” is conceived in negative terms. Therefore, it appears, Payne is saying that 1 Tim 2:12 is forbidding women to teach with self-assumed [i.e., improper] authority. Similarly, on p. 3 of his unpublished 1986 paper, Payne states

that *oude* “in 1 Tim 2:12 may specify the particular sort of teaching Paul had in mind, namely teaching ‘which domineers a man’” (reiterated in his conclusion on p. 4 where Payne says, “It prohibits that kind of teaching which domineers”; another conclusion on p. 5 says, “teach a man in a domineering [bossy, or possibly authoritative] way”).

(2) Payne says he never claimed that a pseudopigrapher may have written 1 Timothy or 1 Tim 2:12 as I implied. On pp. 243–44, Payne, in a paragraph speaking of “the disputed Pauline epistles,” contrasts these with “Paul’s accepted letters,” and goes on to speak of something being “either attributed in the first person to Paul” (citing 1 Tim 2:12: “I am not permitting” as an example), saying “[T]his fits the amanuensis hypothesis.” Immediately following, he says, “Alternatively, if a pseudopigrapher wrote 1 Timothy, that person apparently borrowed vocabulary extensively from Paul’s letters.” He concludes, “In order to account for so much distinctively Pauline word usage, either hypothesis should appreciate the value of considering Paul’s use of *oude* in evaluating its use in 1 Tim 2:12.” While it may be technically accurate for Payne to say he never claimed that a pseudopigrapher may have written 1 Timothy or 1 Tim 2:12, I am content to let the reader decide what to make of Payne’s statements here. At best, his discussion is confusing, and, to me at least, it seems that Payne certainly does entertain the possibility that someone other than Paul—whether an amanuensis or a pseudopigrapher—was involved.

(3) Payne says he never stated that *oude* functions in a subordinating matter in 1 Tim 2:12 but, to the contrary, that he explicitly stated on p. 240 that “[t]he fundamental function of *oude* in these cases [Rom 3:10; 9:16; 1 Cor 2:6; 5:1; 11:16; Gal 1:16–17] is not to subordinate one expression to another, but simply to merge them together to convey a single more specific idea.” Note, however, that the statement Payne quotes is his category #3, which does not include 1 Tim 2:12. Arguably, the upshot of the “single idea” proposed by Payne is to move away from the notion of two ideas being joined together by a coordinating conjunction (*oude*) and to merge these two concepts somehow

to the effect that one expression (in the case of 1 Tim 2:12, teaching) becomes the head term and the second expression (“with self-assumed authority”) becomes the qualifying [i.e., subordinate] term. This is clear in Payne’s concluding gloss on p. 253, where, in the English, the prepositional phrase “with self-assumed authority” modifies the word “teaching.” Similarly, in his unpublished 1986 paper, Payne repeatedly speaks of the phrase “which domineers a man” as “modifying” “to teach” (e.g., twice on p. 8).

(4) Payne says he never stated or implied that *authentein* is “subsumed” under *didaskein*. See my comments under the previous point.

(5) Payne says he never stated or implied that *didaskein* is the “head word” or anything related to this. See my comments under point 3 above.

(6) Payne says never in the article did he use the expression “by assuming” or suggest such a relationship between “to teach” and “to assume authority.” But Payne did, in his conclusion on p. 253 of his article, refer to “women teaching *with self-assumed authority* over a man,” on which see my comments under point 3 above.

(7) Payne says his ETS paper never used the word “hendiadys.” Fair enough. Yet even in his *NTS* article, on p. 235, n. 2, he calls “hendiadys” a “useful term” which he avoids only “because of disputes over its definition.” Note also that one of six key words in his article is “hendiadys”! What is more, whether he uses the term or not, Blass, Debrunner, and Funk, one of the standard Greek grammars, defines hendiadys as “[t]he co-ordination of two ideas, one of which is dependent on the other” (§442 [16]). In substance if not in terminology, this certainly seems very close to what Payne is actually proposing, so it is a bit puzzling why he would go to such lengths to distance himself from this idea. For further discussion, see p. 82 in the first edition of *Women in the Church* and p. 55 in the second edition, where I note that Douglas J. Moo, *contra* Payne, contended that, while *oude* “certainly usually joins ‘two *closely related* items,’ it does not usually join together words that restate the same thing or that are mutually interpreting” and later concluded that, while teaching and having authority

are closely related, “they are nonetheless distinct” (also citing 1 Tim 3:2, 4–5; and 5:17). So, an interpreter as able as Douglas Moo has firmly resisted and rejected Payne’s proposal two decades ago, several years before I came to the same conclusion.

(8) Here Payne returns to the issue of 1 Timothy possibly having been by an amanuensis or pseudepigrapher, on which see my response in point 2 above. Payne’s comments on p. 244, n. 24, again, seem to favor the amanuensis thesis when he writes, “The amanuensis thesis helps explain both the significant differences and the extensive similarities in expression between Paul’s accepted letters and the Pastoral Epistles.” He then refers to the work of I. H. Marshall, who, for his part, believes in the “allonymity” of the Pastoral Epistles, that is, authorship of someone other than Paul without deceptive intent.

(9) On p. 236 of his article, Payne says that seventeen of the twenty-one instances of *oude* as coordinating conjunction in “the accepted letters of Paul” make best sense conveying a single idea. In the following discussion of these instances on pp. 236–41, he takes up the following passages (Payne’s order): Rom 2:28; 9:6–7; 1 Cor 15:50; Gal 1:1, 12; 4:14; Phil 2:16; Rom 11:21; Gal 3:28; 1 Thess 5:5; Rom 3:10; 9:16; 1 Cor 2:6; 5:1; 11:16; Gal 1:16–17; Rom 8:7; 1 Cor 3:2; 4:3; 2 Cor 7:12. I personally went back and rechecked each of these twenty-one “examples” in my own Greek NT, and, again, failed to find even a single instance among these twenty-one passages where *oude* joins two infinitives, much less one “where *oude* joins an infinitive with *positive* connotations to an infinitive with *negative* connotations” as Payne promises on p. 236. It is true that, on p. 236, in n. 5, Payne lists several *non-Pauline* examples of *oude* joining two infinitives (though not joining an infinitive with a positive to an infinitive with a negative connotation), all of which are apparently taken from my essay in *Women in the Church*. But it is actually Payne who is misleading here, because when he writes that he will “identif[y] many instances where *oude* joins an infinitive with positive connotations to an infinitive with negative connotations” and then proceeds to discuss twenty-one examples, the reader is led to

believe that at least some of these examples actually feature passages where *oude* joins infinitives (not to mention examples where *oude* joins an infinitive with a positive connotation to an infinitive with a negative connotation). As it is, none of Payne’s examples features infinitives joined by *oude*, much less instances where *oude* joins an infinitive with a positive connotation to an infinitive with a negative connotation.

(10), (11), (12) See my comments under number 3 above.

(13) Payne claims I have misunderstood what he means by “single idea.” It would require taking up the entire matter once again at considerable length to reargue this point adequately here. As mentioned in point 7 above, Douglas Moo has strongly argued against Payne’s “single idea” proposal two decades ago, and I have done so in the first edition of *Women in the Church* in 1995. In short, there is no question that two expressions joined by the coordinating conjunction *oude* have something in common; after all, they are joined together by this coordinating conjunction! My main concern is simply that the two elements joined by *oude* do not necessarily lose their distinctness. For example, it is still possible to conceive of women exercising authority in ways other than teaching (cf., e.g., 1 Tim 5:17). For this reason I hold that it is inappropriate to construe the syntax of 1 Tim 2:12 in such a way that the two elements (teaching and having authority) are collapsed to the extent that they lose their distinctness and merge into a “single idea.”

(14) Payne says I criticized him improperly for failing to note the “faithful husband” requirement in 1 Tim 3:2, referring to p. 248, n. 38 of his article. In context, my point was that *in his argument that tis in 1 Tim 3:1 “encompasses” both “men and women” Payne fails to note that, whatever “faithful husband” in the following verse means, it does not mean “wife.”*

(15) Payne says I said he does not support his assertion on p. 243, n. 23 that the present tense form of “I do not permit” in 1 Tim 2:12 fits a current prohibition better than a permanent one,” claiming that he did provide support on pp. 247–49. My point was that Payne did not provide any support for his assertion *in the footnote where he*

made this assertion. Even if, for argument's sake, he did supply some support later in his article, it seems reasonable to expect him to support this kind of assertion *when he makes it*, rather than five or more pages after doing so. At least that was my point in context.

I conclude with the following observation. My rejoinder to Philip Payne focused primarily on nine alleged problem passages in my work on 1 Tim 2:12 (out of the approximately 100 I set forth). I showed that none of these nine alleged problem passages are in fact problematic for my proposal. To the contrary, it is Payne's construal of these cases that is flawed. For example, when he says that in 2 Thess 3:7–8 ("we were not idle when we were with you, *and* we did not eat anyone's bread without paying for it"), "idleness" is negative but "eating free food" is not, so that Paul here "merg[es] two concepts, one negative and one positive," this is plainly contradicted by the negative connotation of "not be a burden" in verse 8. Clearly, Paul was not merely talking about "eating free food" here, but about taking advantage of others when those lazy people should have been working with their own hands. It should not escape the alert reader's notice, therefore, that in his surrejoinder, Payne has not taken up even a single one of these alleged nine problem passages and my refutation of his analysis. This, I suggest, is the main point to keep in mind here.

ENDNOTES

¹Andreas 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* (2nd ed.; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005), 53–84.

²Andreas J. Köstenberger, "Odds & Ends," *The Journal for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* 13, no. 2 (2008): 5; Andreas J. Köstenberger, "The Syntax of 1 Timothy 2:12: A Rejoinder to Philip B. Payne," *The Journal for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* 14, no. 2 (2009): 37–40. Both of these articles are available for free download from www.cbmw.org/journal.

³Philip 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): 244, n. 24; Philip B. Payne, *Man and Woman, One in Christ: An Exegetical and Theological Study of Paul's Letters* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009), 291–95.

A Word to Wives: 1 Peter 3:1–6¹

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Introduction

As I studied this passage, I tried to imagine what these words would sound like to a woman. I think it would be very easy for a woman to hear these words as belittling and restrictive. You might even think that Peter is going out of his way to try and offend women. He says, “Wives you need to be submissive. You need to cut your clothing budget. And by the way, you’re the weaker vessel.”

What I hope you’ll see as we study this passage together is that the tone and intention of this passage is one of honor. There is no condescension here. In fact it elevates the value and dignity of women. But because I don’t want anyone distracted or struggling, I want to be very clear at the outset what this passage is *not* saying.

- It’s not condoning abuse or telling a wife to act like a doormat in her relationship to her husband.
- It’s not forbidding the use of makeup, jewelry or clothing in an attempt to be attractive.
- It’s not teaching that men are superior or more valuable than women.

So what *is* it teaching? Well, it’s teaching something radical. And, honestly, it is teaching something about the role of women in marriage that is offensive to many people today.

But if you’re going to be offended, I want to make sure you’re offended by what is actually being said. So let’s consider that to understand this text rightly we need to back up a little and remind our-

selves of the context of Peter’s words. We need to understand why Peter is exhorting Christians to specific behavior. What we need to realize is that Peter isn’t “putting women in their place”; he is helping believers to put God in his rightful place and glorify him by their conduct.

Authority and Submission in Context

Text: 1 Peter 2:11–13

Peter wants people who are speaking of Christians as evil to see the good deeds and honorable conduct of Christians and to glorify God on the final day. He wants the unbelieving world to see the reality of living hope in the way that Christians live. So in verse 13 he gives a very specific way that we as God’s holy people are to be honorable in our conduct: *we are to be subject for the Lord’s sake to every human institution*. The phrase “be subject” is the same word used to tell wives to be submissive. It means to obey. And the sentence can be translated “be subject to every institution *ordained for people*.”

In other words, God has ordained institutions of authority. And because you are submitted to the LORD, be submitted to every institution of authority that God has put in place. And then Peter lists three examples: government leaders, masters or employers, and husbands in marriage.

What this tells us is that authority is God’s idea. It’s God’s idea for there to be governments that set and enforce laws. It’s God’s idea for leadership in the workforce. And it’s God’s idea to give the role of leadership to the husband in marriage.

This reminds us that we are *all* under authority. So wives, remember that you're not being singled-out. In various contexts, we are all called by God to be submissive to authority that God has established.

So men and women are called to be subject to their civic leaders. In the workplace, men and women are called to be subject to their employers. And though it's not addressed here, male and female children are called to be subject to both their parents. Ultimately as Christians, we are all called to be subject to Jesus Christ. We submit to his Lordship.

Authority is not a bad thing in itself, though it can be misused and abused. And we must never obey someone who tells us to disobey God's laws. Nevertheless, authority is something that God has given us for our good. Without it there would be untold chaos and misery.

So, wives, when you hear the instruction to be submissive to your husband, don't think of submission as weakness or inferiority. We are all called to submit based on our roles. Two people can be equal in value and dignity and yet have different roles. Consider the fact that Jesus, who is equal in power and glory with God the Father, submitted himself to his Father's will.

Verse 13 doesn't say, "Be subject, because you are inferior." It says, "Be subject *for the LORD's sake*." We submit to God-established authority because we are submitted to God's ultimate authority. But now let's be very honest. Submission isn't easy. And the reason is because we're all proud and authority is always flawed. And Peter is very honest about this. He doesn't paint a rosy, unrealistic picture of human institutions of authority. He is speaking to people who are suffering.

Verse 12 tells us that non-believers were slandering Christians. We know that early stages of persecution were breaking out against Christians in the Roman empire. Verse 18 acknowledges that some masters are unjust. Then in 3:1 Peter recognizes that some wives were married to husbands who don't obey the Word of God. The theme in all these examples is suffering unjustly or not being treated fairly. It's about not getting what you want.

So how do you respond when you're in that

situation? The normal, human, sinful response is to fight back—to fight fire with fire. If they're not playing fair, then you don't play fair. If they're misusing their authority, then you won't listen. You'll undermine them. If they use power to mistreat you, then you use power to hurt them.

Peter knew all about the "fight back" impulse in response to unjust treatment. In the Gospels Peter is the hothead. Do you remember how he responded when Jesus predicted the cross? He rebuked Jesus. He said, "We'll never let you suffer that way. We won't allow it. We'll battle against your enemies." And then on the night when Jesus was arrested, what was Peter's immediate impulse? The mob that arrested Jesus came with swords and clubs, so Peter pulled out his own sword. He slashed off the ear of one of the High Priest's servants. But Jesus told him to put away his sword, and he healed the ear of the man.

It wasn't until after Jesus died and, through suffering in our place, conquered death that Peter began to understand that when you hope in God you don't fight back with the world's methods and weapons. And that's what he's teaching these Christians who are facing various trials and difficulties because of their identification with Jesus. He knows that there is a "fight back" impulse to each of these categories of authority:

- To slander back against neighbors
- To lead a rebellion against Rome and disobey the state
- For a servant to meet physical violence from his master with physical violence
- For a wife to disrespect, manipulate and dishonor her husband when he fails to lead her biblically.

And so what does Peter do to halt our "fight back" response? He adjusts our thinking by pointing to the example of Jesus Christ.

Text: 2:20b

Our flesh says, "If you're doing good and you start to suffer, stop doing good and hit the other guy over the head." But it is a gracious thing in the sight of God when you suffer for doing good

and endure. That's an amazing statement. God sees that. And he values it because it's a powerful statement of your trust in him. He loves it because it's like his Son.

Okay, at this point some of you are thinking, "We're supposed to be talking about wives and husbands and marriage. Why are we talking about suffering? This stuff isn't about marriage." This is absolutely about marriage. These are some of the most crucial principles you can understand for your marriage.

Being married to an imperfect, sinful human being involves suffering. Being a godly spouse is all about doing the right thing even if your spouse is doing the wrong thing. God is calling you to follow the example of Jesus in your marriage and choose to be gentle and patient and respectful and loving even if the other person isn't. Even if you're being treated unfairly. Do you see this?

Think about the realities of marriage to a fellow-sinner. Think about the last conflict you had. Think about the last time you were right and your spouse was judging you or being unkind. How did you respond? Did you hit back with harsh words? Did you pull out your sword? Think about your impulse and then consider the example of Christ...

Text: 2:21–23

Jesus was without sin. It was unjust for him to be abused. And yet he didn't fight back. When he was reviled, he did not revile in return. When he suffered, he did not threaten. Why? Here's the key statement: Because he entrusted himself to God who judges justly.

How do you endure when you're being treated unfairly? How do you maintain respect when your husband isn't leading you biblically? How do keep a quiet and gentle spirit when your husband is being inconsiderate? Husbands, how do you honor your wife when she's failing to submit to your leadership?

Here's the answer: entrust yourself to God. Remember that he is the judge. Remember that every injustice will be addressed by him. Don't fight back. Don't revile in return. Don't threaten.

Wives, when your husband isn't being con-

siderate, don't withhold your support of his God-given role as head of the family. Husbands, when she's not being submissive, that's not an excuse to dishonor her or use force to get your way. Entrust yourself to God. Suffer while doing good. Endure. That is a gracious thing in the sight of God.

In 3:1 Peter recognizes the fact that some husbands are unbelievers. They don't obey the word. For women here whose husbands are unsaved, take heart. Your church family loves you. We respect you. God sees the burden you carry. And your example of quiet submission to your husband is a powerful witness to your husband.

It might seem insignificant to you, but it's not. When you choose to support your husband's leadership you testify to the reality of a greater authority in your life. God will reward your faithfulness. He will sustain you. And we pray with you that God will save your husband.

Exposition of 1 Peter 3:1–6

Text: 3:1–4

In verse 3 Peter begins to talk about how women braid their hair and dress. And at first this seems completely out of the blue. But actually this isn't a detour or rabbit trail. There is something so profound about what Peter does here. Think about it: Peter is addressing one of the most common means by which a woman seeks to gain power over men: appearance and allurements.

It was true in first century Rome; it's true today. One of the primary ways that a woman gets what she wants is to highlight or flaunt her beauty and her outward appearance. This is why the hair, makeup, jewelry and clothing (not to mention diet and plastic surgery) industries are multi-multi billion dollar industries. Female sexuality, female beauty is often used like a weapon.

This text indicates that a natural tendency in the female human heart is a failure to entrust yourself to God and instead to put your hope in how you look. To get what you want—love, care, attention, power—by the way your body looks, by the way you dress, by your style.

And Peter is saying to women, "Don't play by the world's rules." Don't find your greatest joy in

feeling sexy. Find your joy in the approval of your God. Don't make your focus outward adornment, make it inward adornment.

The point is not that it's wrong to do your hair or wear jewelry. If that's what this verse is saying we'd have to also say it's wrong to wear any clothing at all. Obviously that isn't the point. Many women today need to adorn themselves with *more* clothing.

The point is that outward adornment shouldn't be your primary preoccupation. You should give more attention to cultivating a heart that loves God, more attention to a quiet and gentle spirit—that means an attitude that isn't demanding. God sees your heart; he looks past your outward appearance and what he cares about is your inner person. So make that beautiful.

Clothing and style will get you attention. A short skirt catches the eye of the world—but a quiet heart catches the eye of God. Peter closes his exhortation to wives by pointing to Sarah in the Old Testament as a godly example.

Text: 3:5–7

Holy women are women who hope in God. It is hope in God that enables you to obey an imperfect husband. It is hope in God that enables you not to fear anything that is frightening. That last phrase strikes me as funny. How do you not fear something that is frightening? The answer is that you entrust yourself to God. It is a frightening thing to follow an imperfect husband. But if God is your hope, then you won't be afraid. It's a frightening thing to give up the quest for outward beauty and spend more time on your character than your next outfit. But you don't need to be afraid if you're hoping in God.

Ladies, let me encourage you to study the lives of godly women of old—not only in the Bible but in the history of the church. Read biographies. Be inspired by women like Sarah who submitted to an imperfect husband and experienced God's blessing.

Conclusion

We have many godly women in this church who adorn themselves with inward beauty, and it is evident. Wives, thank you for embracing God's

purpose for marriage. Thank you for submitting to imperfect husbands like us. God is being glorified through your lives.

ENDNOTES

¹This sermon was delivered at Covenant Life Church in Gaithersburg, Maryland, on July 4, 2010. Pastor Harris's sermon on 1 Peter 3:7, "A Word to Husbands (And a Few More for Wives)," delivered the following week, will appear in the Spring 2011 issue of *JBMW*.

Irenic and Unpersuasive

A Review of Millard J. Erickson, *Who's Tampering with the Trinity?*
An Assessment of the Subordination Debate (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2009).

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In this work, renowned theologian Millard Erickson weighs in on the important yet heated debate taking place within evangelical theology on whether there are eternal authority role relations among the persons of the Godhead. The genesis of the book arose out of discussions at the Evangelical Theological Society where Erickson presented a paper on the Trinity to the Gender Studies study group in November 2006. There discussions between “complementarians” and “egalitarians” were taking place, and it was suggested to Erickson that one of the main differences between the two groups was rooted in one’s understanding on whether the Son (and the Holy Spirit) are eternally or temporarily subordinated to the Father. If one resolved that theological issue, then one would understand better the differences between the two groups on gender issues. In light of that discussion, Erickson researched and delivered another paper the following year on that subject from which this book was born.

Similar to many of Erickson’s other works, this book attempts to evaluate the debate by laying out the strengths and weaknesses of each position before weighing in on the issue. However, as one reads each chapter it becomes obvious where his sympathies lie. But overall, he does a fine job presenting the arguments of each view, and the book is helpful in introducing readers to the current

debate. I will approach this review in two steps. First, I will briefly summarize the work in terms of its basic argument and presentation. Second, following Erickson’s example, I will evaluate it by laying out five critical reflections which include both strengths and weaknesses of the book. Obviously on such a vast, complicated, and important subject much could and should be said, but hopefully my interaction with Erickson will serve as an exercise of “iron sharpening iron” with the goal of producing a bit more light than heat.

Basic Presentation and Argument of the Book

In terms of the organization of the book, after an opening introduction that sets the stage to the discussion—e.g., setting the current debate within church history and then describing each position—eight chapters follow that discuss each view in detail (chapters 1–2), lay out criteria for evaluating the positions (chapter 3), and then turn to the specific biblical (chapter 4) and historical (chapter 5) arguments for each view before discussing various philosophical (chapter 6), theological (chapter 7), and practical issues (chapter 8) of the debate. Erickson’s goal in these chapters is admirable: to let each position speak for itself, which, in my view, he does fairly well though not without slips at points, as I will note below. The book concludes with Erickson’s overall assessment of who is right in the

debate, even though, as I noted, the reader already knows where he stands long before his concluding section.

In the introduction before the two sides of the debate are discussed in detail, Erickson wrestles with what to label each position (17–21). He finds the traditional labels, “complementarian” and “egalitarian,” unhelpful and instead opts for “gradational authority” vs. “equivalent authority.” The former view, normally associated with a complementarian position on gender issues, is the view that, within the immanent or ontological Trinity (i.e., God in his eternal nature apart from creation), each person of the Godhead equally shares the divine nature and is thus God, but in terms of the relations between the persons there is an eternal hierarchy of authority between them, hence the term “gradational.” In this view, “the Father is the supreme member of the Trinity, possessing the highest authority, and the Son and the Spirit are subordinate to him and submit to his authority” (17). In terms of the economic Trinity (i.e., the relations between the persons of the Godhead due to God’s actions) the eternal relations between the persons remain the same but are now worked out in redemptive history in light of the incarnation and work of the Son (and Spirit). The latter view, normally associated with an egalitarian position on gender issues,¹ is the view that within the immanent Trinity there is no gradational authority between the persons, rather “the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are eternally equal in authority” (18), and it is only in the economic Trinity that we have a “temporary functional subordination of the Son and the Holy Spirit to the Father” (18) for the purpose of our salvation. However, once that salvation work is done “the three persons’ full equality of authority will resume,” (18) hence the label “equivalence view.”

Erickson rightly comments on how each view appeals to their understanding of Trinitarian role relations to ground their specific view of gender relations. Gradationists appeal to Trinitarian relations to buttress their conviction of the full equality between the sexes but an authoritative role difference between them patterned after the order within the Godhead. Equivalence views appeal to Trini-

tarian relations to justify their position that males and females are equal in dignity, value, and authority and thus deny the notion of male headship as applied to marriage, the family, and the church. For the most part, Erickson does not discuss the gender debate; instead he wrestles with the Trinitarian issues, but he does acknowledge that the two issues are related, especially in the current discussion.

With definitions aside, Erickson outlines each position in chapters 1–2. He begins with the “gradational-authority view” and after a short discussion of Charles Hodge, Augustus Strong, and Louis Berkhof, he focuses most of his attention on the period from 1970 to the present. Erickson succinctly lays out the positions of George Knight, Bruce Ware, Wayne Grudem, and Robert Letham—noting that each person’s view is not presented in exactly the same way—yet all agree that there is an eternal ordering between the persons of the Godhead. Erickson then provides an overall summary of the position in ten points (52–54), which for the most part is accurate. Chapter 2 turns to the “equivalent-authority view.” In a similar fashion, Erickson discusses theologians prior to 1970 such as B. B. Warfield, Loraine Boettner, and J. Oliver Buswell Jr., but most of his attention is on the period from 1970 to the present. He discusses the views of Paul Jewett, Gilbert Bilezikian, Stanley Grenz, and Kevin Giles—all individuals who have written extensively on the issue. He then finishes with a nine point summary of the view (80–81) which at its heart affirms that within the immanent Trinity there is no permanent ordering (*taxis*), either in terms of position or rank, but full equality of relations so that all biblical language regarding the Son’s being sent and obedience to the Father or the Spirit’s procession from the Father and Son must be understood in solely economic and temporary terms.

Chapter 3 then turns to a discussion of the criteria Erickson will use to evaluate the positions. He covers familiar territory such as the internal (consistency, coherence), external (applicability, adequacy), and practical criteria of evaluating views. The discussion is helpful especially in reminding us that evaluating views is not always an easy task

and that each side must take care to avoid fallacious arguments, but a more detailed discussion of how to appeal to Scripture and draw theological conclusions would have been a better use of the chapter. After all, in the end, that is where the argument must go and be decided, even though a discussion of some of these other areas is important.

In chapter 4 Erickson lays out the biblical support for each position. Erickson begins with the “gradationist view” and gives five arguments: (1) texts which demonstrate that the Son’s submission to the Father is rooted in eternity and that the Father is always described as the one who plans and initiates (e.g., John 3:16; Rom 8:29; Eph 1:3–11); (2) the use of the names “Father” and “Son” are tied to eternal relations and indicate a difference in authority; (3) a specific order given of the persons of the Godhead, viz., Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (e.g., Matt 28:19); (4) the Father presented as the source of all gifts thus having priority of relation (e.g., Rom 8:32; James 1:17); (5) the future submission of the Son which reflects eternal and not temporary relations (e.g., 1 Cor 15:24–28). Erickson then outlines three biblical arguments for the “equivalence view:” (1) various texts that counter the gradationists and that demonstrate, for example, that the title “Son” does not indicate a subordinate role to the Father, or texts which do not speak of a specific ordering of the persons of the Godhead (e.g., 2 Cor 13:14; 1 Pet 1:2; Jude 20–21), or texts which use other names for the persons of the Godhead and thus show that “Father,” “Son,” and “Holy Spirit” are not the exclusive biblical designations for the persons of the Trinity (e.g., Isa 9:6); (2) texts which either show a less subordinate role of the Son so that we are told that the Son is the judge of the world with no mention of the Father (Matt 25:31–46), or texts which show the Holy Spirit exercising authority over the Son during his earthly ministry demonstrating that the roles between the persons are temporary and tied to economic realities (e.g., Matt 4:1; Mark 1:12; Luke 4:1); (3) texts which suggest that the Father’s authority over the Son is temporary and not eternal (e.g., Phil 2:6–11; Heb 5:8).

Interestingly, instead of leaving the biblical

discussion at this point, Erickson goes one step further in order to resolve the debate. He presents the biblical data surveyed thus far as leading to a stalemate. On the one hand, we have texts that seem to argue “that the authority relationship of the Father over the Son was not restricted to the time of the Son’s redemptive earthly ministry but is eternal in nature” (121). On the other hand, we have texts that appear to suggest that “the command-obedience, or superiority-subordination relationship began with the coming of the second person of the Trinity in the Incarnation” (121). Is there a way of resolving this dilemma? Erickson suggests that if he can show that the Father, Son, and Spirit are jointly involved in actions then this overturns the gradationist view which must argue that the Father solely initiates and decides in all matters (see 121–23). As I will comment below, Erickson’s supposed solution to the dilemma is strange since it not only distorts the “gradationist view” but also skews the discussion in favor of his equivalence view.

In chapter 5, Erickson somewhat departs from his typical style. As he looks at the debate in light of historical theology it becomes clear that he is responding to the gradationist side more than allowing each side to speak for itself. As Erickson surveys the views of Origen, Novatian, Athanasius, Hilary of Poitiers, Augustine, Aquinas, Luther, and Calvin, he works hard to demonstrate that, especially in Western theology, the church has placed great emphasis “on the unity of the three persons, in the sense that every act of any of them is the mutual act of all three persons of the Trinity” (166), which, as noted above, he believes undercuts the gradationist view and favors the equivalence view. Ultimately he concludes that the church has *not* consistently taught the eternal functional subordination of the Son (and the Spirit) to the Father. He then asserts that the only way gradationists can make their case from church history is by assuming the following (167): (1) the Father-Son relationship is a literal (univocal) parallel to human father-son relationships; (2) the Father-Son relationship during the Incarnation is a reflection of an eternal relationship; (3) ordering within the Godhead must be taken as a gradation of status or superiority

among the persons. As I will note below, Erickson's appeal to historical theology is reductionistic and his understanding of gradationism vis-à-vis these three assumptions is not accurate.²

In chapter 6, Erickson discusses a variety of philosophical issues, some more important than others. Probably the most significant discussion is that of "essence and function" tied to the larger "nature-person" distinction in Trinitarian theology. He argues that the gradationist view affirms that the Son is necessarily subordinate to the Father given the fact that this is an eternal relation and that this entails that "the essence of the Son is different from the essence of the Father" (172) thus opening the door to a denial of *homoousios* and an adoption of an Arian or semi-Arian theology! Erickson is quick to note that no contemporary gradationist is Arian or semi-Arian (172); however, "the way the gradationists have stated their doctrine implies a view of the nature of God that seems to entail some sort of Arian or Semi-Arian position" (172). Erickson also acknowledges that gradationists respond to this charge by distinguishing properties of the person from properties of the divine nature (see 173). But Erickson rejects this solution with the following comment: "If these are necessary properties of the persons, then the persons have different essences" (173). As I will discuss below this is a strange answer and quite out of step with how the church has sought to maintain the nature-person distinction in Trinitarian and Christological thought. Following this discussion, Erickson wrestles with the important issue of how the persons of the Godhead are to be distinguished along with the topic of the eternal generation of the Son before he turns to some issues of logic. He chides gradationists for arguing that differences in role between the persons of the Godhead necessarily require superiority and subordination of role (185). Once again, as I will note below, it is unfortunate that Erickson consistently uses the term "superiority" to describe the gradationist view, which in common parlance assumes some kind of "inferiority" for the Son and the Spirit—a view that no gradationist holds.

In chapter 7 he discusses a number of theological issues important to the debate. After a fine

discussion of the legitimate criticism of Kevin Giles's understanding and use of Scripture (195–202), he wrestles with the relationship between authority and power and whether authority should be conceived as an attribute of God, issues tied to the incarnation and whether it was only the Son who could have become incarnate, all the way to matters of divine immutability, the divine will(s), the names of the persons, and the morality of the atonement. In all of this discussion, Erickson is seeking to demonstrate that the gradationist view opens the door to an affirmation of the inferiority of the Son (and the Spirit) and a surrendering of the full equality and deity of each person of the Godhead.

In chapter 8, as Erickson begins to wrap up his discussion, he applies the entire debate to practical issues such as prayer, worship, the family, and church order. Here Erickson does his best to describe how each view differs on these matters with the goal of showing that how one resolves the Trinitarian debate will have important implications on each of these very practical matters. Finally, in a concluding chapter, in a non-surprising way, Erickson sides with the equivalence view. He believes that it best meets the criteria discussed in chapter 3. In fact, he ends his book with a stirring plea for gradationists to reject their view and to return to the equivalence view, along with its entailments for other areas of Christian theology. He is deeply concerned that gradationists have opened the door to Arianism and/or semi-Arianism and that the next generation could very well walk through this door.

Evaluation and Critical Reflections

Erickson's book is certainly worthy of evaluation and reflection, even much more interaction than I can give it here. Especially given his plea and concern at the end of the book, this issue demands our attention. Anytime we wrestle with the doctrine of God we are not only thinking through the most important subject matter possible, but, given the fact that the doctrine of God is central to our entire theology, much is at stake in these discussions. So in light of this, I will give five reflections, starting with the positive and then moving to the negative.

First, as already noted, Erickson is to be commended for addressing such an important theological issue and for the most part presenting the debate fairly. Often in these heated discussions the tone can be shrill and Erickson avoids this. In addition, even though he sides with the equivalence view he attempts to criticize both views and advance the discussion. For example, in discussing the work of Kevin Giles he admits that “Giles’s statement about Athanasius’s view is not strictly correct, for there seems to be some ambiguity in Athanasius’s statements” (193), and in Giles’s use of Scripture, Erickson offers a sustained critique (see 195–202). All of this is admirable, and it shows that Erickson is attempting to do justice to both positions and to take their arguments seriously. Furthermore, Erickson is helpful in cautioning all participants in the debate not only to make good arguments but also to be careful in the language we use, especially in regard to the views of our opponents. For example, he has some excellent comments on using the terms “clear” and “obvious” in our arguments when further argumentation is needed (see 191–92), or being careful not to impugn the motives of our opponents and question each other’s integrity, which so often happens from both sides of the aisle. In the end, it is important to remember that all Christians who are seeking to live under the authority of Scripture, when it comes to the doctrine of the Trinity are attempting to do justice to the entirety of God’s self-revelation in Scripture. This minimally entails that we must affirm: (1) there is one living and true God who exists in three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; (2) the three persons are *homoousios*, i.e., God-equal and identical in nature; (3) the three persons mutually indwell one another in a dynamic communion (i.e., perichoresis); (4) the three persons are irreducibly different from one another; (5) there is some kind of role difference or ordering among the persons. Obviously it is on this last point that there is a difference of viewpoint as to whether this ordering (*taxis*) is eternal or temporary, but nonetheless everyone, even Erickson, must affirm some kind of distinction and role difference, even if it is only an agreed upon relation in eternity-past (see 185–87, 208).

Second, and more negatively, even though Erickson is to be commended for his attempt to arbitrate the debate judiciously, unfortunately, in my view, he does not always live up to his ideals. Repeatedly, Erickson presents the gradationist view in language which skews the debate. For example, he presents the gradationist view as affirming that the role differences between the Father-Son (and the Holy Spirit) are “differences in rank” (186), or that the Father has a “superior authority” (187), or simply that the Father has a position of “superiority” (185, 186) over the Son and Spirit. In another place he argues that the gradationist affirms that the Father’s will is “unilaterally imposed” (237), or that the Father-Son relation is one of a “superiority-submission” structure (206), and that all gradationists must deny that there is a joint, mutual action of the three persons of the Godhead (121–38). The problem with these statements is that they are not completely accurate. Compare Erickson’s description of the gradationist view of the Father-Son-Spirit relations with Robert Letham, who clearly maintains an eternal ordering among the Triune persons, but does not draw the conclusions Erickson draws. Here are some sample statements from Letham that are quite different than Erickson’s presentation:

Since all three [persons] are one identical being, *no one person is of higher or lesser status* than any other. *There are no gradations of deity....* Since each [person] is wholly God and fully God, *no one person is any greater than any other*, while the three together are not greater than any one.... Within the parameters mentioned above, there is also an order (*taxis*) among the three. *This order is not to be understood in terms of human arrangements, such as rank or hierarchy, but in terms of appropriate disposition.* The most common order in terms of the outworking of salvation, both in the NT and in the early church, is *from the Father through the Son by the Holy Spirit*; the reverse movement in our response to God’s grace is *by the Holy Spirit through the Son to the Father*. However, the NT presents variations....

[yet] it points to an irreversible *taxis*. For instance, despite the elements of mutuality reflected in these different orders, the Father sends the Son, and the Son never sends the Father. The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father, but the Father never proceeds from the Holy Spirit or the Son.³

When one compares Erickson's description of gradationism with Letham's, it is hard not to find a greater contrast. If we take Letham's statements as representative of the view, then we must conclude that Erickson has not accurately described it. But what about other gradationists, do they not talk this way? Even when we look at the statements of Bruce Ware and Wayne Grudem—the main people Erickson criticizes—I am not aware that they present the Father-Son-Spirit relation in terms of “superiority-inferiority” or the Father’s “unilateral action” independent of the Son and the Spirit. Erickson’s language at this point is unhelpful, and sadly it distorts the position thus allowing for an easier dismissal of it.

Interestingly, Erickson uncharacteristically discusses why Grudem rejects the word “inferior” to describe the role of the Son vis-à-vis the Father (see 210–12) and concludes as a kind of psychoanalyst that Grudem is “unconsciously” or “intuitively” sensing that to affirm an eternal ordering among the Triune persons is really to deny the full equality of the Son and the Spirit with the Father, but this is simply not true. Not only does Grudem deny such a conclusion, I suspect that Grudem also rejects the term because even though Scripture presents an ordering among the persons, it must not be understood, as Letham notes, in terms of human arrangements, such as superiority-inferiority (i.e., univocally). Grudem is seeking to do justice to Scripture while at the same time preserve analogical relations between God and humans. For Erickson, then, to present it as he does unfortunately does not advance the debate. As most acknowledge, biblical language in reference to God is analogical, and Erickson affirms this. That is why when Erickson at one point charges Grudem with employing the Father-Son language univocally (219)—something

Grudem does not do—Erickson then turns around and utilizes the structure, “superior-inferior,” in a univocal manner against his opponents. All of this is to say that Erickson does not always live up to his ideals in his discussion of gradationism.

Third, Erickson’s discussion of the biblical evidence for his view is not as compelling as he thinks. As noted above, every orthodox formulation of the doctrine of the Trinity must preserve both the unity of God’s nature as well as the threeness of person. In attempting to do so, the church has drawn a distinction between “nature” and “person” with “person” referring to, as Calvin stated it many years ago, “a subsistence in God’s essence, which, while related to the others, is distinguished by an incommunicable quality” (*Institutes* 1.13.6). This entails that each person of the Godhead has specific properties unique to him that distinguishes him from the others, otherwise modalism would result. Scripture primarily speaks of these incommunicable properties in terms of relations so that even though the three persons subsist in the same identical nature as one God and thus each person is God-equal with each other (*homoousios*), the Father is not the Son, the Son is not the Spirit, and so on. Of course, this raises the next legitimate question: What properties are unique to each of the three persons, i.e., what “incommunicable quality”—to use Calvin’s designation—distinguishes the person of the Son from the Father and the Spirit? Obviously the only way we can answer this question is by appealing to Scripture. When we do so, as most admit, Scripture presents the relations between the divine persons primarily in “economic” terms. Where both sides agree is that economically, Scripture unambiguously presents a specific ordering between the persons. For example, in salvation Scripture presents the Father as the one who initiates and sends the Son, the Son as the one who becomes incarnate and obeys the Father’s will, and the Spirit as the one who applies the work of Christ to us. The question then becomes: Are these relations/roles which distinguish the Father, Son, and Spirit merely relations/roles which obtain economically (temporarily) or do they also reflect an eternal ordering among the Triune persons? Erickson and the equivalence

view argue for the former, while the gradationists argue for the latter. But, in my view, the equivalence view has two basic problems in regard to the biblical data: (1) If the equivalence view is correct, then the economic relations Scripture describes reveal nothing about who God is eternally or immanently. No doubt, as most theologians admit we cannot reduce the immanent Trinity to the economic, as Karl Rahner sought to do, but the flipside is also true: it is unlikely that economic relations reveal *nothing* of the immanent. To affirm such a position leaves us with a basic agnosticism in regard to the eternal relations among the persons of the Godhead. (2) It is very difficult to reduce *all* scriptural teaching of the ordering within the Godhead merely to economic relations, something the equivalence view must do. No doubt, Scripture does not provide a lot of data regarding who God is in himself apart from creation (i.e., immanently); however, there are enough texts that speak of an eternal ordering among the Triune persons that cannot be dismissed so easily. Erickson, in his discussion of gradationism, acknowledges these texts and even admits they are strong (see 109–15). But in order for his position to stand he must show that *all* of these texts can be interpreted merely in economic terms. What kind of arguments does he make? Given the constraints of this review I will only look at four examples he thinks are troublesome for the gradational view.

The first example is the use of the term “Son” in Scripture. Erickson attempts to demonstrate that “Son” is somewhat an arbitrary name and that it bears no sense of eternal ordering vis-à-vis the Father; it only means likeness to the Father which is buttressed by an appeal to John 5:18 (116). But is this the case? To be sure, there are other titles applied to the “Son,” but it is hard to avoid the conclusion that the proper name for the second person of the Godhead is that of “Son;” Jesus’ entire identity is that he is the “Son” vis-à-vis the Father. In addition, John 5:16–30 is a crucial text which unpacks the Father-Son relationship. It is set in the context of Sabbath debates where Jesus incredibly claims that he has the right to work on the Sabbath just as his Father does, thus making

himself equal with him (vv. 16–18). Erickson correctly emphasizes this point. However, as the text continues and Jesus describes himself as the Son vis-à-vis his Father, he speaks of his dependence upon him—“I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does” (v. 19). No doubt the dependence of the Son upon the Father is tied to the incarnation and his mission, but is it limited to it? When Jesus says that he does *whatever* the Father does, in the context of John’s Gospel (especially see 1:1–3), this has to apply to pre-incarnation conditions, namely the agency of the Son in the creation of the universe. Yes, the obedience of the Son is worked out in terms of the specifics of the incarnation, but it is hard not to conclude that it has its basis in the Son as the eternal Son.⁴ Some gradationists refer to this as “the eternal subordination of the Son”—language, in my view, which is not helpful given the baggage it carries and given the fact that we must interpret biblical language in reference to God analogically. But with that said, what must minimally be affirmed is that the Son in terms of his nature is identical to the Father and thus in status, he is equal. Yet in terms of *relation*, he is from the Father and dependent upon him—a relation which cannot be reduced merely to economic relations. This point is underscored in what follows: “For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it. Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has *entrusted* all judgment to the Son.... For as the Father has life in himself, *so he has granted the Son to have life in himself*” (vv. 21–22, 26, emphasis mine). What does it mean that the Father has granted life to the Son? It is difficult to reduce this merely to economic relations since this would entail that the Son gained self-existence only after the incarnation. John has already asserted that the pre-incarnate Son has “life” (1:4). It is best to view this impartation of life-in-himself, as the church has done, as an act belonging to eternity, and that which unpacks something of the eternal Father-Son relationship. In other words, the granting of life described here must *not* be conceived of

in terms of the divine nature, but rather in terms of the eternal, personal relations among the Triune persons.

A second example is Erickson's appeal to texts which give a different ordering of persons in the Godhead (116–17). Erickson is right on this point; not all the texts present the divine persons in exactly the same order; however, two points are in order. First, the order in Matt 28:19—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—is surely significant where, in its context in Matthew, it expresses the new covenant name of God. And second, despite the elements of mutuality reflected in these different orders, the NT gives a consistent pattern of role distinction which cannot be lightly dismissed: the Father sends the Son, and the Son never sends the Father, the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father, but the Father never proceeds from the Holy Spirit or the Son, and so on. Is this simply an agreed upon order or does this economic description reveal something of who God is in himself? It is difficult to reduce everything merely to the former. So when Erickson states that “in a very real sense, all of them [Triune persons] sent the Son, and all had jointly decided that he would go” (135), the problem with this statement is that it may fit within his equivalence view, but there is not one text which says the Son sent himself or the Spirit sent the Son.

A third example to which Erickson appeals is Isa 9:6—a Messianic text that includes within it the title “everlasting father.” Erickson argues that this text demonstrates that the title “father” is applied to the Messiah thus showing no uniform way of naming God. But is this correct? Much could be said on this point, but surely this interpretation fails to do justice to this text's place in redemptive history and in the progress of revelation. In its OT context, “father” is not being used in a proper name sense but as a title of deity (Ps 65:5; 103:13) which is precisely the point. The Messiah, who is the son of David and thus human, is also one who is identified with Yhwh—an identification which is at the heart of NT Christology.⁵ As we move to the NT, it becomes clearer how the Messiah is both son of David and Yhwh as the NT unpacks the coming of God the Son incarnate. But the NT also unpacks

the Father-Son relation in greater clarity so that with the coming of the Messiah and the Spirit, we begin to see that God is not merely unitarian but trinitarian. One must be very careful not to read back into Isa 9:6 an entire understanding of God as “Father” vis-à-vis the Son, without doing justice to what this text is teaching given its place in redemptive history. Erickson's reading of this text, in my view, does not prove his point since he fails to place this text in its OT context as it looks forward to the coming of the Messiah who will be nothing less than the Lord.

A last example of a text Erickson finds troublesome for gradationists is Ps 2:7. Erickson argues that this text teaches the temporal beginning of Jesus' sonship rather than an eternal one and as such, he thinks he has demonstrated that Scripture does not present the Father-Son relation in eternal terms. But is this the case? Why does it have to be an either/or? Many gradationists would agree that Ps 2:7 is fulfilled in Jesus' appointment as the Messianic son tied to his entire redemptive work, but this is too simple since NT Christology also affirms simultaneously the eternal Son. In fact, we cannot understand NT Christology apart from the twin themes that Jesus of Nazareth is Son and Lord by virtue of who he has always been—God the Son—and that he is Son and Lord by virtue of the incarnation and his work for us (see Rom 1:3–4; Phil 2:5–11; Col 1:15–20; Heb 1:1–3). Erickson's treatment of these texts is far from convincing. No doubt Jesus' “sonship” is presented economically in Scripture, but it is not reducible to it. In fact, continuing in this line of thought, Erickson appeals to two texts he believes establish that the Son did not eternally obey (Phil 2:5–11 and Heb 5:8). Erickson's argument goes something like this: If the Son *learns* obedience then this suggests that he never obeyed previously (see 119–21). But does this follow, especially in light of John 5 and the entire Father-Son relation presented in the NT, and especially given that the entire pattern of NT Christology is to present Jesus as both the eternal Son and the Messianic Son? I do not see how it does. All that Phil 2:5–11 and Heb 5:8 are affirming is that the Son does learn obedience now *as the incarnate*

Son, but this does not entail that he did not obey his Father from eternity. Erickson must show in more detail that all the “ordering” texts in the NT only pertain to economic relations and they have no implications for who God is immanently. From what is said here, I do not think he has proven his case.

One last observation in regard to the biblical data to which Erickson appeals. In seeking to arbitrate the textual data of each position respectively, he proposes that if he can demonstrate that Scripture teaches a joint action by the Triune persons then this will favor the equivalence view. As the argument goes, if there is a joint action then it shows that the Father is not the ultimate decision maker and that he does not “unilaterally act” while the Son and Spirit merely obey and follow the decision of the Father (see 121–23). The problem with this proposal is that gradationists do not deny joint action of the Triune persons. Instead what is affirmed is that the entire Godhead acts in creation, revelation, and redemption but they do so in ways unique to each person. So, for example, in creation the entire Godhead creates but in ways appropriate to their person and role: the Father acts *through* the Son *by* the Spirit. The same may be said for all of God’s actions, yet in all of those actions there is an order to them given that there are three distinct persons who share the identically same nature. Listen to Letham on this point and notice how he stresses the joint action of the persons of the Godhead without then concluding that there is no eternal ordering among those persons:

Augustine was right to emphasize that in all the works and ways of God there is an engagement of all three persons of the Trinity. Since the three mutually coinhere, they all work together—in harmony, we might say, rather than in unison, for each is irreducibly distinct.... From its beginning in the eternal counsel of God to its completion at the eschaton, our salvation is rooted in the Trinity. The Father chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world, and to him is attributed the beginning of action. In the Incarnation, the Son takes human nature, lives, dies on

the cross, is raised from the dead, ascends to the right hand of the Father, and will return to consummate our salvation. In turn, the Holy Spirit is sent at Pentecost to indwell and to pervade his people, to render us suitable for union and communion with God. Thus, the grand sweep of salvation follows a Trinitarian structure. However, in each aspect all three persons are integrally involved, while one in particular is directly evident.⁶

All of this is to say that Erickson’s appeal to texts which teach joint action by the Triune persons does *not* prove his case in the least. In fact, at this point he seems to misunderstand what the gradationist view is even claiming.⁷ Obviously more could be said at this point in regard to the biblical evidence for the equivalence view, but the data discussed by Erickson, in my view, is hardly persuasive and in fact it fails to do justice to the overall presentation of the Father-Son relation in Scripture.

Fourth, Erickson’s discussion of the “nature-person” distinction in chapter 6 is not helpful. It is here that he suggests that gradationists have opened the door to Arian and/or semi-Arian views, even though he admits that no present-day gradationist is Arian/semi-Arian (see 169–77; 257–59). Why does he think this? According to his argument he thinks that if we say that there are eternal authority role differences among the persons of the Godhead this entails that the very *nature* of the Son is different from the Father and is thus inferior, hence the Arian concern (see 172–77). But is this how gradationists argue? Erickson admits that it is not. He acknowledges that Bruce Ware’s handling of this issue is to say that the authority role differences are *properties of the persons not the nature*. But Erickson’s response to Ware is basically one of dismissal: “This, however, does not seem to avoid the problem, because if these are necessary properties of the persons, *then the persons have different essences*” (173, emphasis mine). I am puzzled by this response.

As I have already noted, all Trinitarian formulation must make a “nature-person” distinction in order to do justice to the scriptural presentation of the oneness (nature) and threeness (person) of

God. Erickson's response to Ware seems to collapse this distinction. But how, then, does Erickson distinguish the Triune persons and avoid modalism if he does not distinguish the persons by saying that each person has a unique quality/property that the other persons do not have? In fact, as one reads Erickson, he is clear that he does not collapse the person-nature distinction. For example, Erickson suggests that it might be the case that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit "perform different roles within the economy of the Godhead, and perhaps even that these are *necessarily* the roles they perform..." (185, emphasis mine), or that there may be "an eternal distinction between the three, *and that they have some unique characteristics*" (208, emphasis mine). In these statements Erickson is distinguishing the persons by their relations, roles, and unique characteristics. But is this not all that Ware is saying? But once one acknowledges that the persons are distinguishable by their personal properties and that each person has a unique role they perform, then we are back where we started seeking to determine from Scripture what those precise roles are. It is the gradationist's contention that Scripture presents an eternal ordering (*taxis*) within the Godhead which is how the persons are distinguished from each other. Erickson disagrees with this point, but it is difficult to see why he thinks gradationist views tend towards Arianism or semi-Arianism. All of this is to say that his discussion at this point is not helpful and, in the end, it clouds the debate and sends it in a direction that leads to more confusion than clarity.

Fifth, Erickson's argument from historical theology is highly debatable. Obviously this is a huge area to discuss and even Erickson's exposition of the church's understanding of the ordering among the Triune persons is limited. My problem with Erickson in a nutshell is that he is not nuanced enough, and given all the correct points he makes, he states them in such a way that he clouds the issue. For example, in his discussion of Augustine he concludes that Augustine taught that "all works attributed to any one member of the Trinity are to be interpreted as actually being the work of all of them" (158). I agree. But in the hands of Erickson

this serves as proof for the equivalence view given his understanding that it alone maintains that the persons of the Godhead act jointly. But as I noted above, this is not correct. Or, Erickson argues that Augustine affirmed that Scripture teaches that the Father sent the Son but "it can as well be said that the Son also sent himself" (159). I find no evidence of this in Augustine, let alone in Scripture.

In a similar way, Erickson is not helpful in his discussion of Calvin. He argues that Calvin does "speak of the distinctions between the three persons of the Trinity" (162). He even admits that in Calvin "there is a type of order" (162) but then simply reduces this order for Calvin to a "logical or psychological order" (162) thus implying that Calvin would have accepted the equivalence view that all references to an ordering among the persons is only economic and temporary. But this is not correct. The same Calvin who denies any subordination when it comes to the three persons sharing the divine nature, also affirms, along with the Patristic Fathers that there are distinct, eternal relations between the persons so much so that Calvin regarded the Father as the *principium* (beginning) or *origo*, that from him is the Son, and from both is the Spirit—in respect to the persons and not the nature (see *Institutes* 1.13.18–20). Calvin's view is precisely what the equivalence view does not affirm. Furthermore, Erickson concludes from his historical survey that "it is difficult to contend that throughout its history the church has taught the eternal functional subordination of the Son (and the Spirit) to the Father" (167). He goes on to say that in order for gradationists to interpret historical theology differently they must assume that: (1) the human father-son relation can be applied to God univocally; (2) the Father-Son relationship involves a superiority status (see 167). The problem with this analysis is that the church did consistently hold to an eternal ordering among the persons of the Godhead, but they did not conceive of it either in univocal terms or as a superiority-inferiority relation. Looking at church history through Erickson's prism will certainly lead to conclusions which will justify his position, but one must question his prism. In recent days a far better analysis of Trini-

tarian formulation in church history can be found in Lewis Ayres (Patristic thought), Richard Muller (Reformation and post-Reformation thought), and Robert Letham (a nice summary of all of church history), and I would encourage the reader to consult those sources.⁸

Even though I have ended this review on a negative note and I do not find Erickson's equivalence view persuasive, there are many other points where I am in full agreement with him. Furthermore, I do appreciate his efforts to wrestle with such an important theological issue, which has a host of very practical implications for the church. In my view, part of the problem in this entire debate is that both sides too quickly move from the doctrine of the Trinity to gender issues. Even though I whole-heartedly embrace the complementarian position on gender and I do think that the Trinitarian debates do have some relevance for that issue, we must be careful how we move from relations within the Godhead to relations between male-female in marriage, the family, the church, and society. At the end of the day, our understanding of gender issues is directly tied to what Scripture teaches, which is complementarian. Biblical exegesis tied to putting our whole Bibles together must govern our thinking on the gender issue. But we must be careful that we do not too quickly justify our positions by appealing to Trinitarian relations. After all, at the heart of Christian theology is the Creator-creature distinction which entails, at least for this discussion, that Trinitarian relations are utterly unique and that human gender relations are analogous at best. Today, on many fronts and not limited to the gender issue, there is a tendency to justify our theology by an appeal to the doctrine of the Trinity; and even though this is appropriate, it does require care and caution as we do so.

ENDNOTES

¹There is no necessary correlation between an "equivalence" view of Trinitarian relations and "egalitarianism" on gender issues even though most egalitarians today would embrace an equivalence view.

²For example, gradationists would not affirm (1) or (3) but they would accept (2).

³Robert Letham, *The Holy Trinity* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2004), 382–83 (emphasis mine).

⁴On this point see D. A. Carson, *The Gospel according to John* (Pillar New Testament Commentary; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 246–59; Andreas J. Köstenberger and Scott R. Swain, *Father, Son and Spirit: The Trinity and John's Gospel* (New Studies in Biblical Theology; Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2008), 75–92, 111–33; Letham, *Holy Trinity*, 377–406.

⁵On this point see Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008).

⁶Letham, *The Holy Trinity*, 404–05.

⁷Erickson's misunderstanding of the gradationist view is evident in his discussion of prayer (227–32). He tries to reduce the position to absurdity when he states what he thinks the gradationist must affirm: "If indeed the Son acts in obedience to the Father's will, should we not pray for the Father to command the Son to do these things? ... For example, given Grudem's view of the Father sending the Son in the first coming, would it not be more appropriate to pray to the Father to send the Son a second time than to ask Jesus to return? Perhaps the Lord has not yet returned because we have been praying wrongly" (230). One reads in such sentences a sarcasm towards the gradationist view, but I do not know who holds to such a position as Erickson presents it.

⁸Lewis Ayres, *Nicaea and its Legacy: An Approach to Fourth-Century Trinitarian Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University, 2004); Richard A. Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics, Vol 4: The Trinity of God* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003); Robert Letham, *The Holy Trinity*.

Complementarian Caricature

A Review of Kathryn Joyce, *Quiverfull: Inside the Christian Patriarchy Movement*.
Boston: Beacon Press, 2009.

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Complementarians are scary people. They want to take away virtually all the freedoms that women have gained in the past century and replace those freedoms with babies—lots of babies. They want to do away with American democracy and impose a patriarchal theocracy on American culture, which, by the way, they are convinced is what the Founding Fathers would want. They eschew public schools and use homeschooling as a means of training their children, especially their daughters, to be culture warriors who will advance the patriarchal cause. They are pawns of the Religious Right; they are almost uniformly Caucasian and Calvinist; and they delight in oppressing wives and daughters, exercising corporal punishment, and arranged marriages. Doug Phillips of Vision Forum is their leader, and an American Geneva is their endgame.

Such is the view of complementarianism that you will gain if you read Kathryn Joyce's recent book *Quiverfull: Inside the Christian Patriarchy Movement*. Joyce's book is based upon her own journey into the heart of the "patriarchy" movement through attending conferences, reading relevant works, and interviewing leaders and devotees alike. While her tone is mostly amiable, she attempts to demonstrate that there is a vast conspiracy made up of Southern Baptist moms and Presbyterian dads that want to use their families and ministries like The Council for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood (CBMW) to take over America. This, of course, paints a picture that fails to represent the vast majority of complementarians, a fact that seems lost on Joyce.

The most interesting aspect of Joyce's book is that she has spent time with a lot of diverse people who claim to adhere to biblical views of the family and gender roles. Her book is structured around twenty chapters, most of which involve a vignette where Joyce spent some time with individuals whom she believes are key to understanding modern American patriarchy. Many chapters offer fascinating glimpses into the lives and ministries of individuals who have exercised considerable influence among certain segments of pro-family conservative evangelicalism. Joyce clearly did her homework. However, the hitch is not with her research, but rather with her interpretation. Joyce simplistically lumps almost all complementarians into one camp, thus missing the nuance among those who claim to hold to traditional Christian views of marriage and family. Of course, the heroes of her story are individuals (mostly women) who have come to embrace more progressive views of gender roles, often after suffering some type of maltreatment at the hands of those with more conservative (radical?) views.

Joyce consistently zeroes in on what many complementarians would consider to be the extreme fringe. Vision Forum receives considerable attention throughout the book, no doubt because this is one movement that fits neatly with Joyce's implication that most complementarians are Reformed, theonomic, family-integrated church advocating, homeschooling culture warriors. She also focuses on the radical cultural separatism and extreme corporal punishment practices of Michael

and Debi Pearl. And of course, as her title indicates, she gives plenty of attention to the Quiverfull movement that rejects all forms of birth control. By Joyce's reckoning, these movements and individuals represent patriarchy, which is really the same thing as complementarianism (the terms are used interchangeably throughout the book).

The problem with this approach is that it virtually assumes the periphery is the center. Most of the above movements and tendencies are far-right aberrations (many of which can rightly be called "patriarchy") rather than mainstream evangelical complementarianism. And even those that are more typical (like homeschooling and Calvinism) are by no means uniform among complementarians. It is just not true that CMBW, Together for the Gospel, and Focus on the Family are the same thing as the Pearls, Doug Phillips, and the Duggar family. Simply put, while it is an interesting and mostly irenic read, *Quiverfull* is not a trustworthy introduction to complementarianism, though it is arguably a fairly accurate portrayal of the patriarchs and theologians on the movement's far-right extreme. But to normalize these tendencies is akin to writing an account of American political conservatism where the main characters are the Log Cabin Republicans. Some of the convictions and terminology overlaps, but the application is vastly different.

Despite its shortcomings, Joyce's book does present a prime opportunity for mainstream complementarians. It is clear that many Americans, including many Christians, believe that complementarianism is exactly what Joyce assumes: oppressive patriarchy. I do not believe this is the case. That is why it is so important for complementarian groups such as CBMW, the Southern Baptist Convention, and the Presbyterian Church in America to present a biblical vision of manhood and womanhood as an alternative to the extreme views advocated by Vision Forum and Quiverfull. While complementarians should not expect the culture to affirm our convictions, neither should we be pleased when others lump us in with movements that hopefully we would never embrace. We need to be clearer about what we believe and what

we do not believe. The more successful we are in doing so, the less likely it will be that normative complementarians will be seen as a part of some wider patriarchy movement the next time someone attempts to write a book like this.

Becoming a Woman of Dominion

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

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Every few months an “expert” will appear on a morning news program belittling the vocation of wife and mother in light of the great “options” now made available to women in the twenty-first century. To be the former means limiting a woman’s choices and “letting down the team.” To be the latter means showing the world just how far we have come since the days of June Cleaver and the dutiful wife.

But according to Mark Chanski, godly womanhood means working for a purpose much higher than the corner office and executive title. In *Womanly Dominion: More Than a Gentle and Quiet Spirit*, Chanski, pastor of Reformed Baptist Church in Holland, Michigan, writes to dispel the “false stereotype of a Christian woman being a helpless and frail mouse, who passively shades herself under the parasol of her soft femininity, and adoringly waits for her husband to do all the heavy lifting” (13). He argues that godly womanhood is much grander and stronger than the modern feminist’s caricature of wimpy housewives desperate for freedom from patriarchal men. Chanski runs the gamut of issues related to womanhood in this book. While some topics receive more discussion than others, he speaks to virtually every practical and theological aspect of womanhood. Much like what he did in his previous book for men, *Manly Dominion*, Chanski takes the command to “subdue and rule” in Genesis 1:27–28 and applies it to womanhood (15).

Chanski divides the book into three parts. In the first part (16–59), Chanski explains the concept of womanly dominion and the assumptions

and assaults against womanhood. In this part he provides a framework for dominion that shapes the rest of the book. He shows that the “dominion mandate” given in the Garden was for both Adam and Eve. Chanski aims to help women understand what it means to exercise dominion in this world, and “provide answers at a critical hour when misguided voices from both sidelines, and even from inside her own head, are shouting at her all kinds of foolishness” (20). In order to understand womanly dominion, Chanski says, a woman must learn (using a sports analogy) to “play her position” (21). Part of playing her position means having a proper theology of work. Chanski shows what work is supposed to be, regardless of the location of the work. When women work, they are “imitating God, in whose image [they] are made” (29). He further explains that women need to “work and play with a *win it* instead of with a *surrender it* mindset. She must *rule* and *subdue*, rather than let herself be ruled and subdued. God has commissioned her to assert herself aggressively as a master over the teeming spheres of her life” (31). A woman of dominion does not allow herself to be ruled by her environment, circumstances, or feelings.

In the second part he unpacks womanly dominion in the Bible (61–105). Chanski begins by showing how womanly dominion was lived out in the lives of Old and New Testament women. He shows how each of the women mentioned were used by God to “*play their positions* with a *win it* mindset for the glory of God and the advancement of His kingdom” (95). He ends this section unpacking the biblical warrant for motherhood. Chanski

rightfully views motherhood as a high calling, showing from passages such as 1 Tim 5:9–10, 14 and Titus 2:3–5 that God, speaking through Paul, sees motherhood as a high calling as well. This final piece of the section sets the stage for much of the remainder of the book.

In the third and final section of the book, Chanski explains how a woman is to exercise dominion in the world in which she lives (107–227). This is perhaps the most comprehensive section of the entire book, covering everything from motherhood to life in the public square. He spends the most time on motherhood carrying over from the previous section and devoting an additional three chapters to the task of mothering. Chanski provides women throughout church history as models for motherhood that matters. According to Chanski, the home is the “training grounds for steel-backed, lion faced, mighty kingdom warriors. Mothers, who are *women of dominion*, are the God-appointed drill sergeants. Upcoming generations are depending on them and their cradle-rocking vision” (120). Because of his commitment to the differences between men and women, Chanski understands that raising boys and girls will look very different. He shows mothers how to teach their sons to be tough and exercise dominion (144–45) and their daughters to be nurturers and women of dominion (148–49). Chanski also recognizes the importance of women ministering within the local church. He understands that while women are not biblically given the task to teach in the pulpit or teach men, “women are arguably the most highly influential teachers in the church” (196). Women, argues Chanski, have a great responsibility to teach their own children, the children of others, and women (197–99). In each of these settings, Chanski says, the reach of influence has the potential to shape entire generations for God’s glory.

The strengths of this book are a counter-cultural take on what it means to be a woman, backed by biblical references and historical insight. To argue with Chanski’s assertions is to argue with the Bible. For a woman wanting a broad survey of womanhood that covers multiple topics, this book would be a good starting point.

While motherhood is a godly and biblical vocation, at times Chanski can seem to give an unbalanced view of womanhood because of his high emphasis on motherhood. The marriage relationship could potentially be eclipsed by the mother/child relationship in light of his assertion that the stresses of motherhood may cause date nights to inevitably “take a back seat to the nurturing of your little herd” (140). While he does talk about the importance of the marital relationship (157–77), for a frazzled wife who is already struggling with romancing her husband, this could encourage her away from this biblical pursuit rather than push her towards it. Additionally, a single woman reading this book could feel like an incomplete woman in the absence of a spouse or children due to the minimal references to womanly dominion in the season of singleness. Biblical womanhood is for women of every marital status and season of life, and the simple chapter titles alone would imply that womanly dominion is best exercised in the home, with a husband, and through nurturing your own children.

While there are some things missing in this exposition of womanly dominion, overall it is a book that sounds a clear call to women to live with strength and dignity. Chanski is writing to combat the prevailing thought that godly womanhood is a lost cause left behind with the dark ages of the 1950’s. Rather, God’s plan for women began in the Garden when he gave Adam and Eve a task, to rule, subdue, and exercise dominion within our God-given spheres of influence.

Nothing New Here

A Review of *Global Voices on Biblical Equality: Women and Men Ministering Together in the Church*.

Edited by Aída Besançon Spencer, William David Spencer, and Mimi Haddad.

Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2008.

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The fourth title in the House of Prisca and Aquila Series, a series which seeks to “empower women and men to minister together in a multi-cultural church,” regrettably does little empowering due to the presentation of a muddled picture of biblical equality (ii). With contributions from a wide range of egalitarian authors, *Global Voices on Biblical Equality* contains descriptive and sometimes differing perspectives of the status of women in various contexts. At times the chapters veer more into an analysis of the current place of women in society and fail to address their relationship to men and how the two are ministering in the church—both key features of the book’s subtitle. At other times, the chapters take a polemical tone and claim global unanimity for egalitarian interpretations of key biblical texts without adequately referencing or dealing with the legitimate questioning of those interpretations. These observations aside, some aspects in the volume are helpful; and exposure to the latest egalitarian perspective provides an opportunity for learning and further understanding of this particular interpretation of biblical equality.

Edited by Aída Besançon Spencer, William David Spencer, and Mimi Haddad, *Global Voices on Biblical Equality* comes together as a survey “exploring how well we are succeeding in fulfilling God’s intention for us to work in unity to bring Christ’s reign in all our lives together as God has commanded us” (xx). However, while some of the authors argue clearly for the achievements of

ontological equality between men and women—something with which this reviewer and most complementarians agree—inconsistency when discussing the functional roles of genders in society, church, and home brings confusion in the volume. In Haddad’s introductory chapter, for example, she endeavors to show how the gender debate is really a reform movement with ties to the Protestant Reformation and also the Abolitionist movement. Linking the three together, Haddad rightly notes that a return to Scripture is key to all genuine movements of reform (3). However, she denounces a hermeneutic that relies on “a plain reading of Scripture,” citing that such was the folly of slavery advocates as well as contemporary complementarians. Haddad is persuasive; and by blurring any distinction between ontological equality and functional roles, the reader is given the impression that complementarians are as blind as proslavery Christians were in terms of their misunderstanding of the teaching of the Bible as a whole. In short, they have missed the forest of biblical teaching that Haddad summarizes as “love, not bondage,” in favor of singular texts and isolated hierarchical teachings (13). But this blurring is neither helpful nor accurate and does not serve the reader well, for in seeking to make an argument from history, Haddad fails to mention the numerous answers and published works by complementarians that address all the claims she paints with her broad brush. In short, there is nothing new or definitive here.

To provide an example of the muddled nature of the work, consider Haddad's statement, "Both abolitionists and egalitarians insist that Scripture opposes what philosophers call ascriptivism—the effort to ascribe significance, value, and worth to individuals based on their materiality, gender, ethnicity, or class" (16). Complementarians would also insist on this truth that all individuals created in the image of God and stained by sin as a result of the fall are seen equally by God and thus should be seen equally by man. However, such views of equality do not negate the obvious distinctions that still remain for how one is to function in society, church, and home. Haddad fails to articulate that one must address ontological equality separately from functional roles. Instead, she argues that "Scripture, rightly interpreted, as guided by the Holy Spirit, teaches the ontological and functional equality of men and women, as taught by Scriptures such as Galatians 3:28" (20). Haddad's appeal to Gal 3:28 makes her guilty of the very hermeneutical error that she lays at the feet of proslavery advocates and complementarians—namely, to rely "upon isolated passages, read without consideration of the historical background and without regard to the clear moral and theological teachings of Scripture" (11). However, this reviewer would argue that Haddad need not even employ her stated hermeneutic on Gal 3:28 but rather let the clear context of Galatians 3 give explanation—that there is no ontological distinction among those who have faith in Christ.

The core of the volume, grouped somewhat by continent, presents reports from around the world. Each chapter roughly provides a description of the role of women in the past in a particular country, sometimes in society only and other times in both society and the churches. A description of the present situation for women follows, and the chapters conclude with recommendations for a way forward.

Chapters 2–4 deal with Asia and Asian America, focusing specifically on India, China, Chinese Americans, Korea, and Korean Americans. The chapter on India contains a curious interpretation of the parable of the Persistent Widow in Luke 18:1–8 as a guideline for surveying the state

of things in India. The authors see the widow's request for justice as an appropriate avenue "for her to insist upon her rights"—that is, her rights as a woman (22). The authors state, "Let this parable summon Christians to come alive to a call to work for rights for women, and for women and men to feel confirmed by Christ in speaking up for a fair deal. This is part of gospel work" (22, 35). In the chapter on Korean Americans, the author posits, "A helpful starting place to confront gender inequality is to refocus Korean American Christians upon the word of God" (62). As hopeful as that sounds, the author means rather that Korean American Christians should refocus their hermeneutic, for many are "blinded by their presupposition to patriarchy and female subordination.... [T]hey simply take Paul's instructions literally without considering his teachings on gender equality" (63).

Chapters 5–6 provide overviews of developments in Africa and African America. The chapter on Africa tells specifically of views held by the Shona people in Zimbabwe. In the Zimbabwean context, the author explains, "Gender equality could be defined as competence in playing the assigned gender roles accepted by the community" (72). While this reviewer believes that gender function should be first determined by the Bible, this chapter clarifies that some egalitarians do understand the distinctions between ontology and function. In fact, the author continues, "Since God created for man a helper comparable to him, the Bible means someone of equal, comparable, complementary competence. God did not create an inferior dependent" (72). Further, when discussing Eph 5:22, the author concludes, "Husbands also need sacrificially to love their wives for them to respond in loving complementary submission" (80). I do not know of any complementarians who would disagree with these statements.

Chapters 7–9 discuss gender equality in indigenous America and Latin America. As with each chapter in the book, these investigations provide even the critical reader with helpful insight to these cultures in ways many have not previously observed. In the chapter on Latino Churches, the author shows Paul's relationship to women by

citing the times in which he commends specific women as coworkers. There is much to applaud in this study, and some of the recommendations for modern implementation are quite helpful for affirming the work of women in the local church. However, here, too, arises the muddled conflation of ontological equality and functional roles. The author states, “Paul commended his coworkers on the basis of their working hard for the gospel. In the same way, Christian men need to make public commendations of Latina women who have been working and struggling alongside them in ministry” (146). This reviewer could not express greater agreement with this conclusion. However, in the next sentence, the author moves beyond calling for biblical recognition of ontological equality and applies the same to a functional equality. She states, “Our Latino churches must recognize equally the participation of men and women in different ministries and leadership positions. It could be done, for example, by nominating Latina women ... to positions such as regional area minister, bishop, superintendent, or any other position of authority in the church” (146). Here the pendulum swings past the biblical boundaries for functional roles of women in the church. Furthermore, while a handful of the chapters in the volume provide some interaction and interpretation of 1 Tim 2:12 and its correlation to the creation account in Genesis 2, most do not; and, indeed, chapters like this one, which could benefit the most from such interaction, overlook this passage completely.

Chapters 10–12 comprise Western Europe, Australia, and North America. The chapter on Western Europe is particularly intriguing as the authors challenge the common acceptance of “gender mainstreaming” as it regards the attempt to render genders indistinguishable for the purpose of accommodating homosexual partnerships. They state, “While Christian men and women are called to stand for equality and equal opportunity for men and women, they will also need to uphold the differences in the genders, which alone make for meaningfully complementarity. Also, they will stand against attempts to blur the image of God, which is reflected in men and women alike and in

their complementarity (Gen 1:26ff)” (173). When pressed with the advancement of gender mainstreaming, these egalitarians resort to upholding ontological equality while maintaining a distinction of function. Never in this book is homosexuality advocated as acceptable Christian behavior, and in a few places effort is made to underscore that these egalitarians do not support that lifestyle as a biblical option. However, it takes the advancement of such in Europe to reveal the inconsistency of a muddled view of equality among these egalitarians with regard to the roles of women and men in the church.

Chapter 11, by Kevin Giles, gives an engaging history of Australia and as much as any of the other chapters shows how the historical context of that country has affected the current makeup and beliefs of the contemporary population. Chapter 12 gives a sweeping overview of biblical equality in the United States, which is not without a few points of contention. However, this reviewer finds that he can agree completely with the author’s summary statement that, “The fulfillment of Christ’s great commission in Matthew 28 is not possible without the full engagement and deployment of spiritual gifts and abilities belonging to all members of the worldwide body of Christ, female and male” (203). The difference, of course, exists in how one understands the biblical prescription of function for males and females.

The concluding chapter continues to appropriate the volume’s muddled view on the relationship between ontology and function. The author declares, “Full equality of women in the church entails the church allowing qualified women (as well as men) to teach, preach, pastor, and lead, to give the sacraments, to serve all people, not just other women, children, the sick, and the poor” (215). To define biblical equality in terms of function, especially when such specific functions are limited in Scripture to men, shows precisely why this volume fails to achieve the empowering effect the editors set out to achieve. The author of the conclusion clearly disagrees, as she believes that if full functional equality were the standard in the churches, “Evangelism will be more appealing to

the young and to society. A more appealing model of Christianity will be broadcast, because ... men and women will more reflect the perfect love and equality and harmony within the Triune Godhead” (218). However, the Bible does not speak of a Christianity that prospers due to popularity.

The authors and editors of *Global Voices on Biblical Equality* have done all evangelicals a service by allowing the readers of this volume to look through a window at the House of Prisca and Aquila and observe how the authors see and understand the world with regard to biblical equality. The reader must recognize that he looks through a clearly defined window built with a specific hermeneutic and, in the opinion of this reviewer, with a muddled presentation of ontological equality and functional roles. Nevertheless, readers should look and observe, for within, there lies much to learn.

Tell Me Their Story of Jesus

A Review of Margaret Elizabeth Köstenberger, *Jesus and the Feminists*.
Wheaton: Crossway, 2008.

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Margaret Elizabeth Köstenberger is adjunct professor of women's studies at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, North Carolina. Köstenberger's thesis is simple: "[W]hat emerges from feminist scholarship on Jesus is not *one version* of the true Jesus but many different accounts of who feminists perceive Jesus to be" (16). She demonstrates this truth through a rich discussion of the disparate voices arising from religious feminism.

Köstenberger begins her work by laying down some historical and theological "foundations" that the remainder of the book builds upon (15–35). First, there is a brief history of the three "waves" of feminism, showing the movement's beginnings from 1830 (concerned with racial and social justice) through the 1960s (concerned with gender equality) up to the 1990s and present day (a more radical pursuit of feminist ideology). Second, Köstenberger highlights the importance of hermeneutics in this investigation. Feminists present a mounting attack against the Bible or, at least, traditional biblical interpretation, by reconstructing history, denying authorial intent, rejecting the received canon of Scripture, and dismissing the Bible as "irredeemably patriarchal"—all for the sake of replacing these areas with feminist ideas and reconstructions.

As her starting point for understanding the diversity of feminist thought about Jesus, Köstenberger divides feminists into three camps: radical, reformist, and evangelical. In short, radical feminists reject the Bible wholesale and view Christianity as unusable because of its male, patriarchal bias.

Reformist feminists largely reject Christian tradition, but seek to use the Bible as a (or "one") means of defending a more egalitarian theology. Unlike reformists, who do not hold the Bible as inerrant or authoritative, evangelical feminists reject a critical stance toward Scripture and argue that complete male-female equality is found in its pages.

Köstenberger quotes extensively key feminists in each camp to express the main interpretive concepts, critiques, and theological conclusions related to the identity of Jesus Christ. Even more, she reveals how feminists of all persuasions attempt to use Jesus and his teachings to buttress feminist principles and concerns.

Köstenberger shows that radical feminists, such as Mary Daly, Virginia Ramey Mollenkott, and Daphne Hampson have abandoned historical Christianity and promote alternative paradigms for understanding theology (37–59). Radical feminists place little value on Jesus, since he was a man who reflected the patriarchal structures that permeated his culture. So, if theology is to appeal to women at all, Jesus must not be the central focus and must even be eclipsed altogether. Radical feminists conclude that there is no such thing as a "Christian feminist," since Christianity is not truly egalitarian at its core. Whatever feminism is, they claim, Christianity is not.

Reformist feminists, however, appeal to Jesus and his teachings in order to reform the Christian tradition from within (61–101). For reformists, Jesus was a feminist who promoted the full equality of women and men in every facet of life. Key voices

like Letty Russell, Rosemary Radford Ruether, and Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza look to the Bible (although with a “hermeneutic of suspicion”) and to Jesus for data that promotes feminist dogma.

Köstenberger exposes the reality that the reformist feminist position is a “crumbling paradigm” today. Non-evangelical feminists such as Kathleen Corley, Esther Ng, and Amy-Jill Levine argue that Jesus was *not* a feminist, nor did he create a radical egalitarian community (102–12). Simply put, the reformist position is not sustainable any longer by serious historical research.

Evangelical feminists, or egalitarians, work within the theological conviction that the Bible is inspired by God and inerrant, yet at the same time hold that the Bible teaches the full equality of men and women in all areas of life—home, community, and church (129–77). Köstenberger helpfully traces the development of the egalitarian movement through three phases: the pioneering phase (1966–86), the maturing phase (1987–99), and the clarifying phase (2000–present).

The pioneering phase of egalitarianism was spawned by Krister Stendahl, who argued for egalitarianism on the basis of the “breakthrough” verse, Gal 3:28. This verse has become the *locus classicus* of the egalitarian movement. Other major contributors to the early development of evangelical feminism include Letha Scanzoni, Nancy Hardesty, Paul Jewett, Ben Witherington, Gilbert Bilezikian, Aida Besançon Spencer, and Richard Longenecker. Much of the work of this phase focused on Jesus’ relation to women in Scripture and male-female roles and relationships surrounding creation and the fall.

The maturing phase of egalitarianism saw an increasing complexity of argumentation and scholarly approach, especially through the hermeneutical studies of Grant Osborne and R. T. France and the theological studies of Stanley Grenz. Köstenberger points out that this phase maintained much continuity with the pioneering phase, but showed refinement and novelty in egalitarian hermeneutical procedure and argumentation (163).

The third phase of this branch of feminist thought involves additional clarification and speci-

ficity of the positions and arguments found among evangelical feminists. Most significant would be the contribution of William Webb’s “redemptive-movement hermeneutic” that argues for the progressive nature of biblical revelation with regard to human relationships and ethics (168).

Köstenberger notes that one major difficulty for egalitarians is defending the notion, like reformists, that Jesus was actually a feminist. As mentioned above, other feminists have mounted a devastating critique against this central tenet of reformist feminism, and by implication, evangelical feminism as well. Egalitarians must answer this critique if their program is to be sustained.

Köstenberger’s book has many strengths and commendations. Her work is an excellent introduction to the main phases and people involved in the development of religious feminism. Readers gain important historical knowledge and context through Köstenberger’s presentation of the beginnings of feminism (secular and religious), how the movement has changed, and where we are today in this discussion. Another strength of the book is the thoughtful engagement with specific feminist biblical interpretations and views about who Jesus was and what he taught. Feminist hermeneutics is not unified among the various voices found in this study, and Köstenberger handles each contributor fairly and winsomely. Central to the book’s success is Köstenberger’s discussion of feminist interpretation and, as a result, she is able to critique accurately the resultant feminist ideas about Jesus. Perhaps she said it best: “These divergent understandings of Jesus found among feminists, in turn, raise concerns regarding the viability of feminism at large. Since feminists are not able to come to an essential consensus on Jesus’ true identity, the validity of feminist biblical interpretation itself comes into question” (16).

The final chapters and appendices must not be overlooked in terms of the value of Köstenberger’s contribution. She offers an evangelical, “non-feminist reading” of Jesus and the Gospels (179–214) that shows the contrast between complementarian and egalitarian understandings of biblical interpretation—a contrast that leads to convictions about

the identity and teachings of Jesus. What's more, Köstenberger concludes the book with a fine summary of the feminists and their positions in appendix 1, and a brief discussion of hermeneutics in appendix 2. These pages are insightful and offer a helpful contrast to feminist studies in this area.

For those readers looking for something more than an introduction to this discussion, Köstenberger does not offer an exhaustive engagement with feminist views of the person and work of Christ. For example, many religious feminists pose the question, "Could our savior have been a woman?" This question relates to Jesus' identity, as well as hermeneutics, and was only briefly mentioned in the discussion of reformist feminists, even though in feminist literature (including evangelical feminists) this question is more pronounced.

Overall, this book is well worth the investment of time. Pastors, professors, and those in the pew will benefit from this clarifying survey of "Jesus and the feminists."

A Helpful Thesis but a Problematic Assumption

A Review of John L. Thompson, *Reading the Bible with the Dead:
What You Can Learn from the History of Exegesis that You Can't Learn From Exegesis Alone.*
Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007.

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Summary of the Book

The conclusion features a helpful paragraph in which the author summarizes the book in general and specific terms. In general, he claims that the book began as a bet that the Bible is "better read and used" when one is conversant with the contributions of commentators from the so-called pre-modern era of the church. Specifically, he claims that the book "illustrates how these old books and interpreters can offer us guidance with respect to some of the Bible's most obscure and difficult texts—the texts that lectionaries often avoid, and pastors as well" (216).

The table of contents and subtitles alert the reader as to what those "obscure and difficult texts" are: Hagar (chapter 1), Jephthah's daughter (chapter 2), Psalms and Curses (chapter 3), Patriarchs behaving badly (chapter 4), Gomer and Hosea (chapter 5), Silent Prophetesses (chapter 6), Divorce (chapter 7), Paul's arguments about women (chapter 8), and Sex and Violence (Dinah, Bathsheba, Tamar, and others) (chapter 9). The introductory chapter of the book offers something of a road map (10). Here the author says that these

nine chapters actually boil down to one of three themes: (1) texts focusing on violence and abuse (chapters 1–5, 9), (2) texts focusing on domestic issues like divorce (chapter 7), and (3) texts that deal with women in leadership (chapters 6 and 8). The book also features a conclusion that highlights the present benefits of becoming conversant with the past, a glossary of biblical commentators and other writers, and a guide to finding English translations of commentaries written before 1600.

The readers of this journal will likely have a special interest in the chapters that relate most directly to the issue of gender roles and women in leadership (chapters 6 and 8). Therefore, I will summarize these chapters in more detail. Thompson points out that lectionaries often bypass texts that focus on violence or illicit sexual relations, but they also omit texts that treat "male-female relations in hierarchical terms" (2). Therefore, Thompson surveys two texts (1 Corinthians 11 and 1 Tim 2:12) that have been interpreted in hierarchical terms.

Chapter 6 surveys how pre-modern commentators understood 1 Corinthians 11, and chapter 8 deals with the complexity of 1 Tim 2:12. Many of the points that Thompson raises in chapter 6 are repeated and treated at further length in chapter 8, so I will treat them together. His central burden in these chapters is to remind readers that pre-modern biblical commentators differed in their explanations of *why* the Bible prohibits women in church leadership roles like elder/pastor, even though they are unified in saying that the Bible does in fact speak

against women in church leadership positions (except in exceptional circumstances like Deborah in the book of Judges). In other words, the author notes that pre-modern commentators all shared the same conclusions, even though they disagreed over Paul's rationale for those conclusions.

The author accentuates disagreement over Paul's rationale and downplays the fundamental agreement that the commentators have with Paul's conclusions. What is the justification for such an approach? Thompson provides an answer on page 181. He says that scholars like Daniel Doriani have succeeded in stressing one key point: 1 Tim 2:12 "has nearly always been defended as teaching the subordination of women." But Thompson finds fault with these studies because they fail to address the "central" point of his book: knowing how pre-modern commentators reached their conclusions "can help Christian readers avoid a simplistic understanding of a text that isn't simple and has rarely been treated simply" (181). In other words, the history of exegesis involves the whole process of exegesis, not just exegetical conclusions.

Thompson shares three ways that pre-modern commentators help us "live with a divisive text" like 1 Tim 2:12 (181–84). First, these commentators did not read Paul's supporting arguments as literally true in 1 Tim 2:12 and 1 Cor 11:34 (181–82). They agreed that these texts taught the "exclusive right of men to teach and rule in the church" (182), but they still wrestled with the details. Second, Thompson stresses the unavoidable complexity of Scripture and gender (182). He points out that these commentators distinguished between explicit and implicit precepts and between doctrine and polity. Explicit precepts and doctrine enjoy greater weight and authority than implicit precepts and polity (182–83). Third, the author emphasizes the unavoidable complexity of history (183). He says that there "never was a 'golden age' when the prohibitions against women speaking and teaching were not controversial" (183). Thompson suggests that the complexity of history could explain the complexity of Scripture and gender. His assertion on page 184 is worth quoting in full:

One of the most contentious points is whether the Bible, especially the New Testament, ought to be read as perfectly homogenous or whether the Gospels and Epistles arise from a primitive church that was somewhat diverse in its experiences and practices. Insisting on an original homogeneity will force some sort of showdown between the accounts of women teaching or prophesying and the strictures against women teaching. Yet the historical reality of the early church may have embraced both without dissolving either, perhaps in ways we can, at best conjecture.

Thompson quickly qualifies the seeming uncertainty that this statement ascribes to Scripture by saying that Scripture is clear concerning its message of salvation. Therefore, the doctrine of the clarity of Scripture applies to its teaching on salvation; it is not necessarily clear and unified on other issues (184).

Assessment of the Book

The book has three main strengths. First, the glossary of biblical commentators and the guide to finding English translations of commentaries written before 1600 are worth the price of the book in their own right. Second, Thompson successfully defended his thesis that the Bible is "better read and used" when one is conversant with pre-modern commentators. These forefathers of the faith give "guidance with respect to some of the Bible's most obscure and difficult texts" (216). The author helpfully includes well-marked sections in each chapter that highlight the benefits that these commentators offer Christians today. Third, Thompson's survey reminds us that reading the Bible sometimes requires struggling and wrestling with the meaning of the text. Bible study precludes arrogance because we recognize that the gift of the Holy Spirit's illuminating presence has been available to many generations of believers, not just our generation. This fact necessitates a certain amount of humility and charity in our interpretations.

The most significant weakness of the book

concerns Thompson's assumption concerning the nature of Scripture as evidenced by the block quote from page 184. There are three main problems with this approach. I will present them in question form for the consideration of the reader. First, if all Scripture is "breathed out by God" (2 Tim 3:16) and thus if it is legitimate and rational to talk about a unified author, why would one rationally presume that the contents are not also unified?

Second, if God's revelation does not present a unified perspective on women's roles in the church, then what gives one the right to assume a unified perspective on salvation? Is it reasonable to assume that God does not care as much about clarity, except when it comes to the message of salvation? If the New Testament authors do not agree on women's roles, could they not disagree on the message of the gospel as well?

Third, if Scripture lacks a unified perspective on some issues, how does one decide which side to take? If Acts and 1 Timothy presumably lack a homogenous approach to women's roles, why prefer one over the other?

In other words, Thompson's book shines when he stays true to his stated purpose: to survey what pre-modern commentators said and to show an acquaintance with them can benefit the church today. He provides an excellent, focused survey of the history of pre-modern exegesis on difficult texts, and he helps equip the reader to examine these commentators for themselves. His work is far less helpful when he postulates unnecessary discord within divine revelation. The Bible is "better read and used" (216) with Thompson's survey of pre-modern exegesis, but "better read and used" without his assumptions concerning the nature of Scripture.

THE DANVERS STATEMENT

BASED ON OUR UNDERSTANDING OF BIBLICAL TEACHINGS, WE AFFIRM THE FOLLOWING:

1. Both Adam and Eve were created in God's image, equal before God as persons and distinct in their manhood and womanhood (Gen. 1:26-27, 2:18).

2. Distinctions in masculine and feminine roles are ordained by God as part of the created order, and should find an echo in every human heart (Gen. 2:18, 21-24; 1 Cor. 11:7-9; 1 Tim. 2:12-14).

3. Adam's headship in marriage was established by God before the Fall, and was not a result of sin (Gen. 2:16-18, 21-24, 3:1-13; 1 Cor. 11:7-9).

4. The Fall introduced distortions into the relationships between men and women (Gen. 3:1-7, 12, 16).

- In the home, the husband's loving, humble headship tends to be replaced by domination or passivity; the wife's intelligent, willing submission tends to be replaced by usurpation or servility.

- In the church, sin inclines men toward a worldly love of power or an abdication of spiritual responsibility and inclines women to resist limitations on their roles or to neglect the use of their gifts in appropriate ministries.

5. The Old Testament, as well as the New Testament, manifests the equally high value and dignity which God attached to the roles of both men and women (Gen. 1:26-27, 2:18; Gal. 3:28). Both Old and New Testaments also affirm the principle of male headship in the family and in the covenant community (Gen. 2:18; Eph. 5:21-33; Col. 3:18-19; 1 Tim. 2:11-15).

6. Redemption in Christ aims at removing the distortions introduced by the curse.

- In the family, husbands should forsake harsh or selfish leadership and grow in love and care for their wives; wives should forsake resistance to their husbands' authority and grow in willing, joyful submission to their husbands' leadership (Eph. 5:21-33; Col. 3:18-19; Titus 2:3-5; 1 Pet. 3:1-7).

- In the church, redemption in Christ gives men and women an equal share in the blessings of salvation; nevertheless, some governing and teaching roles within the church are restricted to men (Gal. 3:28; 1 Cor. 11:2-16; 1 Tim. 2:11-15).

7. In all of life Christ is the supreme authority and guide for men and women, so that no earthly submission—domestic, religious, or civil—ever

implies a mandate to follow a human authority into sin (Dan. 3:10-18; Acts 4:19-20, 5:27-29; 1 Pet. 3:1-2).

8. In both men and women a heartfelt sense of call to ministry should never be used to set aside biblical criteria for particular ministries (1 Tim. 2:11-15, 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9). Rather, biblical teaching should remain the authority for testing our subjective discernment of God's will.

9. With half the world's population outside the reach of indigenous evangelism; with countless other lost people in those societies that have heard the gospel; with the stresses and miseries of sickness, malnutrition, homelessness, illiteracy, ignorance, aging, addiction, crime, incarceration, neuroses, and loneliness, no man or woman who feels a passion from God to make His grace known in word and deed need ever live without a fulfilling ministry for the glory of Christ and the good of this fallen world (1 Cor. 12:7-21).

10. We are convinced that a denial or neglect of these principles will lead to increasingly destructive consequences in our families, our churches, and the culture at large.



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