

Table of Contents

- 2** **Editor's Column**
Bruce A. Ware
- 3** **Executive Director's Column**
Randy Stinson
- 4** **Tampering With the Trinity: Does the Son Submit to His Father?**
Bruce A. Ware
- 13** **Trinitarian Perspectives on Gender Roles**
Peter R. Schemm, Jr.
- 21** **Reexamining the Eternal Sonship of Christ**
John MacArthur
- 24** **Job: An Ancient Example for Modern Manhood**
W. Fredrick Rice
- 27** **Gendered Language and Bible Translation**
Valerie Becker Makkai
- 31** **Overview of *The Gender-Neutral Bible Controversy***
Rob Lister
- 35** **Annotated Bibliography for Gender Related Articles in 2000**



THE JOURNAL FOR BIBLICAL MANHOOD AND WOMANHOOD

is a biannual publication of the
**Council on Biblical Manhood
and Womanhood**

JOURNAL STAFF

Editor
Bruce A. Ware

Managing Editor
Rob Lister

Layout and Design
Jared Hallal

CBMW
President
Bruce A. Ware

Vice President
Wayne A. Grudem

Executive Director
Randy Stinson

Editorial Correspondence JBMW

Attn: Bruce A. Ware
journal@cbmw.org

Orders and Subscriptions

Single issue price \$10.00. Subscriptions available at \$15.00 per year. Canadian Subscriptions \$20.00 per year. International Subscriptions \$25.00 per year. Ten or more copies to the same address, \$12.00 per year.

2825 Lexington Road · Box 926
Louisville, Kentucky 40280
502.897.4065 (voice)
502.897.4061 (fax)
office@cbmw.org (e-mail)
www.cbmw.org (web)

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

CBMW is a member of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability

Editor's Column



Bruce A. Ware
President, Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood;
Senior Associate Dean,
School of Theology
Professor of Christian Theology
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary
Louisville, Kentucky

Readers of *The Journal for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* will notice a different look, structure, and design, beginning with this issue. As the new *JBMW* editor, I wish to extend my heart-felt thanks to Rev. Timothy Bayly for his previous capable editorial work. As with so much in life, evaluation occurs and changes are made. In our case, perceptions of the needs and desires of our readership have led to decisions for a new approach, reflected in the 6.1 issue you now hold.

Because our Journal is issue-focused, we want to bring to our readers some of the finest scholarship and resources available anywhere on the broad area of the biblical roles of men and women. As a result, we have chosen to focus more of the Journal's attention to articles central to a biblical understanding of gender issues and roles. It is our hope to offer three or four substantive articles in each issue, some of which are reprints from sources to which our readers may not have easy access, and some first-run articles. In either case, we hope to present high quality scholarship so that the church can be helped in her calling to faithfulness, under the headship of Christ. This issue offers three articles dealing with the relevance of the doctrine of the Trinity to gender identity. And, we also commend to you the significance of the gender-neutral Bible controversy, as highlighted by the recent publication of the book, by that title,

co-authored by Vern Poythress and Wayne Grudem.

Some other regularly-planned new features call for brief comment. We propose to offer a pastoral Bible study, biblical meditation, or sermon in each issue. Those involved in ministry may be helped as we see how another minister thinks about Scripture and applies it to various gender-related issues. Also, beginning with this issue, we plan to offer a significant bibliography of books and articles on the role of men and women. The Spring issue will record as close as possible to a comprehensive listing of articles published in the previous calendar year in this area. So, this issue, published Spring of 2001, includes a listing of articles on the role of men and women published in nearly every relevant scholarly journal during the calendar year of 2000. The Fall issue each year plans to include a bibliography of the books published in the previous calendar year. Both bibliographies (articles in the Spring issue; books in the Fall issue) will be annotated – with article annotations quite brief and succinct – so that readers will have some general sense of the articles' and books' overall contribution.

Finally a word about the frequency of our *JBMW*'s publication. In light of the structure and design we wish for the Journal, we believe that we cannot publish four top-quality issues each year. Since each issue will be longer and more substantive than previously published, we also cannot afford four such issues annually. Consequently, we determined to publish instead two issues each year, the Spring issue in May and the Fall issue in November. The length of each issue of the journal will be close to twice as long as previously, so readers will actually receive about the same pages as they did formerly, just in two installments, not four. Our plan is to keep the same annual subscription fee for the two issues each year that you may request receiving. And, in order to be completely fair with our current subscribers, we will honor the number of issues you have paid for, so that until your subscription runs out, you will receive two years of issues (four issues) for the price you paid for one year (the previous four issues). When you renew, of course we will then offer to you the Journal's annual two issues for the annual subscription fee.

I wish to express special thanks to this issue's managing editor, Mr. Rob Lister. He has worked very hard in this transition to our new format, and he has contributed significantly to the substance of this issue. We hope and pray that the Lord will be pleased to bless these efforts to commend the biblical and wise plans of God for manhood and womanhood. May *JBMW* advance God's purposes and speak faithfully regarding this crucial dimension of life. ■

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Donald Balasa
 S. M. Baugh
 Timothy B. Bayly
 James Borland
 Austin Chapman
 Jack Cottrell
 J. Ligon Duncan, III
 Steve Farrar
 Mary Farrar
 Wayne A. Grudem
 Daniel Heimbach

H. Wayne House
 Elliott Johnson
 Peter Jones
 Rebecca Jones
 Mary Kassian
 Heather King
 George W. Knight, III
 Robert Lewis
 C. J. Mahaney
 R. Albert Mohler, Jr.
 Dorothy Patterson
 John Piper

James A. Stahr
 Bruce A. Ware
 Stu Weber

BOARD OF REFERENCE

Danny Akin
 Gary Almy
 Gleason Archer
 Hudson T. Armerding
 Wallace Benn
 Tal Brooke
 Harold O. J. Brown

Edmund Clowney
 Nancy Leigh DeMoss
 Lane T. Dennis
 Thomas R. Edgar
 Jerry Falwell
 John Frame
 Paul Gardner
 W. Robert Godfrey
 Bill H. Haynes
 Carl F. H. Henry
 David M. Howard
 R. Kent Hughes

James B. Hurley
 S. Lewis Johnson, Jr.
 Paul Karleen
 Charles & Rhonda Kelley
 D. James Kennedy
 Beverly LaHaye
 Gordon R. Lewis
 Crawford & Karen Lorits
 Erwin Lutzer
 John F. MacArthur, Jr.
 Connie Marshner
 Richard Mayhew

Marty Minton
 J. P. Moreland
 J. Stanley Oakes
 Stephen F. Olford
 Raymond C. Ortlund, Jr.
 J. I. Packer
 Paige Patterson
 Dennis & Barbara Rainey
 Pat Robertson
 Adrian & Joyce Rogers
 Robert Saucy
 James Sauer

Siegfried Schatzmann
 Thomas Schreiner
 Bob Slosser
 F. LaGard Smith
 R. C. Sproul
 Joseph M. Stowell, III
 Larry Walker
 John F. Walvoord
 William Weirich
 Luder Whitlock
 Peter Williamson

Executive Director's Column

Exposition of the Danvers Statement: Affirmations 1-3



Randy Stinson
Executive Director,
Council on Biblical Manhood
and Womanhood
Louisville, Kentucky

The first three affirmations of the Danvers Statement begin where the Bible itself begins—in the Garden of Eden, prior to the Fall. It is here that we see a picture of manhood and womanhood before sin entered the world.

1. Both Adam and Eve were created in God's image, equal before God as persons and distinct in their manhood and womanhood.

Statement number one affirms that men and women are equally made in the image of God. Genesis 1:27 declares that God made man in his own image as male and female. The equality of men and women, then, is the necessary foundation from which to deal with all gender-related issues. In the creation account it is seen that men and women are, in their essence, equal in the sight of God. Neither has more or less value in their standing before their Creator.

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.

Statement number two affirms that roles between men and women originated in the pre-Fall garden and subsequently apply to all human beings. Since roles are a part of the original creation, then they are inherent in the lives of all men and women and thus should find an echo in every human heart. The idea that men and women are equal yet different, though rejected by modern feminism, is indeed a result of God's purposeful and beautiful design.

3. Adam's headship in marriage was established by God before the Fall, and was not a result of sin.

Statement number three affirms that the roles mentioned in statement number two involve the headship of Adam before the Fall. There are several reasons why it is asserted that headship is taught in Genesis 1 and 2.

First, Adam is created first. The concept of derivation and birth order comes into play here and Adam's headship is assumed in as much as Eve is created subsequently. The fact that Adam is created first is clearly a very important part of the narrative. He has a natural precedence by order of creation (cf. 1 Cor. 11:3, 7-9; 1 Tim. 2: 11-13).

Second, man's headship is designated by the woman's creation to be his helper. Woman was, out of all the creatures uniquely suited for the man, thus signifying her unique equality with him. But her designation as Adam's helper shows that there is a distinct difference in their roles. Not only is Adam formed first, but God also gives him land, an occupation, and a wife—who is created to be his helper (cf. 1 Cor. 11:7-9).

Third, the naming function of Adam suggests headship. Adam is given the responsibility by God to name the animals over which he was given dominion. The responsibility of naming each animal reflected the nature of each and was a reminder to Adam that none was his equal. This is why upon seeing the woman for the first time Adam makes his "bone of my bone" declaration. With this statement he again acknowledges their equality yet demonstrates his headship in the act of naming.

Fourth, the command to leave and cleave is addressed to the man. It is clear here that the responsibility to establish the home and marriage is on the shoulders of the man, Adam. It is up to the man, not the woman to establish this activity, which is a sign of his leadership or headship.

Fifth, man was designated "Adam" which was also the term used to describe the whole human race, and this designation, since it was given to the man and not the woman, implies his occupation as head of the relationship.

The first three Danvers affirmations, then, are rooted in the fact that from the very beginning, the Bible teaches that men and women are equal in their essence before God, but are different in role and function. These differences manifest themselves in marriage through headship and submission.

In the next *JBMW* issue, affirmation number four will be addressed as we take a look at the distortions regarding manhood and womanhood brought about by the Fall. ■

Tampering With the Trinity: Does the Son Submit to His Father?¹

Bruce A. Ware

*President, Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood;
Senior Associate Dean, School of Theology
Professor of Christian Theology
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary
Louisville, Kentucky*

Introduction

To someone not conversant with contemporary theological writings, it may come as something of a surprise to learn that the historic doctrine of the Trinity is undergoing considerable scrutiny, reassessment, reformulation, and/or defense.² To many, this doctrine, perhaps as much or more than any other, seems so abstract and unrelated to life that they might wonder just why the interest. What is *here* that would warrant and elicit such concentrated attention? What is at stake in *this doctrine* that would provoke such interest and concern?

To many, what is at stake is simply this: the integrity and reality of the Christian faith itself. Donald Bloesch surprised many in the theological world with the publication in 1985 of his book entitled, *The Battle for the Trinity*.³ He charged the feminist rejection of the Bible's own and traditional theology's predominantly masculine language for God as a rejection of the Trinity itself and, as such, the imposition of a different faith (i.e., not the *Christian* faith) onto those quarters of the church inclined to accept the feminist critique. And, such charges and concerns have continued unabated. Consider, for example, the sobering words of Duke University Professor of Systematic Theology, Geoffrey Wainwright:

The signs of our times are that, as in the fourth century, the doctrine of the Trinity occupies a pivotal position. While usually still considering themselves within the church, and in any case wanting to be loyal to their perception of truth, various thinkers and activists are seeking such

revisions of the inherited doctrine of the Trinity that their success might in fact mean its abandonment, or at least such an alteration of its content, status, and function that the whole face of Christianity would be drastically changed. Once more the understanding, and perhaps the attainment, of salvation is at stake, or certainly the message of the church and the church's visible composition.⁴

What are some of these contemporary proposed revisions of the doctrine of the Trinity that would provoke such strong reaction? This article proposes to focus on two dimensions of trinitarian reconstruction, both of which are the result of feminist revisionism. First, the mainline church rejection of masculine trinitarian language (or any masculine God-language, more generally) has been occurring for nearly three decades. Whether emasculating God's name leaves us with the God named in the Bible will be explored here, with argumentation offered to support traditional and biblical masculine language for the triune God. Second, many contemporary evangelical egalitarians are urging the church to retain masculine language for God while denying that this masculine language indicates any kind of inner-trinitarian distinction of authority. These arguments will be weighed and support will be offered for the church's long-standing commitment to the trinitarian persons' full equality of essence and differentiation of persons, the latter of which includes and entails the eternal functional subordination of the Son to the Father, and of the Spirit to both Father and Son.

Mainline Feminist Rejection of Masculine Language for the Triune God

Central Feminist Arguments for Rejecting Masculine Trinitarian Language

Admittedly a radical representative of the feminist movement, Mary Daly has, nonetheless, captured the heart of the feminist criticism of the church's biblical and historic adherence to masculine God-language in her claim, "If God is male, the male is god."⁵ While *no* respected theologian of the church has claimed that God *is male*, the force of Daly's objection is simply that to refer to God with masculine language gives the impression that masculinity is more god-like. By this impression, then, women are held in subservient positions and granted less than their rightful dignity, so it is asserted. The only corrective can be to remove the predominance of masculine God-language from our Scripture, liturgy, and preaching. While some (like Daly herself) have moved to an exclusive use of feminine, earthly, even neo-pagan language for deity, most in the mainline churches who share this fundamental concern call for a balance of masculine and feminine references (e.g., God as Father and Mother) or for a fully gender-neutral language altogether in reference to God (e.g., Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer to replace Father, Son, Holy Spirit).⁶

Only brief attention can be given here to the several lines of argument put forth for inclusive God-language,⁷ and our focus will be particularly on the concern over the traditional masculine trinitarian formulation. First, appeal is made to the metaphorical nature of the Bible's own masculine language for God. All agree that when Scripture calls God 'Father' or 'King', we are not to understand by these that God is literally male. They function metaphorically to speak of fatherly and kingly functions such as provision, protection, and rulership. So, while God literally is provider, protector and ruler, he is metaphorically father and king. This being so, feminists argue that we ought, then, to describe God with feminine metaphors that express some other functions of God more characteristically feminine, such as God as comforter, healer, and sympathizer. So while God is (literally) neither father or mother, the metaphors 'father' and 'mother' are equally appropriate in describing of God qualities and functions literally true of him. We ought, then, to balance feminine names of God with traditional masculine names to give a more complete view of God, or else we ought to avoid such gender-specific terms altogether if the risk is just too great that people might take these to think God is a sexual being. As applied to language for the Trinity, feminist advocates have suggested revised language in both directions. Either we should speak of the first person of the Trinity as Father/Mother and the second, the Child of God,⁸ or we should move to a strictly gender-neutral trinitarian language, such as Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer. Both approaches are advocated within mainline feminism and what both have in common is the avoidance of

the dominant masculine language for the triune God due to its being both false and misleading.

Second, when one inquires why both biblical and traditional ecclesial language for God has been predominantly masculine, one immediately realizes the intrinsically culturally-conditioned nature of the Bible's and the church's God-talk. Patriarchal culture in biblical days and throughout the history of the church has given rise to this predominantly masculine language for God. For feminism, upon realizing this reality, it seems both obvious and necessary that we work to re-vamp our God-talk. We can maintain this predominantly masculine language for God only at the expense of perpetuating the illicit patriarchy that gave rise to it. While most mainline feminists would not agree wholly with Mary Daly, they would adjust her claim to say that if God is seen and spoken of as masculine, what is masculine will be viewed, naturally and unavoidably, as of higher value and authority. Again, then, one of two lines of response is needed: either we must balance traditional masculine usage with appropriate and meaningful feminine language of God, or we should leave behind all gender specific God referencing altogether.

Third, following from the above two items, feminist political and ideological advancement requires that we reject the biblical and traditional dominance of the masculine in regard to God. The true liberation of women, generally, and the cause of women's rights to serve in all levels of church and denominational leadership, in particular, can never happen when God, our highest authority and only rightful object of worship, is spoken of in masculine terms. Perpetuating the masculinity of God perpetuates the servile nature of the feminine. Since God is above gender, and since he created both genders in his image, then we dare not continue to focus our discussion of God on one gender thus subordinating the other as inferior and subservient.

Responding to the Feminist Case against Masculine Trinitarian Language

Interestingly, many from within mainline churches as well as the majority of evangelical feminists (i.e., egalitarians) from within and without mainline denominations are opposed to this revisionist feminist agenda. For most in this group, while claiming fully to identify with the values and aspirations of Christian feminism, these opponents claim boldly that to change the language of the Bible and church tradition in which God is revealed as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, is to jeopardize the integrity of Christianity itself and to promote what is truly, in fact, another deity and another faith.⁹ Their argumentation is complex and involved, but we will sketch some of their main concerns.

First, while it is true that the Bible uses masculine metaphorical language for naming God (though God is never

literally male), it is also true that the Bible never employs feminine metaphorical language *to name* God. True, God is sometimes said to be or act in ways *like* a mother (or some other feminine image),¹⁰ but never is God called ‘Mother’ as he is often called ‘Father.’ Respect for God’s self-portrayal in Scripture requires that we respect this distinction. While we have every right (and responsibility) to employ feminine images of God, as is done often in Scripture itself, we are not permitted, by biblical precedence, to go further and to name God in ways he has not named himself. He has named himself ‘Father’ but not ‘Mother.’ This stubborn fact of scriptural revelation must itself restrain our talk of God.

Second, one might be tempted to dismiss the above “factual” point by appeal to the inherently patriarchal culture in which our biblical language of God was framed. But appeal to culture shows just how odd and even unique it is that Israel chose to use only masculine (and *not* feminine) language when naming God. The fact is that the most natural route Israel might have taken is to follow the lead of the nations surrounding her which spoke with regularity and frequency of their deities as feminine.¹¹ That Israel chose not to do this shows her resistance to follow natural and strong cultural pressures, and it indicates that she conceived of the true God, the God of Israel, as distinct from these false deities.

In defending her assertion that “the Bible’s language for God is masculine, a unique revelation of God in the world,” Elizabeth Achtemeier continues:

The basic reason for that designation of God is that the God of the Bible will not let himself be identified with his creation, and therefore human beings are to worship not the creation but the Creator. . . . It is precisely the introduction of female language for God that opens the door to such identification of God with the world, however.¹²

Whether one follows Achtemeier here fully or not,¹³ what is clear is that Scripture never names God as ‘Mother’ or with any other feminine ascription, and this stands clearly against the prevailing practice of the cultures surrounding Israel and the early church.

Third, while Scripture surely does reflect the various cultural and historical settings in which it was written, the God of the Bible is presented, ultimately, by self-revelation or self-disclosure. The Bible’s language of God, then, must be received with respect and gratitude as the divinely ordained conveyer of the truth God himself intended his people to know about him. To alter biblical language of God is to deny and reject God’s self-disclosure in the terms which he chose and which he used in making himself known to us. Clearly, at the pinnacle of this self-disclosure of God stands the revelation of Jesus the Christ who became flesh that we might know in

visible, physical form what God is like (John 1:14-18). And here, with shocking regularity, Jesus refers to God in a manner scandalous to his Jewish listeners, as none other than ‘Father.’ That Jesus is the *Son* sent by the *Father* is so deeply and widely reflective of God’s self-revelation in and through the incarnation, that to alter this language is to suggest, even if only implicitly, that one speak instead of a different deity. Divine self-revelation, then, requires the glad retention of God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Fourth, one last caution will be mentioned. For revisionist feminism, it may be granted that biblical language speaks of the triune God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. But, these revisionists continue, those same scriptures also employ the language of God as creator, redeemer, and sustainer. May we not use in the church this other biblical language of God and by so doing both honor God’s self-revelation and avoid the illicit equation of God with masculinity that the traditional masculine language risks?

While the terms ‘Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer’ are biblical terms for God, they cannot function as substitutes for the persons of the Godhead named with ‘Father, Son, and Holy Spirit’. There are at least three reasons why this substitution is unacceptable. First, one risks a modalistic understanding of God when he is first creator, and then changes to the next historical phase of redeemer, and likewise then to sustainer. The phases and aspects of activity can easily be seen as historical modes of the manifestation of the one God, as has been advocated by Sabellius and other modalists. Second, this substitution implies that the world is eternal, not temporally finite, and that God’s redemptive work is necessary, not free. The church’s affirmation of God as ‘Father, Son, Spirit’ is a claim, not merely of his economic manifestation as the Father of the incarnate Son in the power of the Spirit (though this is true, in part), but also of the immanent trinity who is *eternally* Father, Son, and Spirit. The Father, then, is the *eternal* Father of the Son; the Son is the *eternal* Son of the Father. Now, if we substitute ‘Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer’ as names for these *eternal* realities, it requires that we see God as eternal Creator, implying an eternal creation, and eternal Redeemer, implying necessary redemption. It is clear that while ‘Father, Son, Spirit’ work well as names of the immanent and economic trinitarian Persons, ‘Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer’ are merely economic and functional designations. As such, they simply cannot substitute for the language of Scripture and church tradition of the eternal God who is in Himself (i.e., immanently and eternally) and in relation to creation (i.e., economically) Father, Son, and Spirit. Third, the personal names of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit simply do not reduce to the supposed functional substitutes of Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer.¹⁴ Is the Father and the Father alone the Creator? Is the Son alone the Redeemer? Is the Spirit alone the Sustainer? Biblical teaching instructs us that each of these activities is accomplished by all three divine persons working together. Yes, the Father creates,

but he does so through the power of his Word (John 1:3) who acts as implementer of his creative design (Col. 1:16). The Spirit, likewise, energizes the formation of the creative work of the Father through the Son (Gen. 1:2). Redemption, likewise, is destroyed altogether if the work of redemption is reduced to that of the second person of the Trinity. Biblically, redemption only occurs as the Father sends the Son into the world to receive the wrath of the Father against him for our sin (2 Cor. 5:21). And, of course, the Son accomplishes this work only by the power of the Spirit who rests on him and empowers him to go to the cross (Heb. 9:14) and raises him from the dead (Rom. 8:11). And likewise with Sustaining and Sanctifying, it is the work of the Father (1 Thess. 5:23-24) and the Son (Eph. 5:25-27) and the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. 3:18) to preserve believers and move them toward the holiness of life and character designed for them from all eternity (Eph. 1:4). One realizes that the substitution of ‘Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer,’ for ‘Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,’ not only fails as a functional equivalent of the traditional and biblical trinitarian formula, but worse, if followed it would result in such major theological distortions that the faith that would result would bear only a superficial resemblance to the faith of true biblical and Christian religion. In the words of Geoffrey Wainwright, “Consideration of creation, redemption, and sanctification shows that an account of them that is true to the biblical narrative will also imply and depend on the trinitarian communion and cooperation of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.”¹⁵

Evangelical Feminism’s Rejection of Eternal Functional Subordinationism Within the Triune God

Evangelical Feminism’s Embrace of Masculine Trinitarian Language and Rejection of Inner Trinitarian Functional Subordination

Evangelical feminists, otherwise known as egalitarians, have generally favored retaining traditional masculine trinitarian language. For reasons given above, particularly because Scripture is for egalitarians God’s inspired word and self-revelation, the vast majority of egalitarians have sought to defend masculine God-language against the criticism of many of their feminist colleagues. In the process, however, they deny that such masculine God-language has any implications either 1) of superiority of what is masculine over feminine, or 2) that the eternal relations of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit indicate any kind of eternal functional hierarchy within the Trinity.

Let it be said clearly that non-egalitarian, complementarian¹⁶ evangelicals agree wholly with the first of these denials. Because God created the man and the woman fully as his image (Gen. 1:26-27), it is clear that no use of masculine language for God is meant to signal some supposed greater value, dignity, or worth of men over women.

Furthermore, that women and men alike are redeemed by the Savior, and that the believing husband is to grant his believing wife honor as a “fellow heir of the grace of life” (1 Pet. 3:7) further indicates the full equality of personhood and worth vested in women and men, through both creation and redemption, by our gracious God. Egalitarian and complementarian evangelicals agree, then, that the Bible’s masculine God-language in no way indicates the essential superiority or greater value of male over female. Both men and women are, in creation and redemption, prized, sought, and loved by God equally; women with men stand before God equal in standing, dignity, worth, and human personhood.

Concerning the second denial, however, there is significant reason to challenge the egalitarian position. If, as egalitarians argue, the masculine language of God in Scripture is not a concession to a patriarchal culture but it represents rather God’s own chosen means of self-disclosure, what *is* conveyed by this masculine terminology? Does this masculine language not intentionally link God’s position and authority as *God* with the concept of *masculinity* over femininity? Furthermore, what *does* it mean that the Father is the eternal *Father* of the Son, and that the Son is the eternal *Son* of the Father? Is not the Father-Son relationship within the immanent Trinity indicative of some eternal relationship of authority *within* the Trinity itself?

Egalitarians reject these implications.¹⁷ They see clearly that if an eternal relationship of authority and obedience is grounded in the eternal immanent inner-trinitarian relations of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, then this gives at least *prima facie* justification to the notion of creational human relations in which authority and submission inhere.¹⁸ And yet, both features of the orthodox view mentioned above might be seen to suggest such a correspondence. That is, both the predominant masculine language for God, and the eternal nature of the Father-Son relationship within the Godhead could lead one to think that authority and obedience is rooted in the Trinity, and that authority in some special way corresponds to masculinity.

To counter these lines of thought, egalitarians argue fundamentally along three lines. First, they assert that the predominant masculine references to God in no way convey some corresponding authority attaching to the male. As already seen in the previous section, the appeal to woman and man being created fully in the image of God indicates no such subordination of the female to the male. Equality (only) characterizes their relation as human persons. As Paul Jewett has put it, to affirm the functional subordination of women to men in any respect cannot avoid that charge that women are thereby inferior to men.¹⁹ But the creation of woman and man as image of God renders this impossible. Masculinity is never inherently superior, though it is, admittedly, the gender in which God has chosen to name himself most commonly.

Second, they assert that any suggestion of subordination within the Godhead, even the claim of a functional subordination of the Son to the Father, cannot avoid at least an implicit Arianism.²⁰ The early church theologians, it is argued, rejected all talk of subordination regarding any member of the Trinity to any other. Full equality of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit precludes any and all types of subordinationism. Since the Son is *homoousios* with the Father, we are wrong ever to speak of the Son's subordinate status to the Father and by so doing undermine the orthodoxy won by Athanasius at Nicea and affirmed ever since by the church.

Third, all of Scripture's language of the authority of the Father and submission of the Son is only rightly accounted for within the incarnational mission of the Son. Here, as God taken on human flesh, precisely because Christ was the second Adam and fully human, it was necessary for him to subject himself to the will of the Father. Thus, as Gilbert Bilezikian states, "Christ did not take upon himself the task of world redemption because he was number two in the Trinity and his boss told him to do so or because he was demoted to a subordinate rank so that he could accomplish a job that no one else wanted to touch."²¹ Furthermore, when the mission of redemption was completed, the Son resumed his former stature and full equality within the Trinity, leaving forever behind the role in which he had to submit himself in obedience to the Father. As Bilezikian again comments, "Because there was no subordination within the Trinity prior to the Second Person's incarnation, there will remain no such thing after its completion. If we must talk of subordination it is only a functional or economic subordination that pertains exclusively to Christ's role in relation to human history."²² So, while masculine language predominates in the biblical depiction for God, and while the divine Father-Son relationship is eternal, none of this indicates a relationship of authority and obedience in the Godhead or a corresponding relationship of authority and submission in human relationships.

Response to the Egalitarian Embrace of Masculine Trinitarian Language and Rejection of Inner Trinitarian Functional Subordination

First, it appears that egalitarianism is in a difficult position. It affirms the predominance of masculine biblical references for God and yet it seems incapable, logically, to explain this divinely chosen use of masculine language. Granted, one can argue, as we have seen earlier with Achtemeier, that referring to God in feminine language would result in a confusion between Creator and creation. But, must this be so? Even Achtemeier admits it need not, while she is convinced it likely will. But, if God himself thought and believed as egalitarians do, could he not overcome this supposed faulty Creator-creature confusion that might be drawn if he so chose, deliberately, to employ masculine and feminine metaphors in equal proportion? Certainly he could make clear, as he has, that he is Spirit and so not a sexual or gendered being. Furthermore,

he could make clear that when he refers to himself as Mother he is not by this conveying an ontological connection with the world. So, I find it difficult to accept this as a full or adequate answer to the question of why God chose to name himself in masculine, but never feminine, terms.

Another obvious reason exists, one which egalitarians seem to bump up against regularly without acknowledging it for what it is. For example, in Wainwright's musing over God as 'Father' he notes that "'Father' was the name that the second person in his human existence considered most appropriate as an address to the first person." But why is this? To this question, Wainwright can only say that "*there must be . . . something* about human fatherhood that makes Father a suitable way for Jesus to designate the one who sent him. In trinitarian terms, the crucial point is that Father was the address Jesus characteristically used in this connection."²³ However, just what the "something" is, Wainwright does not tell us. But is it not obvious? Jesus said over and over again throughout his ministry that he came to do the *will* of his *Father*. Clearly, a central part of the notion of 'Father' is that of fatherly authority. Certainly this is not all there is to being a father, but while there is more, there certainly is not less or other. The masculine terminology used of God throughout Scripture conveyed within the patriarchal cultures of Israel and the early church the obvious point that God, portrayed in masculine ways, had authority over his people. Father, King, and Lord conveyed, by their masculine gender referencing, a rightful authority that was to be respected and followed. Malachi 1:6, for example, indicates just this connection between 'father' and authority. Malachi writes, "'A son honors his father, and a servant his master. If I am a father, where is the honor due me? If I am a master, where is the respect due me?'" says the LORD Almighty." God as Father is rightfully deserving of his children's honor, respect and obedience. To fail to see this is to miss one of the primary reasons God chose such masculine terminology to name himself.

Second, while the early church clearly embraced the full essential equality of the three trinitarian persons (because each of the three divine persons possesses fully and simultaneously the identically same infinite divine nature), nonetheless the church has always affirmed likewise the priority of the Father over the Son and Spirit. Since this priority cannot rightly be understood in terms of essence or nature (lest one fall into Arian subordinationism), it must exist in terms of relationship.²⁴ As Augustine affirmed, the distinction of persons is constituted precisely by the differing relations among them, in part manifest by the inherent authority of the Father and inherent submission of the Son. This is most clearly seen in the eternal Father-Son relationship in which the Father is eternally the Father of the Son, and the Son is eternally the Son of the Father. But, some might wonder, does this convey an eternal authority of the Father and eternal submission of the Son? Hear how Augustine discusses both the essential equality of the Father and Son, and

the mission of the Son who was sent, in eternity past, to obey and carry out the will of the Father:

If however the reason why the Son is said to have been sent by the Father is simply that the one is the Father and the other the Son then there is nothing at all to stop us believing that the *Son is equal to the Father* and consubstantial and co-eternal, and yet that the Son is sent by the Father. Not because one is greater and the other less, but because one is the Father and the other the Son; one is the begetter, the other begotten; the first is the one from whom the sent one is; the other is the one who is from the sender. For the Son is from the Father, not the Father from the Son. In the light of this we can now perceive that *the Son is not just said to have been sent because the Word became flesh, but that he was sent in order for the Word to become flesh*, and by his bodily presence to do all that was written. That is, we should understand that *it was not just the man who the Word became that was sent, but that the Word was sent to become man*. For he was *not sent in virtue of some disparity of power or substance or anything in him that was not equal to the Father*, but in virtue of the Son being from the Father, not the Father being from the Son.²⁵

Notice two observations from Augustine's statement. First, Augustine sees no disparity between affirming, on the one hand, the full *equality* of the Son to the Father, and on the other hand, the Son's eternal position as *from* the Father, whose responsibility it is to carry out the will of the Father as the one *sent* from all eternity from the Father. Jewett's claim that functional subordination entails essential inferiority is here denied by Augustine. Second, notice that Augustine denies Bilezikian's claim that all subordination of the Son to the Father rests fully in the Son's incarnate state. To the contrary, Augustine affirms that "the Son is not just said to have been sent because the Word became flesh, but that he was sent in order for the Word to become flesh." In other words, the sending of the Son occurred in eternity past in order that the eternal Word, sent from on high from the Father, might take on human flesh and then continue his role of carrying out the will of his Father.

As P. T. Forsyth writes, the beauty of the Son's simultaneous equality with and obedience to the Father expresses the willing service God intends his people to render. Forsyth asserts that "subordination is *not* inferiority, and it is God-like. The principle is imbedded in the very cohesion of the eternal trinity and it is inseparable from the unity, fraternity and true equality of men. It is not a mark of inferiority to be subordinate, to have an authority, to obey. It is divine."²⁶ And in another place, Forsyth makes clear that the Son's obedience

to the Father was indeed an eternal obedience, rendered by an eternal equal, constituting an eternal subordination of the Son to do the will of the Father. He writes:

Father and Son co-exist, co-equal in the Spirit of holiness, i.e., of perfection. But Father and Son is a relation inconceivable except the Son be obedient to the Father. The perfection of the Son and the perfecting of his holy work lay, not in his suffering but in his obedience. And, as he was eternal Son, it meant an eternal obedience. . . . But obedience is not conceivable without some form of subordination. Yet in his very obedience the Son was co-equal with the Father; the Son's yielding will was no less divine than the Father's exigent will. Therefore, in the very nature of God, subordination implies no inferiority.²⁷

Third, the egalitarian denial of any eternal submission of the Son to the Father makes it impossible to answer the question why it was the "Son" and not the "Father" or "Spirit" who was sent to become incarnate. And even more basic is the question why the eternal names for "Father" and "Son" would be exactly *these* names. John Thompson has indicated a trend in much modern trinitarian discussion to separate Christology from trinitarian formulations. He writes that "Christology and the Trinity were virtually divorced. It was both stated and assumed that any one of the three persons could become incarnate. . . . There was thus only an accidental relation between the economy of revelation and redemption and the eternal triune being of God."²⁸ It appears that contemporary egalitarianism is vulnerable also to this criticism. Since nothing *in God* grounds the Son being the Son of the Father, and since every aspect of the Son's earthly submission to the Father is divorced altogether from any *eternal relation* that exists between the Father and Son, there simply is no reason why the *Father* should send the *Son*. In Thompson's words, it appears that the egalitarian view would permit "any one of the three persons" to become incarnate. And yet we have scriptural revelation that clearly says that Son came down out of heaven to do the will of his Father. This sending is not *ad hoc*. In eternity, the Father commissioned the Son who then willingly laid aside the glory he had with the Father to come and purchase our pardon and renewal. Such glory is diminished if there is no eternal Father-Son relation on the basis of which the Father sends, the Son willingly comes, and the Spirit willingly empowers.

And finally, what biblical evidence exists for the eternal functional subordination of the Son to the Father? A running theme in the history of this doctrine (as seen above in Augustine and Forsyth) is that the Son was commissioned by the Father in *eternity past* to come as the incarnate Son. As Jesus declares in well over thirty occasions in John's gospel, he was *sent to the earth* by the Father to do the Father's will. Could this be reduced merely to the sending of the *incarnate*

Son to fulfill the Father's mission for him now that he has already come into the world? Or should we think of this sending, this commissioning, as having taken place in *eternity past*, a commissioning which then is fulfilled in time? Scripture, it seems clear, demands the latter view.

Consider, for example, Peter's statement in his Pentecost sermon recorded in Acts 2. Concerning Christ, he says, "This man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross" (Acts 2:23). The crucifixion of Christ fulfilled God's "set purpose" which he established far in advance of the actual incarnation. Though this verse alone does not tell us exactly how far back God's plan was set, we know from numerous biblical prophecies (e.g., Psalm 22; Isa. 9:6-7; Isa.53; Micah 5:2, to name a select few of the most notable) that God had planned and predicted, long before the incarnation, precisely the birth, life, death, and ultimate triumph of the Son. If Christ's coming fulfilled God's "set purpose," and this purpose was established long in advance of the incarnation, then it is clear that the commissioning of the Son occurred in Christ's relation with the Father in the immanent trinity and not after he had come as the incarnate Son. Consider another of Peter's claims. In regard to Christ's redemptive work, Peter writes "He [Christ] was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake" (1 Peter 1:20). If we wonder how far back this commissioning of the Son took place, this verse settles the question. Before the world was made, the Father chose (literally, "foreknew") the Son to come as the redeemer. The Son's coming in time to shed his blood reflects not an *ad hoc* decision, or a toss of the trinitarian coin, but the eternal purpose of the *Father* to send and offer his *Son*.

Ephesians 1:3-5 and Revelation 13:8 confirm this understanding. In Ephesians, Paul gives praise to God the *Father* for choosing his own *in Christ* before the foundation of the world, and for predestining them to adoption as sons *through Jesus Christ* to himself. Since Paul specifically 1) gives praise to the *Father* for this election and predestination, 2) designates *Christ* as the one toward whom our election and predestination is directed, and 3) states that the Father's elective purpose and plan occurred before the creation of the world, it follows that the Father's commissioning of the Son is based in eternity past, and that the Son's submission to the Father is rooted in their eternal relationship within the Godhead. Revelation 13:8 likewise indicates that the book of life in which believers' names have been recorded is 1) from the *foundation of the world*, and 2) is of the *Lamb who was slain*. Again, then, we see clear evidence that the Father's purpose from eternity past was to send his Son, the Lamb of God, by which his own would be saved. The authority-obedience relation of Father and Son in the immanent trinity is mandatory if we are to account for God the Father's eternal purpose to elect and save his people through his beloved Son.

But will Christ one day, as Bilezikian argues, be elevated to the same status or equality of role as that of the Father? Consider Paul's discussion of the consummation of Christ's reconciling work in a day yet future. He writes, "For he [the Father] 'has put everything under his [Christ's] feet.' Now when it says that 'everything' has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ. When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all" (1 Corinthians 15:27-28). Because Christ was commissioned in eternity past to come, in time and in history, to carry out the will of his Father, when this work is completed, Christ will place himself in the very position he had with the Father previously. While possessing again the full glory of the Father (John 17:5), he will put himself in subjection to the Father (1 Cor. 15:28). The relation of the Father and Son in eternity past, in Christ's historic and incarnate life, and in eternity future, then, is the same. Christ is fully equal in essence with the Father yet subordinate in role. Scripture clearly upholds these truths, and we in the church should likewise do the same.

Conclusion

We have examined two areas where significant and wide-spread revisionism is currently taking place in the doctrine of the Trinity: mainline feminism's rejection of Scripture's predominantly masculine trinitarian language, and evangelical feminism's rejection of the eternal inner trinitarian relations of authority and obedience. Each of these areas calls for great care by thoughtful and prayerful Christian people. Because we have God's inspired word, and because God has, in this word, made his own triune life known, we must with renewed commitment seek to study, believe and embrace the truth of God as made known here. Where we have been misled by the history of this doctrine, may Scripture lead to correction. But where contemporary revision departs from Scripture's clear teaching, may we have courage to stand with the truth and for the truth. For the sake of the glory of the only true and living God, who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit, may we pledge to him alone our fidelity, obedience, and love.

Addendum: Points of Practical Application

1. *Embrace Rightful Authority Structures.* Because the structure of authority and obedience is not only established by God, but it is, even more, possessed in God's own inner trinitarian life, as the Father establishes his will and the Son joyfully obeys, therefore we should not despise, but should embrace proper lines of authority and obedience. In the home,

believing community, and society, rightful lines of authority are good, wise, and beautiful reflections of the reality that is God himself. This applies to those in positions of God-ordained submission and obedience who need, then, to accept joyfully these proper roles of submission. It applies equally to those in God-ordained positions of authority who need to embrace the proper roles of their responsible authority and exercise it as unto the Lord.

2. *View Both Authority and Submission as God-like.* With P. T. Forsyth, we need to see not only authority but also submission as God-like. We more readily associate God with authority, but since the Son is the *eternal Son* of the Father, and since the Son is *eternally God*, then it follows that the inner trinitarian nature of God honors both authority and submission. Just as it is God-like to lead responsibly and well, so it is God-like to submit in human relationships where this is required. It is God-like for wives to submit to their husbands; it is God-like for children to obey their parents; it is God-like for church members to follow the directives of their godly male eldership. Consider Phil. 2:5-11 and see the pattern of God-like submission manifest. We honor God as we model both sides of the authority-submission relationship that characterizes the trinitarian persons themselves.

3. *Revive the Wholesome and Biblical Concept of God as Father.* As Jesus instructed us in his model prayer (i.e., the Lord's prayer), we are to pray to "our Father who art in heaven." The concept and reality of God as Father is so very glorious, and we dare not lose this article of the church's faith and practice because of abusive fatherhood or cultural confusion over what fatherhood is. 'God as Father' invokes two counterbalancing and complementary ideas: *reverence* (e.g., hallowed be thy name), and *reliance* (e.g., give us this day our daily bread). God as Father deserves our highest and unqualified respect and devotion, and he deserves our absolute trust and dependence. Devotion to and dependence on God as Father captures, at heart, the whole of what our life before him is to be.

4. *Our Common Adoption into God's Family is as Sons.* All of us, as children of God, need to embrace God's rightful authority over our lives. We are all sons of God (兒女 兒女) through faith in Jesus Christ (Gal 3:26), and as sons we must see our role, as with the role of the eternal Son, always and only to submit to the will of our Father. Paradoxically, when we obey fully, we enter fully into life as God created it to be. As Jesus said, "If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. These things I

have spoken to you so that My joy might be in you and your joy might be made full" (John 15:9-10). We are to obey, without reservation, fully, and with great anticipation of blessing, for as we obey, we enter into full and lasting joy.

5. *Our Worship is of the Triune God, Equal in Essence yet Distinct in Role.* The beauty and harmony of God's created design of diversity in unity (as seen, e.g., in marriage and in the body of Christ) is rooted eternally and immutably in God himself. We only worship God when we uphold him *as he is*. If we despise unity and "celebrate diversity" that is fragmented and disjointed, or despise diversity by insisting on a uniformity that denies created and God-ordained differences, we will not value God for *who* he is, and so we will not honor him *as he is*. In God, diversity of persons serves the unity of purpose, method and goal. The will of the Father is gladly carried out by the Son. When the Spirit comes, it is his joy to do the will of the Son. In purpose they are united, in roles they are distinct, and in *both* (purpose and role) there is glad acceptance. Together the three persons model what our 'diversity in unity' of relationship should look like and how our lives together are to be lived. ■

¹ This article was first delivered as a paper at the "Building Strong Families" conference, Dallas, Texas, March 20-22, co-sponsored by FamilyLife and The Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood. An expanded and edited version of this article will appear as part of a forthcoming chapter, "The Doctrine of the Trinity," in *God Under Fire: Modern Scholarship Reinvents God*, edited by Douglas S. Huffman and Eric L. Johnson (Zondervan).

² Consider a sampling of recently published works, and notice the variety of theological perspectives and interests represented among their authors: Colin E. Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1991; 2nd ed., 1997); Ted Peters, *God as Trinity: Relationality and Temporality in Divine Life* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1993); Thomas F. Torrance, *Trinitarian Perspectives: Toward Doctrinal Agreement* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1994); Duncan Reid, *Energies of the Spirit: Trinitarian Models in Eastern Orthodox and Western Theology* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997); Kevin Vanhoozer, ed., *The Trinity in a Pluralistic Age: Theological Essays on Culture and Religion* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997).

³ Donald Bloesch, *The Battle for the Trinity: The Debate over Inclusive God Language* (Ann Arbor: Servant, 1985).

⁴ Geoffrey Wainwright, "The Doctrine of the Trinity: Where the Church Stands or Falls," *Interpretation* 45 (1991) 117.

⁵ Mary Daly, *Beyond God the Father: Toward a Philosophy of Women's Liberation* (Boston: Beacon, 1973) 19.

⁶ See, e.g., Carol Christ and Judith Plaskow, eds., *Womanspirit Rising: A Feminist Reader in Religion* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1979); Virginia Mollenkott, *The Divine Feminine: The Biblical Imagery of God as Female* (New York: Crossroad,

1983); Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk: Toward a Feminist Theology* (Boston: Beacon, 1983); Ruth Duck, *Gender and the Name of God: The Trinitarian Baptismal Formula* (New York: Pilgrim, 1991); Elizabeth Johnson, *She Who Is: The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse* (New York: Crossroad, 1992); Gail Ramshaw, *God Beyond Gender: Feminist Christian God-Language* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995); Aída Besançon Spencer, et. al., *The Goddess Revival* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995).

⁷For very careful and thorough study and critique of this argumentation, see Alvin F. Kimel, Jr., ed., *Speaking the Christian God: The Holy Trinity and the Challenge of Feminism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992); and John W. Cooper, *Our Father in Heaven: Christian Faith and Inclusive Language for God* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998).

⁸Note that the early creeds speak of the second person as “begotten” not made, which, as such, contains no gender connotation. So, it is argued, to speak of the Child begotten of the Father/Mother is consistent with the language of the early church and preserves continuity while making a needed correction.

⁹Note the telling title of an article opposed to feminist God-language revisionism, viz., Elizabeth Achtemeier, “Exchanging God for ‘No Gods’: A Discussion of Female Language for God,” in Kimel, ed., *Speaking the Christian God*, 1-16.

¹⁰For an exhaustive discussion of biblical references to God employing feminine imagery, see Cooper, *Our Father in Heaven*, chapter 3, “The Bible’s Feminine and Maternal References to God,” 65-90.

¹¹Elaine Pagels, “What Became of God the Mother? Conflicting Images of God in Early Christianity,” in Christ and Plaskow, eds., *Womanspirit Rising*, 107 comments that “the absence of feminine symbolism of God marks Judaism, Christianity, and Islam in striking contrast to the world’s other religious traditions, whether in Egypt, Babylonia, Greece and Rome, or Africa, Polynesia, India, and North America.”

¹²Achtemeier, “Exchanging God for ‘No Gods,’” 8-9.

¹³See, *ibid.*, 12, where Achtemeier acknowledges that many feminists deny that naming God as feminine links God with creation, but she asserts and then supports with numerous citations her claim, “But feminist writings themselves demonstrate that it does.”

¹⁴Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, 4 vols. in 13 parts (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1936-1969), I. 2., 878-879, writes: “the content of the doctrine of the Trinity . . . is not that God in His relation to man is Creator, Mediator and Redeemer, but that God in Himself is eternally God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. . . . [God] cannot be dissolved into His work and activity.”

¹⁵Wainwright, “Doctrine of the Trinity,” 123.

¹⁶The term “complementarian” is the self-designation of the evangelicalism constituency that would see God’s created design for men and women as comprising male headship in the created order, reflecting itself in the requirement of a qualified male eldership in the church and the husband’s overarching responsibility in the leadership of the home. The single best volume describing and defending a complementarian vision is John Piper and Wayne Grudem, eds., *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 1991).

¹⁷See, e.g., Gilbert Bilezikian, “Hermeneutical Bungee-Jumping: Subordination in the Godhead,” *Journal of the Evangelical*

Theological Society, 40/1 (March 1997) 57-68; and Stanley J. Grenz, “Theological Foundations for Male-Female Relationships,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 41/4 (December 1998) 615-630; Royce G. Gruenler, *The Trinity in the Gospel of John: A Thematic Commentary on the Fourth Gospel* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1986); and Millard Erickson, *God in Three Persons: A Contemporary Interpretation of the Trinity* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995).

¹⁸Some egalitarians acknowledge the eternal inner-trinitarian Father-Son relation yet do not understand this as implying or entailing relations of authority and submission in the created order. See Craig Keener, “Is Subordination Within the Trinity Really Heresy? A Study of John 5:18 in Context,” *Trinity Journal* 20 NS (1999) 39-51.

¹⁹See, e.g., Paul K. Jewett, *Man as Male and Female: A Study of Relationships from a Theological Point of View* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975), where he asks, “how can one defend a sexual hierarchy whereby men are over women . . . without supposing that the half of the human race which exercises authority is superior in some way to the half which submits?” (p. 71). He continues by asking further whether anyone can “establish the mooted point—woman’s *subordination* to the man—by underscoring the obvious point—woman’s *difference from* the man—without the help of the traditional point—woman’s *inferiority to* the man? The answer, it appears to us, is no” (p. 84).

²⁰Bilezikian, “Hermeneutical Bungee-Jumping,” 67 says, e.g., that any talk about subordination “smacks of the Arian heresy.”

²¹*Ibid.*, 59.

²²*Ibid.*, 60.

²³Wainwright, “Doctrine of the Trinity,” 120 (italics added).

²⁴For a discussion of evidence that early church theology upheld the simultaneous eternal equality of essence yet functional relationship of authority and obedience among the persons of the triune Godhead, see also, Robert Letham, “The Man-Woman Debate: Theological Comment,” *Westminster Theological Journal* 52 (1990) 65-78; and Stephen D. Kovach and Peter R. Schemm, Jr., “A Defense of the Doctrine of the Eternal Subordination of the Son,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 42/3 (September 1999) 461-476. In limited space, Kovach and Schemm cite examples from Hilary of Poitiers, Athanasius, the Cappadocian fathers, and Augustine, with supporting commentary from John Calvin, Philip Schaff, Jaroslav Pelikan, J. N. D. Kelly, Charles Hodge, W. G. T. Shedd, and they cite (p. 471) the conclusion of Paul Rainbow, “Orthodox Trinitarianism and Evangelical Feminism,” 4 (unpublished paper, based on his dissertation, “Monotheism and Christology in 1 Corinthians 8:4-6,” [D.Phil. diss., Oxford University, 1987]), in which Rainbow concludes, “From the earliest form of the creed we can see that the Father and the Son are united in being, but ranked in function.”

²⁵St. Augustine, *The Trinity*, trans. Edmund Hill, vol. 5 of *The Works of St. Augustine* (Brooklyn, NY: New City Press, 1991) IV. 27 (italics added).

²⁶P. T. Forsyth, *God the Holy Father* (1897; reprint, London: Independent Press, 1957) 42.

²⁷P. T. Forsyth, *Marriage, Its Ethic and Religion* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1912) 70-71.

²⁸Thompson, *Modern Trinitarian Perspectives*, 22.

Trinitarian Perspectives on Gender Roles¹

Peter R. Schemm

Instructor of Theology

Southeastern College at Wake Forest

Wake Forest, North Carolina

The purpose of this article is to offer a critique of evangelical feminism. What follows is mainly a theological discussion that concerns the doctrine of the Trinity and the gender role debate. In what way might the triune relationship of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit help one to understand how men and women are related? Are there theological foundations for gender relations? The article evaluates the proposals of Gilbert Bilezikian and Stanley J. Grenz.

The Trinity: A Model for Gender Roles

One of the benefits of the twentieth century revival of trinitarian doctrine is that both egalitarians and complementarians have been able to tap into a larger discussion, asking the question, "What, if anything, can be said about the relations within the Godhead that might also explain how men and women relate to each other?" Those familiar with some of the more recent monographs on the Trinity know that the gender role question consistently finds its way to the surface.² Millard Erickson explains why a person with a feminist bent might see the doctrine of the Trinity as problematic:

Because the Trinity is composed of three persons, at least two of whom are identified as masculine in nature, women have no one to identify with. The spiritual qualities set up as ideals are those of the masculine gender. Furthermore, the Trinity has frequently been used to justify patriarchalism

and hierarchicalism. Women have been made to feel that they are inherently less than men. So for many feminists, both women and men, the Trinity seems incompatible with their fundamental experience.³

Consequently, there have been several feminist revisions (some more radical than others) of the doctrine of God in recent years. Rosemary Radford Ruether's *Sexism and God Talk* (1983), Virginia Ramey Mollenkott's *The Divine Feminine* (1983), Sally McFague's *Models of God* (1987), and Denise Carmody's *Christian Feminist Theology* (1995) all come to mind. But, this essay is not concerned with the broader picture of feminism, rather, its focus is evangelical feminism.

Gilbert Bilezikian

Gilbert Bilezikian's article, "Hermeneutical Bungee-Jumping: Subordination in the Godhead,"⁴ was originally a paper he delivered at the Annual Meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society on November 18, 1994. Bilezikian describes what he thinks the problem is:

From within our own ranks a potentially destructive redefinition of the doctrine of the Trinity is being developed that threatens its integrity at what has historically proven to be its most vulnerable point: the definition of the relationship between the Father and the Son. The promoters of this approach are not heretics bent on

subverting the faithful. They are well meaning but overzealous guides who venture into the dangerous waters of Christological speculation only obliquely, while attempting to press other issues.⁵

Bilezikian goes on to say that “some proponents of a hierarchical order between male and female attempt to use, as a divine model for their proposal at the human level, an alleged relationship of authority/subordination between Father and Son.”⁶ In other words, according to Bilezikian, the relationship between the Father and Son is wrongly used to legitimize the order between men and women.

The central question, insofar as the Trinity is concerned, is whether there is any type of order or ranking at all in the Godhead. Bilezikian claims that “nowhere in the Bible is there a reference to a chain of command within the Trinity. Such ‘subordinationist’ theories were propounded during the fourth century and were rejected as heretical.”⁷ He says that his position has been the view of the Western Church since the Arian controversy and its settlement at the councils. “There was no order of subordination within the Trinity prior to the Second Person’s incarnation, (and) there will remain no such thing after its completion.”⁸ Calling on church history again to prove his point, Bilezikian argues that “through the councils, the Church cut across all speculations to affirm the coeternality, the interdependency and the oneness in substance of the three persons of the Trinity, *thus excluding any form of hierarchy, order or ranking among them that would pertain to their eternal state.*”⁹

Summarizing, the flow of Bilezikian’s argument looks like this:

1. Ever since the Arian controversy the Western Church has affirmed an understanding of the Trinity that excludes “any form of hierarchy, order or ranking among them that would pertain to their eternal state.”¹⁰
2. Complementarians, however, read into the Trinity a hierarchy, order, or ranking so that, by way of analogy, they may have support for their position.
3. This lands complementarians in the camp of subordinationism.
4. Subordinationism is a heresy that has been consistently rejected throughout church history.
5. Therefore, complementarians who claim that there is an order or ranking in the Godhead are heretics.

There is, however, at least one glaring problem with Bilezikian’s proposal. He has clearly oversimplified and misrepresented church history on the understanding of the Trinity. He has taken the heretical concept of subordinationism and wrongly identified it with *any* type of eternal order, ranking, or hierarchy in the Godhead. Commenting on the

Nicene Fathers and the idea of subordination in the Godhead, Philip Schaff says:

[T]he Nicene fathers still teach, like their predecessors, a certain *subordinationism*, which seems to conflict with the doctrine of consubstantiality. But we must distinguish between a subordinationism of essence (*ousia*) and a subordinationism of hypostasis, of order and dignity. The former was denied, the latter affirmed. . . . Father, Son, and Spirit all have the same divine essence, yet not in a co-ordinate way, but in an order of subordination.¹¹

That Bilezikian has made a flagrant error can also be seen by surveying some of the classical exegetes of the Patristic period. Hilary (*The Trinity*), Athanasius (*Orations against the Arians*), Gregory of Nazianzus (*The Five Theological Orations*), and Augustine (*The Trinity*) all affirm some sort of eternal order or ranking in the Godhead.¹² One important example will suffice. Augustine, representing the Western Church, does indeed teach that there is an order that pertains to the eternal state of the Godhead. This eternal order can be seen in at least two ways.¹³

First, Augustine sees the eternal distinction of roles as related to the external operation of the Godhead. That is, “each of the Persons possesses the divine nature in a particular manner. . . . the role which is appropriate to him in virtue of his origin.”¹⁴ In other words, even in the unity of essence (for which Augustine is famous), there is an appropriate reflection of the eternally distinct order of the persons in the Godhead. Second, Augustine’s explanation of the mutual relations affirms an eternal order. One of Augustine’s signal contributions is that he attempted to solve the problem of subordinationism by positing the category of relations.¹⁵ In this approach, the Father is different from the Son relationally, and yet the same ontologically. The point is that Augustine was rejecting Arian subordinationism while at the same time holding to an eternal order among the Persons of the Godhead. Assuming that Augustine is widely accepted as representative of the Western Church, Professor Bilezikian’s appraisal is completely unacceptable. Although it is not the purpose of this essay to articulate, in a constructive manner, just *how* the human order of gender roles reflects the divine order of the Trinity, at least the possibility still remains (cf. 1 Cor 11:3).¹⁶

Paul Rainbow, in an unpublished paper titled, “Orthodox Trinitarianism and Evangelical Feminism,”¹⁷ evaluates Bilezikian’s denial of a hierarchy, order, or ranking in the Godhead in Bilezikian’s transcribed lecture on “Subordination in the Godhead, A Re-emerging Heresy.”¹⁸ Rainbow confirms that Bilezikian has misrepresented the historically orthodox position on an eternal order in the Godhead. Rainbow avers,

Not a single one of Dr. Bilezikian's charges can stand. The trinitarian doctrine he impugns as heretical, is in fact that of historic orthodoxy ... That only a few individual theologians subscribe to it, is patently false. His own rationalistic premise that unity of essence necessarily implies parity of station and function runs contrary to scripture as understood in all the major theological traditions.¹⁹

Rainbow concludes by asking Bilezikian to demonstrate his argument from the Church Fathers. He says, "let him bring forth from their writings...explicit and emphatic denials of an order among the Persons of the Godhead, considered as to their Personhood, as distinct from their being."²⁰ In Rainbow's words Bilezikian's view of the Trinity has indeed been shaped by the "feminist egalitarianism of which Dr. Bilezikian is a well known champion."²¹

Stanley J. Grenz

A more recent article published on the Trinity and gender roles is "Theological Foundations for Male-Female Relationships" by Stanley Grenz.²² While Bilezikian's work is basically a polemical approach that discounts the idea of subordination, Grenz's article is a more constructive approach that attempts to build a model for male-female relations based on the doctrine of the Trinity.

Grenz wants to correct the emphasis on the oneness of the transcendent God that has dominated Christian theology for much of church history. God has been characterized wrongly "by the supposedly male traits surrounding designations such as Lord and King."²³ This has led to a conception of gender roles that gives prominence to men and fosters hierarchicalism. Grenz welcomes the twentieth century renewal of interest in the doctrine of the Trinity because it points to a better understanding of human relations. He says:

Simply stated, the doctrine declares that the eternal God is not an undifferentiated reality. Although one, God is nevertheless a unity in diversity. The one God is the social Trinity, the fellowship of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Consequently, God is fundamentally relational. Hence it comes as no surprise that when God fashions the pinnacle of creation, a unity in diversity—humankind as male and female—emerges.²⁴

Grenz's thesis is that the foundation for godly male-female relationships is the mutuality modeled within the Trinity.²⁵ His reasoning is simple. Since God is fundamentally relational, "we can look to the dynamic among the Trinitarian

persons for the clue to understanding what characterizes godly human relationships."²⁶ Grenz describes this fundamental dynamic within God with one key word, mutuality. He says that the best way to look into this concept of mutuality is through the window of the relationship between the Father and the Son.

Grenz goes on to support his proposal on a theological basis. He claims that at the heart of the doctrine of the Trinity is an eternal dynamic, a two-way movement that is mutually reciprocating.²⁷ Grenz explains that the Church Father Origen spoke of it as the eternal generation of the Son. From all eternity the Father begets the Son in one eternal act. Consequently, Grenz argues that some theologians have wrongly constructed a linear model of the Trinity in which authority flows from the top down. Thus as authority flows from the Father to the Son, so also men have authority over women. According to Grenz, however, the problem with this model is that it fails to see that the eternal generation of the Son moves "in two directions."²⁸ Calling on another Patristic divine, Grenz says,

As the Church father Athanasius realized, this dynamic not only generates the Son but also constitutes the Father. In that the Son is none other than the eternal Son of the eternal Father, the Son is not the Son without the Father. But in the same way the Father—being the eternal Father of the eternal Son—is not the Father without the Son ... The idea of generation within the Triune God means that we must balance the subordination of the Son to the Father with the dependence of the Father on the Son. In short, the eternal generation of the Son indicates that the first and second persons of the Trinity enjoy a mutuality of relationship.²⁹

Grenz's proposal, however, is problematic for several reasons.

Overemphasis on Relationality

The first concern deals with Grenz's overemphasis on relationality in the doctrine of God. Grenz claims that although He is one, "God is nevertheless a unity in diversity. The one God is the social Trinity...God is fundamentally relational."³⁰ For the sake of clarity, what Grenz is not saying is worth pointing out. He is not saying that the only way to describe or understand God is captured in the concept of relationality.³¹ Nor is he saying that all other ways of describing God are insignificant. What Grenz has done, however, is to take the fact that God is relational and interpret the entire doctrine of God through this concept. In his systematic theology, *Theology for the Community of God*, Grenz explains:

Many theologians appeal to the concept of divine attributes in an attempt to pierce through the veil of mystery to the one, eternal divine essence.

However, because God is triune—the Father, Son, and Spirit in eternal relationship—our quest to speak of the being and attributes of God actually constitutes an attempt to characterize the relational nature of God—God in relationship.³²

While Grenz is to be commended for beginning his doctrine of God with the trinity of God,³³ his effort to correct the classical emphasis on the transcendence of God seems to have swung the pendulum too far in the direction of relationality. A balanced view of the doctrine of God requires more than the fact that God is fundamentally relational. Thomas Oden's caution fits well:

Classic Christian teachers warned against emphasizing one attribute at the expense of another... The history of theism is plagued by errors caused by overemphasizing a single one or set of attributes while neglecting others. Aristotle stressed God's absolute essence, aseity, self-contemplation, transcendence, and immutability, yet failed to grasp God's relationality, closeness, and covenant love toward humanity... A healthy equilibrium in the Christian teaching of God grows as one becomes firmly grounded in the interpenetrating qualities of the divine attributes so as to not overemphasize one to the neglect of others.³⁴

While it may be unnecessary to return to the classic Thomistic division in the doctrine of God, *De Deo Uno* and *De Deo Trino*,³⁵ where one focuses first on the divine essence, only later to reflect on the relations, still it is best to maintain a distinction between the two. It is important to recognize that each of the personal distinctions of the Godhead “belong not to the divine essence as such universally, but only to the particular person of the Trinity who bears its name.”³⁶ Therefore, in an effort to maintain the significance of the distinctions among the Persons of the Godhead, it is said that the attributes of God only belong to the divine essence universally.³⁷ Thus an overemphasis on relationality—that which removes the distinction between God's essence and His person—may lead to a weakened view of God's trinity.

Regarding male-female relations, then, there may be some other fundamental aspects of God, or communicable attributes, to consider with regard to humanity in general, and to male-female relations in particular. For example, is it not significant that God is spirit (John 4:24) and truth (John 1:14; 1 John 5:20)? A substantive view of the *imago Dei* would indicate such.³⁸ The idea that humanity, as both male and female, bear the image of God (Gen. 1:27) and thus can reason and understand truth is based on a very important attribute of God.

Moreover, God is holy (Lev. 11:44) and good (Exod. 33:19). These two attributes of God, no matter how they are

classified, speak of something beyond the concept of relationality. In fact, it is God's morality that is the fundamental foundation for ethical human behavior. Both male and female stand accountable before God to live under His divine instruction. While this instruction includes how men and women are to relate to one another, it is not limited to that concept. Thus, John Dahms argues that, “*The doctrine of the generation of the Son is an essential component of the theological basis for biblical ethics.*”³⁹ He says,

Fundamental to Biblical ethics is the teaching that we are to be like God ... What is right for us is analogous to what is true of him. But the Scriptures teach that Christians are to recognize the authority of those who are over them in the state, the Church, the home ... Because the Son is begotten (and the Spirit spirated) this recognition of human authorities has a theological basis. On the other hand, without the generation doctrine ... the social ethics urged in the Scriptures is not compatible with ultimate truth.⁴⁰

While Dahms' example of the subordination of the Son to the Father is a relational example, nevertheless, the point is that what is right for us is what is true of Him. Indeed, our relationships with others are based on what is morally right and ultimately true for God.

There are, then, other fundamental aspects of God to consider with regard to humanity in general, and to male-female relations in particular. In short, many of the concepts Grenz uses (relationality, mutuality, and community), along with the conspicuous absence of other ideas (such as authority, order, submission, and obedience), are cause for concern. It is not that his terms lack biblical support. They are indeed biblical concepts. Alone, however, they lead to an unnecessary overemphasis on relationality.

Origen and Eternal Generation

The second concern builds on the first. Grenz has distorted the teaching of the eternal generation of the Son. In an effort to correct the asymmetrical model of human relationships, Grenz claims that the generation of the Son is actually a two-way movement which, properly understood, provides a symmetrical model for male-female relationships. However, the classical teaching of the eternal generation of the Son is a one-way movement. It does not move, as Grenz says, in “two directions.”⁴¹ At least Origen does not speak of it in this manner. Neither does he imply it.

In fact, Origen rightly teaches that it is one-way. The Father, who stands at the apex of Origen's system, “is the source and goal of all existence.”⁴² The Son is the eternally generated Word (or Wisdom). He comes from the Father who

alone is “unbegotten.”⁴³ In more than one instance, Origen uses the analogy of light from the sun to explain eternal generation (an analogy that illustrates, among other things, the one-way direction of the generation).⁴⁴ When properly understood, “it (the analogy) clearly shows that the existence of the Son is derived from the Father, but not in time, nor from any other beginning, except, as we have said, from God Himself.”⁴⁵

The Eleventh Council of Toledo puts the one-way direction of eternal generation in clear terms:

The Son was born, but not made, from the substance of the Father, without beginning, before all ages, for at no time did the Father exist without the Son, nor the Son without the Father. *Yet the Father is not from the Son, as the Son is from the Father, because the Father was not generated by the Son but the Son by the Father. The Son, therefore, is God from the Father, and the Father is God, but not from the Son.*⁴⁶

To speak of the eternal generation of the Son as a two-way dynamic, as Grenz does, is without historical precedent and of questionable logical consistency. If generation is a two-way movement, then in what way can we meaningfully speak of the Father as ingenerate (Gk. *agennetos*)?

Harold O.J. Brown explains the significance of the language of “eternal generation” or “eternal begetting” when he says:

It permits us to ascribe the following traditional properties to each of the three Persons: to the Father, ingenerateness; to the Son, begottenness; and to the Holy Spirit, procession. (This language)...suggests to us part of the meaning of being a person, namely, that one is an individual and not interchangeable with another person: the begetter and the begotten one cannot reverse their roles.⁴⁷

Summarizing the second concern, Origen did not teach, nor has classical Christian teaching expounded, that the eternal generation of the Son is a two-way movement.⁴⁸ This is not to say that the Father could be the Father without the Son. It is clear that the Father is the Father because of the generation of the Son. But, the fact that Sonship constitutes Fatherhood does not require eternal generation to be viewed as a two-way movement.

Athanasius and Sonship

The third problem with Grenz’s proposal is that, apparently, he also reads his two-way idea into Athanasius’ argument found in *Orations against the Arians*.⁴⁹ The work of

Athanasius to which Grenz refers teaches nothing more than that Sonship and Fatherhood only make sense when thought of together. Athanasius says, “When we call God Father, at once with the Father we signify the Son’s existence.”⁵⁰ Grenz is right to point out that Fatherhood and Sonship are essentially related and that the Father never existed apart from the Son. But, eternal generation is still unidirectional and Athanasius does not seem to indicate otherwise.⁵¹

Interestingly, the significance of the ontological distinctions of Father, Son, and Spirit within the Godhead is rightly affirmed by Grenz. He puts it this way: “Were the threeness of the one God not ontological, the Son and the Spirit would ultimately be lacking in full deity. As Athanasius rightly declared, in that case we could not participate in salvation.”⁵² Yet, only a proper understanding of the eternal generation of the Son—that is, one-way generation—provides an ontological basis with soteriological significance. After all, it is the Son who submits to the Father for the purpose of redemption, not the Father to the Son. Athanasius argues that indeed this is the reason for the incarnation of the Word.⁵³

In short, Athanasius does not appear to teach what Grenz asserts. As previously noted, Grenz suggests that “the idea of generation within the Triune God means that we must balance the subordination of the Son to the Father with the dependence of the Father on the Son.”⁵⁴ If it is not altogether clear what Grenz means by the “dependence of the Father on the Son,” perhaps a rather startling statement from another one of Grenz’s recent works will help clarify it. In *Women in the Church*, Grenz calls on yet another Patristic divine, Irenaeus, and makes this interesting claim:

In sending his Son into the world, the Father entrusted his own reign—indeed his own deity—to the Son. Likewise, the Father is dependent on the Son for his title as the Father. As Irenaeus pointed out in the second century, without the Son the Father is not the Father of the Son. *Hence the subordination of the Son to the Father must be balanced by the subordination of the Father to the Son.*⁵⁵

What justification is there for moving from the Father’s “dependence” on the Son to the Father’s “subordination” to the Son? Wolfhart Pannenberg, the one whom Grenz appears to be following on this idea,⁵⁶ is more careful in his proposal. Pannenberg explains Athanasius’ effort to protect the priority of the Father and yet not lapse into Arian subordinationism with these words,

Athanasius, however, argued forcibly against the Arians that the Father would not be the Father without the Son. Does that not mean that in some way the deity of the Father has to be dependent

on the relation to the Son, although not in the same way as that of the Son is on the relation to the Father? The Father is not begotten of the Son or sent by him. These relations are irreversible. But in another way the relativity of fatherhood that finds expression in the designation “Father” might well involve a dependence of the Father on the Son and thus be the basis of true reciprocity in the trinitarian relations.⁵⁷

Following Athanasius, Pannenberg’s proposal for “true reciprocity” between the Father and the Son is a helpful trinitarian construct. The relativity of fatherhood and sonship is undeniable. However, trinitarian interdependency in no way requires Grenz’s distortion of one-way generation or the addition of the concept of two-way subordination between the Father and the Son.

In historical, orthodox trinitarian discussion, this type of language has no precedence. Neither does Scripture indicate such an idea. Grenz’s proposal seems to be more informed by evangelical feminism than biblical theology. It may be that his egalitarian presuppositions have contributed to his view of the Trinity, causing him to misrepresent the Church Fathers and the classical expression of the doctrine.

The Egalitarian Presupposition

The last problem is that Grenz seems to presuppose that for a mutually reciprocating love relationship to be meaningful there must not be an order or ranking in that relationship.⁵⁸ This presupposition, of course, is the touchstone of evangelical feminism. Any type of subordination, or ordered relationship, automatically implies the inferiority of that one who subordinates himself (or herself), whether willingly or not. Grenz’s presupposition, however, has a few flaws.

First, it is at odds with the relationship between the Father and the Son during the incarnation. Certainly there was a sense of loving reciprocity between them during that time (see John 6:38; 7:16; 8:28-29; 14:10; 15:10; 17:4; 1 Cor 15:24-28). If nothing else, the incarnation proves that it is possible, and in the case of the atonement, even necessary, to have an ordered relationship (wherein one submits willingly to another) and still have a mutually reciprocating love relationship.

Second, Grenz’s presupposition is problematic in light of the doctrine of “eternal generation” already explained above. As Geoffrey Bromiley explains:

“Generation” makes it plain that there is a divine sonship prior to the incarnation (cf. John 1:18; 1 John 4:9), that there is thus a distinction of persons within the one Godhead (John 5:26), and that between these persons there is a superiority

and subordination of order (cf. John 5:19; 8:28). “Eternal” reinforces the fact that the generation is not merely economic, but essential, and that as such it cannot be construed in the categories of natural or human generation. Thus it does not imply a time when the Son was not, as Arianism argued...Nor does the fact that the Son is a distinct person mean that he is separate in essence. Nor does his subordination imply inferiority.⁵⁹

Assuming that the Father and the Son (along with the Holy Spirit; or through the Holy Spirit as Augustine and Grenz both like to think of it)⁶⁰ share their love for and with each other eternally, then “eternal generation,” rightly understood, also stands against Grenz’s apparent presupposition.

Finally, Grenz’s egalitarian presupposition also breaks down in the illustration of his own son.⁶¹ Attempting to clarify the mutually dependent relationship of the heavenly Father and Son, Grenz explains that he was not an earthly father until his firstborn son was generated. Thus, “there is a reciprocal relationship inherent in human generation.”⁶² Although he understands that this human analogy “has an obvious shortcoming and therefore ought not to be pushed too far,”⁶³ Grenz still misses the bigger question. Is there not an order in the mutually reciprocating relationship of the father (Stanley Grenz) and his son (Joel Grenz)? Does Grenz really want to take the next step and say that the parent-child relationship is equal in both essence *and* function?

Conclusion

Both Gilbert Bilezikian and Stanley Grenz have made daring claims in their recent attempts to discuss the possible connection between the Godhead and male-female relations. Bilezikian’s approach must be rejected because he has oversimplified and misrepresented church history on the doctrine of the Trinity. The Church Fathers affirmed that, according to Scripture, there is an eternal order in the Godhead, an order of subordination that has historically been understood in such a way so as not to be confused with the heresy of subordinationism.

Grenz is to be commended for proposing a model of how male-female relations might reflect the relations within the triune Godhead. Indeed, it is no small matter to suggest, in human terms, how humanity might mirror the internal relations of Almighty God. His concern for reciprocating loving relations within both the human and divine frameworks is certainly a valid, if not, indispensable point. However, in proposing such a model, it is unnecessary to overemphasize relationality in the doctrine of God, redefine the doctrine of eternal generation, apparently misrepresent Athanasius, and

work from the assumption that loving (and reciprocating) relationships, must of necessity, be absent of all order or ranking.

A better approach is that there is an eternal order in the Godhead, an order in which the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit share and reciprocate love, and yet still maintain their eternally distinct roles. With this model, the order in the Godhead may be seen, however dimly, in the order between male and female. The reciprocity among the members of the Trinity (as well as on the human level) is not lost. Rather, it is made more meaningful by the personal distinctions of each member in the divine order. While there is still much work to be done in developing a constructive model for exactly *how* male-female relations might reflect the relations within the Trinity, nevertheless, the complementarian view of gender roles seems to make more sense theologically. ■

¹ A version of this article appeared earlier and has been reproduced with permission from: Stephen Prescott, N. Allan Moseley, and David Alan Black, eds., *Here I Stand: Essays in Honor of Dr. Paige Patterson* (Yorba Linda, CA: Davidson Press, 2000.)

² See Millard Erickson, *God in Three Persons: A Contemporary Interpretation of the Trinity* (Grand Rapids, Baker, 1995) 271-89; Catherine Mowry LaCugna, *God for Us: The Trinity and Christian Life* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1991) 266-78; Ted Peters, *God as Trinity: Relationality and Temporality in Divine Life* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993) 46-55; John Thompson, *Modern Trinitarian Perspectives* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994) 114-17; Peter Toon, *Our Triune God: A Biblical Portrayal of the Trinity* (Wheaton: Bridge Point, 1996) 22, 24.

³ Erickson, *God in Three Persons*, 271.

⁴ Gilbert Bilezikian, "Hermeneutical Bungee-Jumping: Subordination in the Godhead," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 40/1 (March 1997) 57-68.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 57-58.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 58.

⁷ Bilezikian, *Beyond Sex Roles: What the Bible Says About a Woman's Place in Church and Family*, 2d ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1985) 241.

⁸ Bilezikian, "Hermeneutical Bungee-Jumping," 60.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 66. Emphasis mine.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, vol. 3, *Nicene and Post-Nicene Christianity* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1923) 681.

¹² I briefly survey these classical exegetes in light of this question in Stephen D. Kovach and Peter R. Schemm, Jr., "A Defense of the Doctrine of the Eternal Subordination of the Son," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 42/3 (September 1999) 461-76.

¹³ See my unpublished paper, "Augustine, the Trinity, and the

Modern Gender Role Debate," delivered March 19, 1999 at the Southeastern Regional Meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society Meeting, Wake Forest, NC.

¹⁴ J. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1978) 273-74. See Augustine, *The Trinity*, trans. Edmund Hill (New York: New City, 1991) 2:9; 103.

¹⁵ Mary T. Clark, *Augustine* (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 1994).

¹⁶ I believe that the human order of gender roles *does* reflect, in some fashion, the divine order of the Godhead. On this much, Stanley Grenz (whose proposal follows) and I agree.

¹⁷ Paul Rainbow, "Orthodox Trinitarianism and Evangelical Feminism." This is an unpublished paper used by permission. Rainbow's argument against Bilezikian, and for an order and ranking in the Godhead, is based in part on his Oxford dissertation, "Monotheism and Christology in 1 Corinthians 8:4-6" (D.Phil. diss., Oxford University, 1987). According to Rainbow, 1 Cor 8:6 explains that while God the Father is the originator of all things, the Lord Jesus Christ is the great agent through whom all things came into being. The Corinthian passage is especially relevant to the trinitarian discussion because, as can be clearly seen in comparison, it supplied vocabulary for the Nicene Creed in several places. This leads Rainbow to conclude: "Hence the Father is the ultimate author and goal of creation and redemption, while the Lord Jesus is the mediator of both, taking a penultimate role with respect to his Father, a role which obtains for all his activity in the world, from the remotest beginning to the eschaton, and not just during the Incarnation. From this earliest form of the creed we can see that the Father and the Son are united in being, but ranked in function." Rainbow, "Orthodox Trinitarianism," 4.

¹⁸ Rainbow, "Orthodox Trinitarianism," 1. Apparently, this transcribed lecture was an early draft of "Hermeneutical Bungee Jumping," since the claims Rainbow refutes are repeated verbatim in the latter article.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 11.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² Stanley J. Grenz, "Theological Foundations for Male-Female Relationships," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 41/4 (December 1998) 615-30.

²³ *Ibid.*, 616.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 617.

²⁵ Cf. Stanley J. Grenz, *Sexual Ethics: An Evangelical Perspective* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1990) 47-51.

²⁶ Grenz, "Theological Foundations," 617.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 618. It is important to note that I affirm the idea of *circumincessio* or *perichoresis* among the members of the Godhead. The doctrine of the eternal generation of the Son is distinct from, but not mutually exclusive of, the teaching of the coinherence of the Three.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 617.

- ³¹ For clarity, it is well to note that I do not understand Grenz to be denying the unity of the one essence of the Godhead. See Stanley J. Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000) 65-75, 88-97.
- ³² *Ibid.*, 77.
- ³³ See Stanley J. Grenz, *Renewing the Center: Evangelical Theology in a Post-Theological Era* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000) 212-13. Like Grenz, I also see the value of beginning the doctrine of God with the concept of God's triunity since we first meet God in divine revelation as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Two of the most important modern discussions on the significance of beginning the doctrine of God this way are Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics, Volume 1: The Doctrine of the Word of God, Part One*, 2d ed., trans. G. W. Bromiley (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1975); and Karl Rahner, *The Trinity*, trans. Joseph Donceel (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1997).
- ³⁴ Thomas Oden, *The Living God* (Peabody, MA: Prince Press, 1998) 38-39.
- ³⁵ See Rahner, *The Trinity*, 16-21.
- ³⁶ Augustus H. Strong, *Systematic Theology* (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1907) 246.
- ³⁷ *Ibid.*, 245-46.
- ³⁸ See Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1985) 499.
- ³⁹ John V. Dahms, "The Generation of the Son," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 32/4 (December 1989) 498.
- ⁴⁰ *Ibid.*
- ⁴¹ Grenz, "Theological Foundations," 618. My concern is not that Grenz has misrepresented Origen on the concept of eternal generation, but rather, that he has distorted the proper understanding of eternal generation as a one-way movement from the Father to the Son.
- ⁴² Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, 128.
- ⁴³ Origen, *First Principles*, 1.2.3.
- ⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 1.2.4; 1.2.11.
- ⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 1.2.11.
- ⁴⁶ The Eleventh Council of Toledo, quoted from Thomas Oden, *The Word of Life* (Peabody, MA: Prince Press, 1998) 111. Emphasis mine.
- ⁴⁷ Harold O. J. Brown, *Heresies* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1998) 133.
- ⁴⁸ Geoffrey Bromiley explains "eternal generation" this way: "'Generation' makes it plain that there is a divine sonship prior to the incarnation (cf. John 1:18; 1 John 4:9), that there is thus a distinction of persons within the one Godhead (John 5:26), and that between these persons there is a superiority and subordination of order (cf. John 5:19; 8:28). 'Eternal' reinforces the fact that the generation is not merely economic, but essential, and that as such it cannot be construed in the categories of natural or human generation. Thus it does not imply a time when the Son was not, as Arianism argued... Nor does the fact that the Son is a distinct person mean that he is separate in essence. Nor does his subordination imply inferiority. In virtue and not in spite of the eternal generation, the Father and the Son are one (John 10:30) ... It ('eternal generation') finds creedal expression in the phrases 'begotten of his Father before all worlds' (Nicene) and 'begotten before the worlds' (Athanasian)." Geoffrey Bromiley, "Eternal Generation," Walter A. Elwell, ed., *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1984) 368.
- ⁴⁹ In footnote 4 of "Theological Foundations," Grenz points the reader to "*Apologia Contra Arian* 3.6." This appears to be an inaccurate reference. Perhaps he intends *Orationes contra Arianos*, since there 3.6 matches his discussion (PG 26:332c). Cf. Grenz, *Theology for the Community*, 68.
- ⁵⁰ Athanasius, *Orations Against the Arians*, 3.6.
- ⁵¹ Grenz uses Athanasius to argue against an "assymetrical model of God." In fact, this seems to be a questionable understanding of Athanasius. Grenz, "Theological Foundations," 619. See Alwyn Petterson for a clearer understanding of the assymetrical relationship between the Father and the Son. Alwyn Petterson, *Athanasius* (Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishing, 1995) 167-69.
- ⁵² Grenz, *Theology for the Community*, 66.
- ⁵³ Athanasius, *On the Incarnation*. As John Dahms puts it, "*The generation doctrine provides an ontological basis for the subordination of the Son of the Father*, which the NT emphasizes (e.g. John 5:19-30)." John Dahms, "The Generation of the Son," 497.
- ⁵⁴ Grenz, "Theological Foundations," 618.
- ⁵⁵ Stanley J. Grenz and Denise Muir Kjesbo, *Women in the Church: A Biblical Theology of Women in Ministry* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1995) 153-54. Emphasis mine. Grenz appears to be following Wolfhart Pannenberg regarding the Father's dependence on the Son. Grenz, "Theological Foundations," 619. Pannenberg, however, is more careful in his argument and does not speak of the "subordination" of the Father to the Son as Grenz does. Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology, Volume 1*, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991) 273, 279, 312-13.
- ⁵⁶ Grenz says, "Pannenberg is an important contemporary proponent of this idea." Grenz, "Theological Foundations," 619. Cf. Stanley J. Grenz, *Reason for Hope: The Systematic Theology of Wolfhart Pannenberg* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990) 50.
- ⁵⁷ Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, 312.
- ⁵⁸ Grenz, "Theological Foundations," 619.
- ⁵⁹ Bromiley, "Eternal Generation," 368.
- ⁶⁰ Grenz, "Theological Foundations," 622.
- ⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 618.
- ⁶² *Ibid.*
- ⁶³ *Ibid.*

Reexamining the Eternal Sonship of Christ

John MacArthur

Pastor, Grace Community Church

President, The Master's College and Seminary

Sun Valley, California

Near the end of his life, Augustine of Hippo meticulously reviewed everything he had ever published. He wrote an entire catalogue of his own works, a painstakingly annotated bibliography with hundreds of revisions and amendments to correct flaws he saw in his own earlier material. The book, titled *Retractationes*, is powerful evidence of Augustine's humility and zeal for truth. Not one of his earlier publications escaped the more mature theologian's scrutiny. And Augustine was as bold in recanting the errors he perceived in his own work as he had been in refuting the heresies of his theological adversaries. Because he reviewed his works in chronological order, *Retractationes* is a wonderful memoir of Augustine's relentless, lifelong pursuit of spiritual maturity and theological precision. His forthrightness in addressing his own shortcomings is a good example of why Augustine is esteemed as a rare model of both godliness and scholarship.

I've often wished for the opportunity to review and amend all my own published material, but I doubt I'll ever have the time or the energy to undertake the task. In this day of electronic recordings, my "published" material includes not just the books I have written but also nearly every sermon I have ever preached—about 3,000 of them so far. It's far too much material to be able to critique exhaustively the way I wish I could.

Not that I would make sweeping or wholesale revisions. Throughout my ministry, my theological perspective has remained fundamentally unchanged. The basic doctrinal statement I subscribe to today is the same one I affirmed when I was ordained to the ministry almost 40 years ago. I am not

someone whose convictions are easily malleable. I trust I am not a reed shaken in the wind, or the kind of person who is naively tossed about by various winds of doctrine.

But at the same time, I do not want to be resistant to growth and correction, especially when my comprehension of Scripture can be sharpened. If more precise understanding on an important point of doctrine demands a change in my thinking—even if it means amending or correcting already-published material—I want to be willing to make the necessary changes.

I have made many such revisions over the years, often taking measures to delete erroneous or confusing statements from my own tapes, and sometimes even preaching again through portions of Scripture with a better understanding of the text. Whenever I have changed my opinion on any significant doctrinal issue, I have sought to make my change of opinion, and the reasons for it, as clear as possible. To that end, I want to state publicly that I have abandoned the doctrine of "incarnational sonship." Careful study and reflection have brought me to understand that Scripture does indeed present the relationship between God the Father and Christ the Son as an eternal Father-Son relationship. I no longer regard Christ's sonship as a role He assumed in His incarnation.

My earlier position arose out of my study of Hebrews 1:5, which appears to speak of the Father's begetting the Son as an event that takes place at a point in time: "This day have I begotten thee"; "I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son."

That verse presents some very difficult concepts. “Begetting” normally speaks of a person’s origin. Moreover, sons are generally subordinate to their fathers. I therefore found it difficult to see how an eternal Father-Son relationship could be compatible with perfect equality and eternity among the Persons of the Trinity. “Sonship,” I concluded, bespeaks the place of voluntary submission to which Christ condescended at His incarnation (cf. Phil. 2:5-8; John 5:19).

My aim was to defend, not in any way to undermine, Christ’s absolute deity and eternity. And I endeavored from the beginning to make that as clear as possible.

Nonetheless, when I first published my views on the subject (in my 1983 commentary on Hebrews), a few outspoken critics accused me of attacking the deity of Christ or questioning His eternity. In 1989 I responded to those charges in a plenary session of the annual convention of the Independent Fundamental Churches of America (the denomination that ordained me). Shortly after that session, to explain my views further, I wrote an article titled “The Sonship of Christ” (published in 1991 in booklet form).

In both instances I reemphasized my unqualified and unequivocal commitment to the biblical truth that Jesus is eternally God. The “incarnational sonship” view, while admittedly a minority opinion, is by no means rank heresy. The heart of my defense of the view consisted of statements that affirmed as clearly as possible my absolute commitment to the evangelical essentials of Christ’s deity and eternity.

Still, controversy continued to swirl around my views on “incarnational sonship,” prompting me to reexamine and rethink the pertinent biblical texts. Through that study I have gained a new appreciation for the significance and the complexity of this issue. More important, my views on the matter have changed. Here are two major reasons for my change of opinion:

1. I am now convinced that the title “Son of God” when applied to Christ in Scripture always speaks of His essential deity and absolute equality with God, not His voluntary subordination. The Jewish leaders of Jesus’ time understood this perfectly. John 5:18 says they sought the death penalty against Jesus, charging Him with blasphemy “because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.”

In that culture, a dignitary’s adult son was deemed equal in stature and privilege with his father. The same deference demanded by a king was afforded to his adult son. The son was, after all, of the very same essence as his father, heir to all the father’s rights and privileges and therefore equal in every significant regard. So when Jesus was called “Son of God,” it was understood categorically by all as a title of deity, making

Him equal with God and (more significantly) of the same essence as the Father. That is precisely why the Jewish leaders regarded the title “Son of God” as high blasphemy.

If Jesus’ sonship signifies His deity and utter equality with the Father, it cannot be a title that pertains only to His incarnation. In fact, the main gist of what is meant by “sonship” (and certainly this would include Jesus’ divine essence) must pertain to the eternal attributes of Christ, not merely the humanity He assumed.

2. It is now my conviction that the begetting spoken of in Psalm 2 and Hebrews 1 is not an event that takes place in time. Even though at first glance Scripture seems to employ terminology with temporal overtones (“this day have I begotten thee”), the context of Psalm 2:7 seems clearly to be a reference to the eternal decree of God. It is reasonable to conclude that the begetting spoken of there is also something that pertains to eternity rather than a point in time. The temporal language should therefore be understood as figurative, not literal.

Most theologians recognize this, and when dealing with the sonship of Christ, they employ the term “eternal generation.” I’m not fond of the expression. In Spurgeon’s words, it is “a term that does not convey to us any great meaning; it simply covers up our ignorance.” And yet the concept itself, I am now convinced, is biblical. Scripture refers to Christ as “the only begotten of the Father” (John 1:14; cf. v. 18; 3:16, 18; Heb. 11:17). The Greek word translated “only begotten” is *monogenes*. The thrust of its meaning has to do with Christ’s utter uniqueness. Literally, it may be rendered “one of a kind”—and yet it also clearly signifies that He is of the very same essence as the Father. This, I believe, is the very heart of what is meant by the expression “only begotten.”

To say that Christ is “begotten” is itself a difficult concept. Within the realm of creation, the term “begotten” speaks of the origin of one’s offspring. The begetting of a son denotes his conception, the point at which he comes into being. Some thus assume that “only begotten” refers to the conception of the human Jesus in the womb of the virgin Mary. Yet Matthew 1:20 attributes the conception of the incarnate Christ to the Holy Spirit, not to God the Father. The begetting referred to in Psalm 2 and John 1:14 clearly seems to be something more than the conception of Christ’s humanity in Mary’s womb.

And indeed, there is another, more vital, significance to the idea of “begetting” than merely the origin of one’s offspring. In the design of God, each creature begets offspring “after his kind” (Gen. 1:11-12; 21-25). The offspring bear the exact likeness of the parent. The fact that a son is generated by the father guarantees that the son shares the same essence as the father.

I believe this is the sense Scripture aims to convey when it speaks of the begetting of Christ by the Father. Christ is not a

created being (John 1:1-3). He had no beginning but is as timeless as God Himself. Therefore, the “begetting” mentioned in Psalm 2 and its cross-references has nothing to do with His origin.

But it has everything to do with the fact that He is of the same essence as the Father. Expressions like “eternal generation,” “only begotten Son,” and others pertaining to the filiation of Christ must all be understood in this sense: Scripture employs them to underscore the absolute oneness of essence between Father and Son. In other words, such expressions aren’t intended to evoke the idea of procreation; they are meant to convey the truth about the essential oneness shared by the Members of the Trinity.

My previous view was that Scripture employed Father-Son terminology anthropomorphically, accommodating unfathomable heavenly truths to our finite minds by casting them in human terms. Now I am inclined to think that the opposite is true: Human father-son relationships are merely earthly pictures of an infinitely greater heavenly reality. The one true, archetypical Father-Son relationship exists eternally within the Trinity. All others are merely earthly replicas, imperfect because they are bound up in our finiteness, yet illustrating a vital eternal reality.

If Christ’s sonship is all about His deity, someone will wonder why this applies to the Second Member of the Trinity alone, and not to the Third. After all, we don’t refer to the Holy Spirit as God’s Son, do we? Yet isn’t He also of the same essence as the Father?

Of course He is. The full, undiluted, undivided essence of God belongs alike to Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God is but one essence; yet He exists in three Persons. The three Persons are co-equal, but they are still distinct Persons. And the chief characteristics that distinguish between the Persons are wrapped up in the properties suggested by the names Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Theologians have labeled these properties paternity, filiation, and spiration. That such distinctions are vital to our understanding of the Trinity is clear from Scripture. How to explain them fully remains something of a mystery.

In fact, many aspects of these truths may remain forever inscrutable, but this basic understanding of the eternal relationships within the Trinity nonetheless represents the best consensus of Christian understanding over many centuries of Church history. I therefore affirm the doctrine of Christ’s eternal sonship while acknowledging it as a mystery into which we should not expect to pry too deeply. ■■

JOB: Ancient Example for Modern Manhood

W. Frederick Rice

*Elder, Church of the Covenant, O.P.C.
Hackettstown, New Jersey*

Due to sexual misconduct biblical manhood is being seriously compromised within the evangelical church. A recent issue of *World Magazine* enumerated some of the most disgraceful episodes,¹ and yet we hardly need to be reminded that the incidence of sexual sin among professing Christian leaders has become epidemic. Misconduct has become so common that we dread, and yet are no longer shocked, by media revelations of each successive scandal.

What is wrong in the church? We of course must face the reality that there are always some within the church, even among its leaders, that are not true believers: they profess the truth, but do not possess the truth. In addition, true believers are not perfect, and are capable of falling into gross sin, as did King David, the man after God's own heart (II Sam. 11-12).

But why does there seem to be so much more sexual misconduct occurring in America today than in previous generations? An aggressive and hostile media is certainly reporting more of what is happening, but at the same time it is difficult to deny that such sin has in fact increased dramatically in recent years. There are at least two underlying causes contributing to the escalation of this kind of sin in the Christian community. One underlying cause is the influence of our cultural decline, and its concomitant preoccupation with illicit sex. Everywhere we turn we are confronted with sexual images or sexual conversation. Television, movies, advertising circulars, convenience store newsstands, and the Internet bombard our senses with sexual images, and talk shows and casual conversation are saturated with sexual innuendo. The other underlying cause is the truncated Gospel that has become far too common in American

evangelicalism. So often, when people are invited to Christ, they are not challenged with the cost of discipleship. Thus we have large numbers of professing believers who maintain a merely casual relationship with the church, and fail to see the necessity of following Jesus as Lord as well as Savior.

And yet, even among those who have a proper understanding of salvation and the church of Jesus Christ, there remains the problem of dealing with sexual temptation because of the "remnants of corruption"² in the believer, aggravated by our cultural setting. This category of temptation is in a peculiar sense a male problem. Of course Christian women also have to deal with sexual temptation, but not in the same way or to the same degree that men do. In fact women are often horrified if and when they discover the sorts of things that tempt their Christian husbands. This article seeks to provide biblical strategies for dealing with such temptation.

The solution to this problem, as to all our problems, is found in the Word of God. Jesus prayed, "Sanctify them in the truth; Thy word is truth" (John 17:17).³ One especially helpful passage providing instruction for men who desire to model biblical manhood in the area of sexual purity is Job 31:1. In chapter 31 Job is answering the false accusations that had been leveled at him by his friends. He is not displaying a proud, Pharisaical attitude. His friends had concluded that his many troubles must have been the result of serious and specific sin in his life. In the words of Matthew Henry, Job is giving a "just and necessary vindication, to clear himself from those crimes with which his friends had falsely charged him, which is a debt every man owes to his own reputation."⁴

In verses 1-4 Job answers the accusation of lust, in verses 4-8 he answers the accusation of fraud and injustice in business, and in verses 9-12 he answers the accusation of adultery. In this last section he denies that he has had any designs on a neighbor's wife. In verse 1, the focus of our consideration, it is not adulterous coveting that is in view, but sexual lust in a more general sense: "I have made a covenant with my eyes; How then could I gaze at a virgin?"

The NASB has the most literal translation of the Hebrew word that is used for the female envisioned: "virgin." Now of course this does not mean that Job felt free to lust after women who were not virgins. The KJV has "maid," the NKJV has "young woman," and the NIV has "girl." All of these translations are efforts to capture what Job has in mind: sexual lust for any woman, and the young single woman is representative because she is most often the source of temptation to lust.

That lust is in view is clear from the Hebrew verb that is used of Job's contemplation, which means to "consider diligently."⁵ The NASB "gaze" and the NIV "look lustfully" are the best renderings.⁶ Clearly Job does not have in mind the legitimate consideration of a woman's attractiveness or her finer qualities. How do we define "looking lustfully" at a woman? Some have defined it as involving a high state of arousal.⁷ This definition, however, lets most of us off the hook the majority of the time. Lust starts long before a high state of arousal is reached. Lustful looking is somewhat difficult to define. Someone has said, "I don't know how to define pornography, but I know it when I see it." Likewise, men generally know when they are looking lustfully. It involves sweeping a woman's body with the eyes, and desiring to have that body, or intentionally storing that image in the mind for future reference. "Looking lustfully" may involve looking at an actual woman that we pass at the mall, doing a "double take." Or it may involve looking at pictures of women in advertising circulars, on news stands at the local convenience store, on TV, or on the Internet. Or it may involve searching the memory banks in an effort to bring up images that have been stored there.

Job dealt with this temptation very aggressively: he made a covenant with his eyes. This is a metaphorical expression, since the eyes are inanimate. As Barnes says, it "is poetical, meaning that he solemnly resolved. A covenant is of a sacred and binding nature; and the strength of his resolution was as great as if he had made a solemn compact."⁸ But this metaphorical expression contains a profound and practical truth. Delitzsch points out that the Hebrew indicates the kind of covenant where a superior makes a covenant with an inferior—not a covenant made between equals.⁹ Consider the significance of this. Delitzsch paraphrases as follows: "as lord of my senses I prescribed this law for my eyes."¹⁰ As believers who are indwelt by the Spirit of God and delivered from the dominion of sin, we have the ability to control our eyes—not to the point of absolute perfection, but to the point of consistent domination. "For sin shall not be master over you,

for you are not under law, but under grace" (Rom. 6:14). We are not the helpless victims of our eyes. As a Christian man, you cannot say, "I can't help looking." Yes you can!

Now Job's purpose was not just to lead an outwardly chaste life—to avoid open sin—but to avoid the first motions of sin.¹¹ Verse 4 makes it clear that his concern was not what people would think, but what God would think: "Does He not see my ways, and number all my steps?" Barnes comments: "if a man wishes to maintain purity of life, he must make just such a covenant as this with himself—one so sacred, so solemn, so firm that he will not suffer his mind for a moment to harbor an improper thought."¹² In this connection Jesus said the following:

"You have heard that it was said, YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY; but I say to you, that every one who looks on a woman to lust for her has committed adultery with her already in his heart. And if your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out, and throw it from you; for it is better for you that one of the parts of your body perish, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. And if your right hand makes you stumble, cut it off, and throw it from you; for it is better for you that one of the parts of your body perish, than for your whole body to go into hell" (Matt. 5:27-30).

This means dealing radically with sin. Jesus was not speaking literally. We must always compare Scripture with Scripture, and self-dismemberment is forbidden elsewhere (Deut. 14:1; 23:1). Furthermore, we do not read of any of the apostles walking about minus body parts due to self-mutilation. What Jesus means is that in areas of *special temptation* we need to take *special measures to deal* with that temptation.

Who needs to take special measures, and what sorts of special measures need to be taken? The authors of *Every Man's Battle* state that in their experience 10% of men do not have any problem at all with sexual lust, 10% have an extreme problem, and among the other 80% there is a spectrum.¹³ In other words, the vast majority of men—Christian men—are susceptible to sexual lust, but for some it is more of a problem than for others. Obviously Job was susceptible to sexual temptation, otherwise he would not have found it necessary to make a covenant with his eyes. And since most of us share Job's susceptibility to one degree or another, we need to make a covenant with our eyes.

The sorts of special measures which need to be taken vary from one individual to another, depending upon the degree of a man's problem and the particular sources of his temptation. In considering the measures which can be taken to control our eyes, we must keep in mind that *we are not helpless victims of our eyes*; rather, as believers we *can* by God's grace control our eyes. One way to control the eyes is by staying away from avoidable situations that would subject us to temptation. This is employing the biblical principle of fleeing temptation (II Tim. 2:22). I know a

man who in order to avoid temptation turned down a promotion which would have required him to work in New York City. For many Christian men taking such a position would not have been a problem. But this man, knowing his own propensities, was dealing radically with sin, or more accurately the potential thereof. Perhaps for you dealing aggressively with temptation will mean staying away from the beach or from that gym that is frequented by scantily clad women. You may need to find alternative activities for your family in order to avoid certain situations.

Another special measure that some men may need to take is the elimination, or limitation, of cable TV in order to avoid some of those movie or music video channels. Or perhaps you need to get rid of your TV, as some have done. If less radical measures will work for you, here are some other suggestions. First, it might be a good idea not to flip channels, since you will often see something provocative in doing so; instead, go to the specific channel that you're after. Second, turn off those beer and bikini commercials, or look away, or get out of the room. If you travel you may want to have the hotel block the adult channels on your TV. As Jerry Jenkins observes, there may be some embarrassment connected with making this request,¹⁴ but if you are serious about denying yourself, taking up your cross daily, and following Christ (Luke 9:23), then this is a small matter.

Some men will need to take special measures with their Internet access. If it is not already the primary source of sexual temptation, it may well be so in the near future. Not only are there endless sexual images available on the Internet, but it seduces many by its promise of anonymity. A man can have access to tantalizing smut without running the risk of being seen entering an X-rated video store. Even if a man avoids the hardcore web sites, there are links to soft-core material from almost every home page, and it is so easy to click on a link. If you find yourself looking at material that you should not, you may want to put a filter on your Internet and give the password to your wife or a friend.¹⁵

But how do we control images that confront us in situations **which we cannot avoid? As Arterburn and Stoeker stress in *Every Man's Battle***, we need to learn to "bounce" the eyes rather than allowing them to linger on women or sexual images.¹⁶ In the convenience store do not allow your gaze to wander to the magazine rack; even fitness and entertainment magazines regularly have provocative covers. When you come into contact with a woman who, because of her provocative dress or appearance might tempt you to lust, look away, or focus only on her face. Sometimes you can limit her to your peripheral field of vision to prevent sinning with your thoughts. Whatever techniques you employ, do not allow your eyes to linger inappropriately.

The need to use any or all of these suggestions depends upon an individual's threshold of susceptibility. The question is this: in order to follow Christ, are you willing to deal radically with sin?

"Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? May it never be! Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness? But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed" (Rom. 6:15-16).

These strategies must be undergirded with positive spiritual disciplines, flowing out of faith in Christ alone for salvation from sin. The traditionally defined means of grace—the Word, sacraments, and prayer—all need to be employed on a consistent basis. Use of the Word should include Scripture memorization. Memorizing God's Word in general, and passages that have to do with purity in particular, is a great deterrent to temptation. Some especially helpful passages are I Peter 2:11-12; Psalm 119:9-11; I Cor. 10:11-13. The considerable time that many of us spend in the car presents an opportunity to memorize Scripture, as well as to listen to edifying tapes. In dealing with any problem area, we need to use a holistic approach, taking up the whole armor of God for the battle (Eph. 6:10-20). ■

¹ Lynn Vincent, "Here We Go Again," *World Magazine*, November 11, 2000, 18.

² This is the terminology of the *Westminster Confession of Faith* in its helpful chapter on sanctification (Chapter XIII).

³ All Scripture quotations are from the NASB.

⁴ Matthew Henry, *Commentary (The Master Christian Library, Ages Digital Library, Version 8, II) 388.*

⁵ Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and C. A. Briggs, *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1907) 106. The verb is the hithpolel of *bin*.

⁶ It is translated by the KJV "think," and by the NKJV and RSV "look," all of which fail to convey the intensity of the verb.

⁷ As Douglas Wilson, *Fidelity* (Moscow, ID: Canon Press, 1999), 18. On the whole, this is a helpful book dealing with the subject under consideration, although, as Wilson himself acknowledges, it is very blunt, and he suggests "that wives read this only when their husbands give it to them, and not the other way around" (13).

⁸ Albert Barnes, *Notes on the Bible (The Master Christian Library, Ages Digital Library, Version 8, II) 741.*

⁹ F. Delitzsch, *Biblical Commentary on the Book of Job, II* (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1949) 174.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ This expression is borrowed from Puritan theologian John Owen's "On the Mortification of Sin," *The Works of John Owen, VI* (London: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1966), an excellent work on remaining sin in the life of the believer.

¹² Barnes, 742.

¹³ Stephen Arterburn and Fred Stoeker, with Mike Yorkey, *Every Man's Battle* (Colorado Springs, CO: Waterbrook Press, 2000) 31.

¹⁴ Jerry Jenkins, *Loving Your Marriage Enough to Protect It* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1989) 59-60.

¹⁵ A free filter is available from the Christian web site <http://www.crosswalk.com/>.

¹⁶ Arterburn and Stoeker, 125.

Gendered Language and Bible Translation¹

Valerie Becker Makkai

*Associate Professor of Linguistics
University of Illinois-Chicago
Past President, Linguistic Association
of Canada and The United States*

As a professor of linguistics with a keen interest in the theory and practice of translation, and as a committed Christian, my reading of various translations of the Bible has always been accompanied by a desire to know the original Hebrew and Greek wording on which the varying translations were based. Some knowledge of ancient Greek and of the Semitic languages, as well as study of commentaries, has only piqued my curiosity. As I read and study the Bible I find myself constantly wondering how closely and accurately each translation reflects the original. Thus I have followed with great interest the debate that has arisen over gender-neutral Bible translations in general, and the NIVI (*New International Version: Inclusive Language Edition*) in particular, and I was pleased to be asked to write the foreword to the present contribution to this debate.

In the present volume Vern Poythress and Wayne Grudem have presented a well-reasoned and level-headed argument for their case. Indeed, they are a voice of reason in a dispute that is fraught with emotion and misinformation. They clearly understand the fluid and changing nature of language and their arguments are based on sound linguistic principles, some of which bear emphasizing here.

First, one of the basic facts about language is that all languages are constantly undergoing change. At any point in time, changes in pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary are in progress. Most of the time the speakers of the language are not aware of the changes. But if we look back in time we can see that at earlier stages the language was different. We sometimes have trouble understanding the King James Version of the Bible or the plays of Shakespeare because they were

written some four centuries ago and English has undergone many changes in that time. If we go back two hundred years farther in time, say to Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, we have an even harder time understanding. And if we go back five hundred more years to something that was written in Old English, such as *Beowulf*, we can't understand it at all—we have to read it in Modern English translation. Or look at Latin. In the course of less than two thousand years Latin has changed so much that it isn't Latin at all any more—it has become French and Spanish and Italian and several other languages. And so it is with all languages.

A second basic fact of language is that we cannot consciously control the changes that languages undergo. We cannot prevent the changes, we cannot stop a change once it is underway, we cannot predict what will change and what will not, and very seldom if ever can we consciously cause a grammatical change to occur. The reason for this lies in the fact that historically changes have originated as "mistakes" in pronunciation or grammar or word usage that children or others make. These "mistakes" often originate because the language contains some sort of irregularity in structure that people are unconsciously trying to regularize. If enough people make the same "mistake" over a long enough period of time, the new creation begins to be seen as less of a mistake—it becomes more acceptable, and eventually, if the more educated speakers of the language begin to use it, the new form becomes an accepted part of the language. Not all such "mistakes" are ultimately incorporated into the language, however, so we can never tell the end result until many years (often a century or more) have gone by.

As an example of this process, take the pronoun *you* in English. It can refer to one person or more than one. But in English we are accustomed to being able to distinguish between singular and plural, so our inability to make that distinction with *you* bothers us on some unconscious level. Thus, in various parts of the country a new “plural” *you* has been created (albeit without conscious intent): *you-all* or *y’all* (primarily in the South), *you guys*, *yous*, and even *yous guys*. These are all relatively recent creations, and they have experienced varying degrees of acceptance. In the south even educated speakers now use *you-all* or *y’all*, so this has become acceptable usage there. In other parts of the country *you guys* is commonly used, but is generally regarded as slang or quite informal—it has not been totally accepted even though some educated speakers may use it in very informal situations. *Yous* and *yous guys*, while often heard, are generally used only by less educated speakers, those who are less particular about grammatical correctness. It is important to realize that there is nothing *inherently* good or bad about *any* of these forms. They are all ones that various speakers, for various reasons, have created to fill in a perceived gap in English structure. Which one of them, if any, will eventually take over as “the plural” of *you* is still anybody’s guess. But ultimately the decision is not made by grammarians or scholars or anyone else who might have an ax to grind. It is made by all the millions of average speakers of the language who, by consistently using a given form over and over, turn it into an acceptable part of the grammar.

Attempts have often been made to stop such language changes in progress, but to no avail. One of the most interesting cases comes to us from Classical Latin times. A language purist (whose name has not come down to us) wrote a document which is called the *Appendix Probi*. It consists of a list of some three hundred Classical Latin words which, the author complained, everyone was mispronouncing. He carefully indicated the proper classical pronunciations (what “you should say”) alongside the mispronunciations (what “you should not say”). No doubt he was not the only scholar of the times who was appalled at the common people’s lack of knowledge of their language. Yet as we look at later Latin and at the languages that have descended from Latin, we find that every one of the “mistakes” that the author complained about took hold and is reflected in the daughter languages. No one, apparently, paid any attention to the instructions of the grammar teachers and scholars. They just went on saying “what came naturally,” which was what they heard other people saying.

This is essentially what we all do, even though we may “know better.” How many of us have said *it’s me* in answer to the question *Who’s there?* Do we know that *It’s me* is bad grammar and that we’re supposed to say *It is I*? Probably. Then why do we say it? Most people would reply, “because that’s what everyone else says,” or “it would sound stilted or silly to say *It is I*,” and so on. The point is that the language is changing, and we say what we hear others saying. The purpose

of language is to communicate, and if we don’t communicate in the way others do we are in danger of being misunderstood or being thought of as weird or pedantic or a jokester.

With all this in mind, when we consider the question of “politically correct” language, we can see that there is a totally different process at work in this case. Instead of letting the language change naturally, as the speakers feel the need for new forms, those who are pushing political correctness are trying to impose change on language from the outside. The politically correct language movement attempts to speed up and control the direction of language change. It is a conscious attempt to mold the language into the form that certain people think it should take rather than let it take its normal course. From a theoretical linguistic point of view such an attempt would be doomed to failure, as we have seen, if it weren’t for the fact that those who are controlling the movement have managed to give us a guilty conscience on the subject. We have been made to feel that somehow we are being insensitive to the feelings of various groups if we say the wrong thing, and so we try to follow the dictates of the “language police,” as Poythress and Grudem have termed them. This has resulted in a number of words being replaced by other, “more acceptable” words, not through a natural process of change, but because of outside pressure to do so.² And for the most part these changes have occurred first among educated, scholarly speakers, those who are doing the writing and who do not want their writings to be stigmatized as insensitive or prejudiced. That is, the changes have occurred first in the written word, and have only later trickled down to the spoken language of some people, though by no means all. This is the exact reverse of the usual process of language change, and it remains to be seen whether changes introduced in this fashion will stick. There is a considerable amount of backlash against politically correct language, taking the form of humor, or derision, or simple refusal to use the new forms.

With regard to the issue at hand in the present volume, namely gender-neutral forms, and in particular the issue of generic *he*, there is even more resistance to the changes that the “language police” would have us make. There are several reasons for this. One is that it is relatively easier to replace one vocabulary item with another (to replace *blind* with *visually impaired*, for example) than to change a person’s understanding of the meaning of a word (e.g., to claim that *man* can no longer be used to mean “humanity” in general). Secondly, in the case of *he* in particular, if we say that this word can no longer be used in a generic sense (to mean one person, unspecified as to gender) there is no good way to express the concept. We have no good replacement term, although a number of (rather silly) possibilities have been suggested. Thirdly, and most importantly, the speakers of English do not perceive a need within the language for such a change (as they do, for example, in the case of *you* discussed above). As long as the average speaker (and

writer, as Poythress and Grudem illustrate in Chapter 10 and elsewhere) does not feel the need for such a change, and has no ready form to use as a replacement, it will not happen.

Poythress and Grudem show a clear understanding of the basic principles of language change, as outlined above, and have applied them to the subject of Bible translation with great sensitivity to the holiness of the task at hand. They clearly recognize that language does change, and that Bible translations must be revised from time to time to keep up with these changes. On the other hand, they also recognize that there are reasons not to jump the gun. They present statistics (Chapter 2) that show that in both 1996 and 1999 23.5% of Bibles purchased in the United States were the King James Version—written in four-hundred-year-old language! Not everyone is clamoring for a Bible in the most up-to-date language. Some people like the archaic flavor of the language of the King James Version; they find it beautiful; they trust it. On the other hand, modern language translations are also clearly needed—people want to be sure they understand what the Bible says and they don't want to have to struggle to follow the language. Where the adherents of politically correct Bible translations go wrong, however, is that they are rushing to judgment. They are hastening to make changes that the average speaker of English has not yet made and may never make. We do not yet know, for instance, what the ultimate fate of generic *he* will be, and we probably will not know for years. It is not the job of the Bible translator (it is not even the job of the grammar book writer or the dictionary writer) to lead the charge in such a case. It is, rather, their job, as Poythress and Grudem recognize, to follow the patterns of grammar and vocabulary that have already been firmly established through common usage.

As the authors point out again and again, a translator, and most particularly a Bible translator, does not have the option of injecting personal ideas and interpretations into the translation. If we are going to call the result a “translation,” then we must *translate*—not rephrase or paraphrase. Many participants in the translation dispute seem to have an agenda of political correctness which is fueled by the feminist revolution. They want to change gender references and other terms to reflect current views and attitudes toward women. But as Poythress and Grudem state, our only agenda should be to represent God's Word as it was written, not what we wish His Word had said, nor what we think His Word would have said if it had been written today. Working with a translation that reflects as closely as possible the meaning of the original, Biblical scholars and others who want to interpret the Bible and to understand its meaning in today's setting are free to do so. But if the translation is done in such a way that the original meaning is obscured or changed, all Christians are deprived of the opportunity to read God's Word as it was given and then to interpret it according to our own beliefs. In essence we are being *told* what to believe.

This point strikes at the heart of my own personal faith. For most of my life I have belonged to the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), a denomination which grew out of the Presbyterian and Methodist movements in the early 1800s. It arose from a commitment to the unity of all Christians and thus it rejected the various doctrinal requirements of different churches of that time. We take the Bible as our only creed, and the statement is often made that “where the Scriptures speak, we speak; where the Scriptures are silent, we are silent.” This does not necessarily mean that we subscribe to a strictly literal interpretation of Scripture. In fact, most Disciples, for instance, believe that it is acceptable in modern times to have women as pastors and in roles of leadership in the church. I personally have been an elder in my local congregation for over ten years and I also currently hold the office of President of the Congregation and Chair of the General Board. I understand that the teachings of the Bible were intended for people of a different era, and I am perfectly capable of interpreting those teachings and applying them to modern times. It is not necessary for translators to do that for me, nor do I want them to. On the contrary, it is of utmost importance to me, as a Christian, to know exactly what the Scriptures say, in a translation that reflects as closely as possible the exact meaning of the original. Only then can I decide how the Biblical teachings apply to my life today. As Poythress and Grudem imply, it is insulting to me as a woman and as a thoughtful reader of the Bible to insinuate that I cannot appreciate the differences between ancient and modern cultures, that I am incapable of understanding accurately the meaning of something like generic *he*, and that I have to be catered to lest I be offended by such a “sexist” usage.

This attitude is evident in the fact that some participants in the translation debate take the position that for modern times the Bible ought to be modernized. Poythress and Grudem include the following quote from the Preface to the *Inclusive Language Edition* of the NIV: “. . . it was recognized that it was often appropriate to mute the patriarchalism of the culture of the biblical writers . . .”³ And (from a set of internal guidelines used by the Committee on Bible Translation for the NIVI): “The patriarchalism . . . of the ancient cultures in which the Biblical books were composed is pervasively reflected in forms of expression that . . . deny the common human dignity of all hearers and readers.” As Poythress and Grudem forcefully maintain, how does anyone dare condemn God's own Word as denying the “common human dignity” of His creation! It is rather *we*, in the supreme egotism of assuming that our culture is better than that of the patriarchs, who deny *their* human dignity. How much better to simply say that we will translate God's Word as it was written, without changing meanings and nuances any more than we absolutely have to, and then allow modern Christians to interpret the message of God's Word for modern times in whatever way seems best to them.

One of the major problems in translating, which the

authors discuss at length, is that one cannot always easily translate all of the meanings contained in a passage. Connotations of words (the extra meanings or associations that a word brings to mind which are not part of the dictionary definition of the word) are an important part of the process of communication, and the connotations of a word in one language are rarely the same as the connotations of the corresponding word in another language. The choice of one or another translation of a word or phrase may significantly affect the reader's understanding of a passage. Thus, as the authors point out, it is of great importance that the translation reflect as many as possible of the connotations and nuances of meaning of the original.

Some adherents of gender-neutral language seem not to understand a basic principle which Poythress and Grudem clearly recognize—that nuances of meaning are of tremendous importance in translation (as indeed they are in any act of communication). Linguists are in agreement that *any* change in grammar or wording, no matter how slight, *always changes meaning*. Take as an example the following situation: eight-year-old twins, Susie and Billy, are in the kitchen. Their mother comes in and finds milk spilled all over the table. She asks “Who spilled the milk?” and Susie replies “Billy did.” The mother then says one of the following:

(to Billy) You need to wipe it up right now!

(to Susie) He needs to wipe it up right now!

Whoever spilled it needs to wipe it up right now!

We need to wipe it up right now!

It needs to be wiped up right now!

Wiping it up right now would be a good thing!

Which of the above will Billy take more seriously? Which sentence will be most likely to cause him to jump into action? The same basic message (wiping up the milk) is present in all the sentences. Yet there is a clear difference in tone (in nuance) conveyed by the shift from second person (“you”), to third person (“he,” “whoever”), to first person (“we”), to passive—focusing on the milk (“it needs . . .”), to focusing on the action (“wiping it up . . .”). Does it make a difference which sentence the mother chooses to say? It most definitely does, as anyone familiar with children will immediately recognize.

While the above example does not involve generic *he*, the same principle applies to this and to all differences in word choice. The nuances of difference in meaning may at times seem trivial, but this is never the case — especially when we are dealing with Biblical texts which (in sermons, commentaries, and so on) are routinely subjected to intense scrutiny, with each word and its exact implications being carefully analyzed. Throughout their discussion Poythress and Grudem quite rightly emphasize that loss of nuance, with the resulting loss of details of meaning of the original, is something that should be avoided if at all possible. And their claim that substituting gender-neutral language does indeed change nuance and meaning is entirely linguistically sound.

While “translation is not treason,” as the authors point out (Chapter 4), bitter disputes over the translation of God's Holy Word might be so regarded. It cannot please God to see the dissension that has arisen over what should be a joyous and loving part of fulfilling the Great Commission. Poythress and Grudem have attempted to set the record straight on a number of misunderstood issues in the inclusive language debate. It is to be hoped that all involved in the discussion will read this book carefully. ■

¹This article is reprinted with permission from the “Foreword” to: Vern S. Poythress and Wayne A. Grudem, *The Gender-Neutral Bible Controversy: Muting the Masculinity of God's Words* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000).

²For a detailed discussion of this subject, the reader may wish to look at my “Correctness in Language: Political and Otherwise,” 1996 Presidential Address, *The Twenty-third LACUS Forum 1996*, ed. Alan K. Melby (Chapel Hill, N.C.: The Linguistic Association of Canada and the United States, 1997) 5–25.

³See Chapter 8 for the full text of this and the following quote.

Overview of The Gender- Neutral Bible Controversy

Rob Lister

Managing Editor,

Journal for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood

Louisville, Kentucky

The Gender-Neutral Bible Controversy: Muting the Masculinity of God's Words. By Vern S. Poythress and Wayne A. Grudem. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000, 377 pp., \$19.99.

The aim of this article is not primarily to produce a full-scale academic book review. Rather, it is more simply to provide a brief overview of the contents of *The Gender-Neutral Bible Controversy*,¹ and to commend to our readership its clear-minded insights regarding the translation of gendered language in Scripture.² Indeed, since it appears that this debate will continue into the foreseeable future, all thoughtful Christians (clergy and laity alike) committed to the inerrancy and authority of Scripture need to become informed of the issues, the arguments, and the stakes. To that end, *The Gender-Neutral Bible Controversy* offers considerable help. Moreover, in working through the issues, Wayne Grudem and Vern Poythress also cleared up a great deal of inaccuracy and misrepresentation that has characterized much of the recent literature.

In the first chapter, Grudem and Poythress introduce the debate over gender-neutral translations, and they lay out the basic points of emphasis that they intend to pursue in the remainder of the volume. From the outset, the authors make it clear that their concern (contrary to accusations of some) centers on the matter of *accuracy* in Bible translation (p. 4). Accordingly, this is the primary end to which the authors labor in this book, and their fundamental contention is that in *many* cases the gender-neutral translations fail to present the most accurate renderings.

In laying out the parameters of their engagement, Grudem and Poythress note that they are not addressing the “radical-feminist versions” that have attempted to undermine the “Fatherhood of God” (p. 5). Rather, they are primarily concerned to interact with translations that retain the traditional language about God, but “generally eliminate generic ‘he,’ avoid using the word ‘man’ as a name for the human race, and systematically exclude many instances of male-oriented words such as ‘father,’ ‘son,’ ‘brother,’ and ‘man’” where Grudem and Poythress contend that “a male component of meaning is present in the original text...” (p. 5). After arguing that the term “gender neutral” is the most accurate description of such translations (pp. 5-6), the authors demonstrate their even-handedness in the chapter conclusion by virtue of six helpful acknowledgments that offer balance and perspective to their project (pp. 7-8).

In the second chapter, Grudem and Poythress provide helpful background material that clarifies the context for and the development of the debate over gender-neutral translations. In so doing, the authors help even the uninformed reader prepare to follow their discussion on actual translation matters. The third and final preparatory chapter, then, sets the table for the discussion of translating gendered language by hitting the high points in the doctrine of Scripture. That is, the authors discuss what the Bible claims for itself in terms of inspiration, inerrancy, and authority, and then they conclude the chapter by laying out the kind of response that God’s Word calls for.

Chapter four turns attention more specifically to the issue of how one proceeds in translating Scripture. This chapter

serves as the “wide-angle lens” which introduces the issues and theories that occupy the biblical translator and that guide the specific evaluations of the authors in the later chapters. Central to this chapter is a discussion of the question of how to balance the preservation of meaning and form. To that end, after noting a number of the major difficulties that translators face (pp. 58-63), the authors discuss the development of translation theory throughout the twentieth century (pp. 63ff).³

After pointing out twelve key factors that play into the “total meaning” of a text, Grudem and Poythress note their advocacy for the approach to translation, termed “maximal equivalence,”⁴ that would serve as a foundational element for the heart of the book’s discussion (p. 71). The avowal of this position led to yet a more detailed discussion of the relation between form and meaning and the dangers of ultimately oversimplifying that relationship (pp. 77-78). One consequence of this further discussion is a helpful foray into the classification of the major English translations.

The final section of the chapter (pp. 82-90), denoting four levels of linguistic thought, is of foundational importance (as is the advocacy of “maximal equivalence”) to what Grudem and Poythress do in their specific analyses throughout the remainder of the book. As such, even though the authors rightfully flag the section as a bit more technical in content, it is worth slowing down to understand, and it will repay careful reading in the discussions that occupy the remainder of the book.

Chapters five and six move the readers into the specific aspects of the debate over gender-neutral translations. Chapter five identifies places where gender-neutral renderings are permissible or, in some cases, may even be more accurate. Indeed, this demonstrates (contrary to the misrepresentations of some) the claim of the authors that their interest lies in seeking the most faithful and accurate translations, not rigid conformity to gender-specific outcomes.⁵ Chapter six examines instances of gender-neutral translation that should be deemed unacceptable.⁶ Then Grudem and Poythress conclude the chapter with the interesting (but not surprising) note that the so-called gender-neutral translations only delete the “male sex indicator” and not the female one, thereby revealing the inconsistent bias that springs from the pressures of feminism (pp. 108-109).

Chapter seven begins the authors’ treatment of the most significant problem with gender-neutral translations—an error that affects verses numbering into the thousands—namely, the evacuation of “generic he” (p. 111). By this term the authors have something very specific in mind, and in order to avoid any misunderstandings, it will be helpful here to use their own definition. They specify that they are looking at the question of “whether it is permissible to drop ‘he’ when it refers *backward* to an earlier identifying expression like ‘anyone’” (111).⁷ Following the authors’ example of Matthew 16:24, we will note the differences between the NIV and the NIVI⁸ renderings:⁹

NIV: Then Jesus said to his disciples, “If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.”

NIVI: The Jesus said to his disciples, “*Those* who would come after me must deny *themselves* and take up *their* cross and follow me.” (117).¹⁰

To be sure, Grudem and Poythress do not suggest that the various gender-neutral translations obscure the main point of such texts beyond recognition when they adapt a translation that avoids using the “generic he.” Rather, their claim is that such translations are not as accurate as they could be, in that they fail to bring over nuances and shades of meaning that are there in the original (namely the masculine markings) and which can be represented in English by their closest equivalents, namely masculine generics (p. 112).¹¹ Following this explanation, the authors briefly describe the not-so-inconsequential losses of meaning that accompany the decision not to use the “generic he” (pp.112-113).

According to Grudem and Poythress, the key component that must be recognized in these trade-offs centers on the differences between “explicit and implicated meaning” (pp. 113-115). There is a subtle shift in meaning when what is explicit in the original is only implicated in a translation or when the implication of the original is made explicit in a translation (p. 113).¹² Moreover, gender-neutral translations require a subtle shift in starting point in terms of the representative example that the language brings to mind (p. 114).¹³ Consequently, subtle though it may be (and it is not always so subtle), shades of meaning are lost that do not have to be lost in an English translation. Finally, in the remainder of this chapter the authors yet again demonstrate the feminist pressure that stands behind the gender-neutral translations (pp. 126-127), and they also show how the guidelines established by the opponents of gender-neutral translation have been misrepresented (pp. 129-132).

In chapter eight, the authors delve deeper into the matter of feminist pressure. Here again, their presentation is even-handed. After clearly exposing the feminist agenda that has been such a large factor, Grudem and Poythress demonstrate the clear conclusion that the objection to “generic he,” which cannot be substantiated on “grammatical grounds” (p. 148), stems from an opposition to “male-oriented textual meanings” (p. 158). Chapters nine, ten, and eleven focus on responding to a variety of specific objections to the use of “generic he.”¹⁴ The responses of Grudem and Poythress throughout these chapters demonstrate over and over that they have a clear linguistic understanding and a firm grasp of the issues involved.¹⁵

While “generic he” represents the largest problem in terms of quantity, there are numerous other issues involved in translating passages with gender markings. These additional

issues are the special concern of Grudem and Poythress in chapters twelve and thirteen,¹⁶ in which they call attention to “the extent of the changes” made in gender-neutral translations (p. 277). Accordingly, they note, in the NRSV for example, that the “total number of unacceptable changes in meaning” could be in excess of 4,600 instances (p. 278). When viewed in that light, one quickly recognizes that this is no small matter at all. Meaning and accuracy are lost in spades. And what is the basis for doing so? As Grudem and Poythress demonstrate time and again, these changes, on the whole, are not called for on the basis of sound grammatical reasoning. Rather, they reflect the feminist aversion to the “male-oriented textual meanings” that are present in the original languages (p. 158).

Chapters fourteen and fifteen respectively offer suggestions for practical application and pull together the authors’ final conclusions.¹⁷

The contributions of this book are manifold. Remarkably, Grudem and Poythress provide a thorough yet clear volume that is both technical and readable. Scholars and laypersons alike will profit from reading this book. The authors are also to be commended for their charitable tone. They do not presume to know the motives of gender-neutral translators or advocates. They simply concern themselves with the texts that have been produced, and they direct their comments accordingly. Especially for the benefit of the laypersons, Grudem and Poythress offer some helpful practical suggestions, including a few “at-a-glance” tests to ascertain the gender translation policy of the various English translations (pp. 291-292), an encouraging reminder that this debate is not only the concern of scholars (p. 292), and four strategic recommendations for how laypeople can help in this matter (pp. 294-296).

Insofar as the main point of the book is concerned, suffice it to say that in the opinion of this author, *The Gender-Neutral Bible Controversy* convincingly demonstrates its thesis that gender-neutral translations do not preserve all the shades of meaning that they can from the original text. Rather, in their capitulation to feminist pressures these versions do indeed “mute the masculinity of God’s words” by giving up the use of terms available to them in the English language, not because of compelling grammatical argumentation, but because these nearest meaning equivalents are marked with masculine meaning (not just masculine form).

What’s more, Grudem and Poythress help to clarify issues that others have previously clouded. Indeed they present a technically skilled linguistic analysis in a way that is understandable to the common reader. Moreover, they substantiate their claims by repeated appeal to textual examples. Verse after verse is examined in demonstration of the “maximal equivalence” approach to translation. Clearly there is no special pleading, nor do the authors set up “straw men” to establish their case. For their contribution, then, this

volume ought to be welcomed and the authors ought to be thanked. May evangelical readers everywhere give this volume a fair reading and then decide for themselves. ■

¹ In this respect, however, any reviewer will quickly find the inability to surpass the splendid and detailed outline provided in the Table of Contents. Indeed, the Table of Contents is a major strength of the book as it guides the reader through the book’s framework, and provides an entry-way into the discussion of translating gendered language for readers of almost any level.

² At the outset, the reader should also be reminded that this overview cannot delve into all the specifics of the argumentation offered within this volume. It will come as no surprise then, that, herein, the contents and argumentation of the book will be addressed in a broader and less specific manner. Consequently, though this overview aims at accurately summarizing the contents of *The Gender-Neutral Bible Controversy*, the present author in no way claims that this overview will accomplish that task comprehensively. One purpose of this overview then, is to whet the reader’s appetite for the fuller and more helpful discussion. Accordingly, the reader is encouraged to work through the book itself.

³ Specifically they discussed the advent and development of the “dynamic equivalence” theory. See the following footnote for a definition.

⁴ Again, this term is descriptive of a position on the question of whether to preserve form or meaning in translation. There has been development on this question, and several positions have been taken. According to the authors, “‘dynamic equivalence’ means choosing an expression that yields equivalent *meaning* in the target language. ‘Formal equivalence,’ by contrast means choosing an expression that has one-to-one matching *forms* in the target language, regardless of whether the meaning is the same” (pp. 61-62). “Formal equivalence” then, is something of a naïve approach in that it is only concerned to match forms. “Dynamic equivalence” represents an advance in translation theory in its concern to translate meaning and not just form. “Maximal equivalence” then, represents yet another advance in its recognition that “form and meaning are not neatly separable” (p. 85, cf. p. 77). In other words, this position recognizes that forms themselves carry subtle shades of meaning. Hence, while recognizing that no translation can account for every shade of meaning in the original text (p. 70), proponents of this approach hold that translators should be responsible not only for conveying the “basic meaning” of a text but also for bringing “over into the receptor language as much of the meaning of the original as they can” (p. 71). The reason for this springs from the simple recognition that everything God inspired in the original languages of Scripture is important (2 Tim. 3:16). Therefore, translators should responsibly try to capture as much of it as possible.

⁵ Moreover, this chapter also demonstrates the authors’

longstanding recognition (once again contra the misrepresentations of some) that languages do indeed change (note the footnote on pp. 92-93).

- ⁶ These cases include: “removing reference to males in historical passages” (pp. 101-104), “removing references to males in parables” (pp. 104-105), “removing references to males who are examples of principles” (pp. 105-107), and finally, general rules *with exceptions* for the Greek and Hebrew terms for “father” and “son” (pp. 107-108).
- ⁷ For a further clarification of what they are *not* speaking about, see their discussion on page 111 as well as section B in chapter five.
- ⁸ I.e. the New International Version Inclusive Language Edition.
- ⁹ For the sake of brevity we only note one example here. The reader is referred to the discussion in chapters seven and following. Furthermore, the reader is reminded of the pervasiveness of this particular problem.
- ¹⁰ In this example, the gender-neutral translation changes the third person singular pronouns to third person plurals. This is not the only way that gender-neutral translations attempt to get around the masculine marking of “generic he,” but it is a fairly prominent method.
- ¹¹ Hence, for the sake of “maximal equivalence,” the person translating into English ought to bring over all that he can, including the masculine markings, since (as the authors later argue at length) “generic he” is available when translating into English.
- ¹² This chapter provides a very helpful discussion of the various losses in meaning that can occur. They are, in fact, too numerous to mention here as the losses pertain to different areas depending on how the gender-neutral translation attempts to get around “generic he.” If the reader wants to understand the heart of the issue addressed in this book, then this chapter is a must read. Just to discuss the example already given (Matt. 16:24), however, the loss that occurs involves the shift in starting point that moves from a focus on a representative (male) individual to a focus on a group. As Grudem and Poythress note, “in the NIVI, ‘their cross’ in the singular could be construed as a single cross belonging to the whole group jointly. If one reads it this way, the group jointly has responsibility for a single ‘cross,’ a group shame. They also have a group life, in which they deny ‘themselves,’ their former identity as a group” (p. 117).
- ¹³ Here is one place where recalling the explanation of four-tiered linguistic thought at the end of chapter four will aid the reader in following the argument.
- ¹⁴ In general, each of these arguments falls under one of three main headings: “1) arguments for making the Bible more acceptable to modern readers, 2) arguments based on analyzing either ancient or modern languages, and 3) an argument for avoiding misunderstanding” (p. 163). These three headings then, are taken up in the three chapters respectively.
- One key point that emerges from these chapters bears pointing out here. Some have suggested that “generic he” is undergoing a

reduction in frequency in contemporary English. Some have gone further in expressing the anticipation that if “generic he” is not already on the verge of obsolescence in contemporary English, then it will (in their view) inevitably go that way in the not too distant future (p. 213). As Grudem and Poythress abundantly demonstrated, however, it is far too soon to begin laying “generic he” to rest. In fact, there is massive evidence in contemporary English to the contrary (pp. 203-221). Moreover, even granting the charges of “infrequency” for the sake of argument, the issue hinges not on the frequency of the spoken expression in everyday use, but on the understandability of the expression when confronted with it (pp. 212-213). And the fact of the matter is that “generic he” is an understandable expression in contemporary English (and looks to be so into the indefinite future). One semi-ironic reason that this is so stems from the practice (endorsed by feminists) of using “generic she.” According to the authors, “the use of “she” keeps “he” understandable, because the two usages are structurally analogous” (p. 214). Beyond that, Grudem and Poythress also offer a convincing argument for the inevitability of “generic he” (pp. 215-221). The outcome of all this is that “generic he” has remained in play and is likely to continue to do so. Hence, if it is available, understandable, and provides the closest meaning equivalent to the text of the original language, then (aside from unusual cases and the exceptions mentioned in this volume) the translator ought to use it to capture the fullest range of authorially intended meaning as possible.

¹⁵ Indeed as Valerie Becker Makkai noted in the Foreword, Grudem and Poythress “are a voice of reason in a dispute that is fraught with emotion and misinformation” (p. xvii). These chapters are of tremendous importance in guiding the reader to a clear-headed grasp of the issue.

¹⁶ Examples of the issues in these chapters include: “the use of ‘man’ for the human race” (pp. 233-242), the phrase “son of man” in the Old Testament (pp. 242-245), individual male examples of a general principle (pp. 246-251), and others.

¹⁷ The reader should note that although this review does not contain a discussion of the material in the appendices, this reviewer finds that all six appendices are valuable and offer further aid in understanding the issues.

Annotated Bibliography for Gender Related Articles in 2000

Compiled and Annotated by Rob Lister
Managing Editor,
Journal for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood
 Louisville, Kentucky

A word of explanation is in order, as *JBMW* readers will find this portion of the journal unfamiliar to them. As another means of helping the church deal biblically with gender issues, we at *JBMW* would like to help keep our readership abreast of the range of publications pertaining to gender issues. This new section in the journal represents our effort to do just that. In the spring edition of every journal, *JBMW* will attempt to provide a near comprehensive bibliography with annotations for all the gender-related journal articles published in the previous year. Then, in the fall edition, *JBMW* will attempt to do the same thing with the gender-related books of the previous year.

In so doing, we believe that our readers will quickly recognize from the sheer quantity of the publications the need to stand biblically firm on the matter of gender issues facing the contemporary church. To that end, *JBMW* has attempted to provide an appropriate classification and annotation of each of these articles. The annotations focus on reporting the content of the respective article, but where appropriate, they also interact with the articles in an effort to expose problematic thinking. In that way, we hope to help our readership remain on top of what is currently being said as well as how it is said.

A brief word about the classification system. The reader will notice that the articles are classified according to their stance on gender issues. **Complementarian**, **Egalitarian**, **Non-Evangelical**, and **Undeclared** have all been assigned as headings. The **Complementarian** heading should be self-evident to our readers. By **Egalitarian**, we intend to classify evangelicals who do not see a place in Scripture for male headship in the church or home. Under the **Non-Evangelical**

heading, we have classified articles that are strictly secular in vantage point (e.g. a psychological or sociological article) as well as articles that broach the subject of biblical gender issues from a non-evangelical point of view. In some cases this latter group of articles represents radical feminists whose teaching is undeniably unbiblical and, since their beliefs show that they have no claim to anything that is distinctively evangelical, we felt it would be a misrepresentation to classify them alongside evangelical feminists. Finally, under the **Undeclared** heading, we have listed those articles that do not give sufficient indication of their stance for us to classify them more specifically.

A final note of interest to our readers. Upon compiling these bibliographies, they will also be posted on our website. This then, will be a resource that is always in progress and always growing. Over time, in addition to staying on top of the current literature, we also intend to work our way back as far as we can go through previous gender-related publications. As this information is compiled it too will be posted on our website (www.cbmw.org).

Complementarian Authors/Articles

Baugh, S. M. "Relativizing Paul." *Journal for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* 5 (2000) 1-12.

Baugh presents the egalitarian view of I Tim. 2:12 which understands the command as no longer applicable due to special circumstances (namely cult prostitution) that they believe limits the command to

the original recipients in Ephesus only. Baugh, then, overturns this hypothesis based on its lack of convincing evidence.

Bolt, Peter G. "If the Son Shall Make You Free..." *Journal for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* 5 (2000) 13-17.

Bolt documents how various feminists have begun to press for the international illegality of churches that would differentiate roles and spheres of authority on the basis of gender. Bolt, then, turns his attention to demonstrating the inconsistencies and wrong-headedness of such thought.

Carlson, Allan. "Domestic Partners." *World* 15 (2000) 29-32.

Carlson looks at marriage from a sociological and historical standpoint, and points out that marriage as an economic union has historically stabilized secular marriages. He then attempts to show how the division of work and home has traumatized marriage and family life. Carlson concludes with some political and personal suggestions for reclaiming a measure of traditional family values.

Chapell, Bryan. "Alpha Male meets Alpha and Omega." *World* 15 (2000) 22-26.

Chapell draws out some of the practical implications of complementarian understanding of headship and submission.

Chin, Steve. "Marriage is Multicultural." *World* 15 (2000) 62-63.

Chin argues that heterosexual marriage is not "merely a product of Judeo-Christian thinking." Rather, it is an institution spanning all cultures and times.

Cottrell, Jack. "The Gender of Jesus and the Incarnation: A Case Study in Feminist Hermeneutics." *Stone-Campbell Journal* 3 (2000) 171-194.

Cottrell examines how some feminists handle the incarnation of Christ as a male. Cottrell begins with a helpful summary of the various feminist responses, and then he offers a careful, systematic rebuttal of the feminist hermeneutic and consequent readings.

Donnelly, Elaine. "GI Janes." *World* 15 (2000) 58-60.

Donnelly depicts how feminists have pushed their agenda, with a great deal of success, in the United States military, thereby changing the military's top priority from one of "military readiness" to one of androgynous social experimentation.

Jeffrey, David Lyle. "Death of Father Language." *Journal for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* 4 (2000) 1-16.

Jeffrey depicts the failure of inclusive language in its attempt to reconfigure the "Fatherhood of God." Demonstrating his point from the Scriptures (especially the words of Jesus), Jeffrey shows how such "goddess religions" clearly fall short of being Christian.

Jeffrey, David Lyle. "Inclusive Language and Worship." *Journal for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* 4 (2000) 10-16.

Jeffrey discusses a number of linguistic issues leading up to his main point, namely, the link between language and worship. Jeffrey notes that the Scriptures give to us the language of worship and that this is indeed a grace. In Jeffrey's own words, then, we redefine this language "at the absolute peril of our unity in Christ and oneness with the Father." Moreover, Jeffrey insightfully notes that "our language of worship" always reveals "what it is we really do worship."

Jones, Peter. "Androgyny: The Pagan Sexual Ideal." *Journal of Evangelical Theological Society* 43 (2000) 443-469.

Jones labors the point that the "new sexuality" (as especially manifested in homosexuality) is vitally linked with, and indeed, is an expression of a re-emerging paganism. Jones notes that paganism is, at root, monistic. Then, as he traces this thought throughout history, Jones shows the powerful link between monistic paganism and the accompanying elimination of sexual distinction. In this way, Jones explains the spiritual elevation of the androgynous and the homosexual (as an expression of androgyny) in classic and contemporary paganism.

Maynard, Roy. "Fatherhood Canceled in Primetime TV." *World* 15 (2000) 34-36.

Maynard relates the shifts in television's depiction of family life (fatherhood in particular) of the past several decades. According to Maynard, the traditional family is often mocked, and fathers, in particular, are disparaged as shiftless and hopeless bunglers.

Montoya, Alex D. "Homosexuality and the Church." *The Master's Seminary Journal* 11 (2000) 155-168.

Montoya examines the pressure which contemporary society exerts on the evangelical church in regards to homosexuality. The author outlines the hermeneutic and interpretation of pro-homosexual scholars on the key biblical texts. He then rebuts those interpretations with traditional evangelical exegesis. The article then concludes with four practical implications for the

church in response to the homosexual issue.

Veith, Gene Edward. "We are Family." *World* 15 (2000) 6-8.

Veith contrasts God's plan for the family with the contemporary view of family and sexual ethics. Veith identifies several of the consequences of un-harnessing sex from the parameters of biblical marriage. In so doing, he briefly examines and forecasts future possibilities in terms of reproductive technologies.

Egalitarian Authors/Articles

Bailey, Kenneth E. "Women in the New Testament: A Middle Eastern Cultural View." *Theology Matters* 6 (2000) 1-10.

Bailey offers an egalitarian overview of gender roles in the New Testament. In so doing, he tries to incorporate a good bit of discussion concerning the Middle Eastern background. Unfortunately for Bailey, there are a number of places where his reconstructions are highly speculative (i.e. there appears to be no textual justification), and accordingly a number of them appear to be instances of special pleading.

Bailey, Kenneth E. "The Women Prophets of Corinth: A Study of Aspects of I Cor 11:2-16." *Theology Matters* 6 (2000) 11-15.

Bailey offers his exegesis of I Cor 11:2-16. Bailey's discussion is, yet again, encumbered by speculation and special pleading.

Belleville, Linda. "The Same Sex Challenge." *Cornerstone* 28 (2000) 47-50.

Belleville treats the issue of homosexuality via an investigation of I Cor 6:9-11 and I Tim 1:9-11. Specifically, she engages in a word study on the Greek terms *arsenokoitai* and *malakoi*. From her study, Belleville attempts to demonstrate that the New Testament is normatively opposed to homosexuality in all its expressions and not just specific abuses.

Belleville, Linda. "Paul, Homosexuality, and Celibacy: Part V of a Biblical Perspective on Sexuality." *Cornerstone* 29 (2000) 17-21.

Belleville engages the issue of homosexuality via an investigation of Rom 1:24-27. She rejects the interpretations of some that would suggest this text speaks of homosexuals and heterosexuals that act contrary to their "orientation." Rather, Belleville demonstrates that this text treats all homosexual

manifestations, and that Paul's argumentation is grounded in God's created design. Belleville also points out that such sexual sin is born out of the idolatrous exchange of worship of the creature rather than the creator. She also helpfully points out that while there are only a few passages that explicitly condemn homosexuality, the whole tenor of the Bible points adamantly to monogamy in heterosexual marriage. Hence, Belleville concludes with an affirmation of singleness and a call for celibacy apart from heterosexual marriage.

Diego, Aida Melendez. "Hispanic Women's Ministry in the Local Church." *Church & Society* (2000) 42-51.

It appears that Diego selectively adjusts her exegesis to fit her practice as an ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church. She suggests valuably (p. 46) that our views on gender issues should arise from Scripture. In her discussion of biblical texts, however, she fails to discuss even one passage that supports the notion of role distinctions. Here again, we see the tendency to take Gal. 3:26-28 (which clearly speaks of redemption) out of context and absolutize it as a proof text for a full-blown gender equity. Helpfully, Diego points out the esteemed view of women in the Bible, as well as the equality of essence that the Bible maintains. As with most egalitarians, however, Diego fails to acknowledge all of the biblical teaching.

Giles, Kevin. "A Critique of the 'Novel' Contemporary Interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:9-15 Given in the Book, *Women in the Church*. Part I." *The Evangelical Quarterly* 72 (2000) 151-167.

Giles summarizes and critiques *Women in the Church*, edited by Köstenberger, Schreiner, and Baldwin. This is the first part of a two-part article, in which Giles asserts that the exegesis in the book is neither "historic" nor correct. Giles frequently criticizes the authors of this book as unscholarly, emotive, and full of special pleading. Yet often Giles merely asserts and fails to establish his case.

Giles, Kevin. "A Critique of the 'Novel' Contemporary Interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:9-15 Given in the Book, *Women in the Church*. Part II." *The Evangelical Quarterly* 72 (2000) 195-215.

Giles critiques what he sees as the main weaknesses of *Women in the Church* edited by Köstenberger, Schreiner, and Baldwin. Giles argues that their understanding of "creation orders" is novel, that they adapt and spin the term "role," and that they intentionally employ evasive language all in an effort to preserve power and privilege. Giles also accuses the authors of proof-texting and then

moves on to offer an alternate interpretation of the text. In his own interpretation, he limits the application of the passage based on the belief that Paul's prohibition to women came either as a result of certain women in this specific situation who were teaching heresy, or as a concession to the surrounding culture. This is obviously an emotionally charged issue for Giles, and he appears to be guilty of many of the charges he levels at complementarians. He presumes to know the motives of the authors and simply assumes that complementarians are all duplicitous persons seeking to maintain advantage. He fails to acknowledge their concern to represent the biblical teaching and application on this matter. Moreover, he simply asserts that the whole tenor of the Bible stands against two or three texts, to which complementarians supposedly cling. In the end, however, Giles fails to overturn the complementarian view on exegetical grounds or show that his reading of the Bible is superior. It appears that Giles thinks he is not susceptible to his own presuppositions, but his reconstruction, which is primarily built on arguments from silence should prove otherwise.

Gorsuch, Nancy J. "Gender as Construct and Category in Pastoral Theology: A Review of Recent Literature." *Journal of Pastoral Theology* 10 (2000) 96-111.

Gorsuch reviews several of the recent contributions to the study of gender issues by pastoral theologians. On the whole, Gorsuch seems to be pleased with the three trends she identifies in the recent literature she surveyed. These trends include a praxis orientation, the inclusion of newer perspectives, and their move toward understanding gender more as the product of social construct.

Hernandez, Yolanda. "Hispanic/Latina Presbyterian Women." *Church & Society* (2000) 35-41.

Hernandez represents the response of fourteen Latin American women to the General Assembly of the PC-USA regarding the adoption of a statement in 1998 on Church Growth Strategy for Racial Ethics. Accordingly, she reveals the commendable desire on the part of these women to be involved in ministry through the PC-USA to the Hispanic community. There appears to be an error in her reasoning, however, in the assumption that women must be ordained as elders in order to be involved in ministry to the community (p. 37).

Ince, Gwen. "Judge for Yourself: Teasing out Some Knots in I Corinthians 11:2-16." *Australian Biblical Review* 48 (2000) 59-71.

Ince suggests that "gender differentiation conventions" are overturned on her reading of this passage. She notes that some portions of this text are problematic for

egalitarians. But she attempts to show that this passage is fundamentally eschatological in orientation, and hence on this view, arguments from creation cease to apply. It appears that, on her reading, such an emphasis warrants throwing off all role differentiation between sexes.

Murphy, Anne. "What Difference Does Gender Make?" *Priests & People* 14 (2000) 303-308.

Murphy attempts to trace, in outline form, the recent historical developments of masculinity and femininity.

Nilsson, Nils-Olov. "The Debate on Women's Ministry in the Swedish Pentecostal Movement: Summary and Analysis." *Pneuma: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 22 (2000) 61-83.

Nilsson depicts the progression of the Swedish Pentecostal Movement towards the acceptance of female elders. After tracing some of the historical progression, Nilsson attempts to summarize the complementarian and egalitarian views. Unfortunately, she caricatures the complementarian view at points. Moreover, her hermeneutic is reductionistic in that it appears, a priori, to call for the overturning of the "Pauline problem texts" on the basis that they are ad hoc in nature. The problem, however, is that she simply asserts this as true rather than demonstrating exegetically that it is true.

Stackhouse, Jr., John G. "History Clearly Teaches—What? The Uses of History in Evangelical Gender Debates." *Crux* 35 (2000) 11-15.

Stackhouse demonstrates how arguments from biblical and church history have been employed to support both the complementarian and egalitarian views. In reviewing how the data have been variously interpreted, however, Stackhouse appears to give the impression that while we can examine church and biblical history descriptively, the matter of determining what is authoritatively prescriptive may be unattainable in light of our historical-locatedness. As such, it appears that Stackhouse has conceded too much to the postmodern ethos.

Tillman, Jr., William M. "The Southern Baptists' View of Women in Ministry." *Priscilla Papers* 14 (2000) 13-16.

Tillman reflects on the "typical" Southern Baptist view of women in ministry. Sadly, in so doing, Tillman offers a massively caricatured picture based purely on his impression of what the "unspoken" ground-rules are. Accordingly, his article fails to make a positive contribution to the discussion.

Trull, Joe E. "Is the Head of the House Home?" *Priscilla Papers* 14 (2000) 3-7.

Trull argues that Eph 5:21-6:9 teaches "mutual submission." As such he dismisses any notion of a husband's authority in the home.

Watson, Francis. "The Authority of the Voice: A Theological Reading of 1 Cor 11:2-16." *New Testament Studies* 46 (2000) 520-536.

Watson initially suggests that a reading of this text in strict support of complementarian or egalitarian positions falls short of Paul's intent. From there, he then presents his exegesis of the text, wherein he asserts that the notion of interdependence is the key to Paul's thought on gender. Though he raises some valuable points, it appears Watson, like other egalitarians, limits his appreciation to one half of the Biblical teaching. Indeed, it appears that Watson appreciates the biblical emphasis of equality and mutuality. Unfortunately, it also appears that he super-imposes this one aspect on all of the data, and as such, fails to appreciate sufficiently the companion biblical teaching on gender role distinctions.

Wilkinson, Loren. "'Post-Christian' Feminism and the Fatherhood of God." *Crux* 36 (2000) 16-30.

Wilkinson surveys much of "Post Christian" feminist thought regarding the notion of God as Father. While demonstrating much sympathy with some of the feminist critiques of a patriarchal Christianity, Wilkinson nevertheless maintains that all believers rightly call God "father" through Jesus Christ.

Williams, David T. "Gender in the Trinity." *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa* 106 (2000) 51-59.

Williams offers a discussion of relations within the Trinity. He suggests that misunderstandings of this doctrine have led to hierarchical family relations and the mistreatment of women. Williams then corrects this perceived error by suggesting that there is not eternal order in the (immanent) Trinity. In this way, Williams declares that the pattern for marriage should therefore entail no expectation of leadership on the part of the husband or submission on the part of the wife. While Williams rightly notes the full essential equality of the persons of the Godhead, he wrongly denies the eternal order within the Godhead.

Non-Evangelical Authors/Articles

Benson, Peter. "Cross-Dressing with Jacques and Judy." *Philosophy Now* (2000) 28-30.

Benson gets his impetus from the philosophical hermeneutics (Deconstruction) of Jacques Derrida, especially as picked up in the thought of feminist Judith Butler. His primary assertion is that "binary" linguistic classifications (e.g. male/female, homosexual/heterosexual) are too limiting. Therefore he concludes that neither Derrida nor Butler have gone far enough, and that some of their inconsistencies reflect the fact that they have not completely escaped from binary classifications of gender. Nevertheless, Benson clearly celebrates the trajectory given by Derrida and Butler.

Bond, Susan L. "The Rhetoric of Gender and the Rhetoric of Folly: The Incompatibility of Two Feminist Approaches." *Encounter* 61 (2000) 297-319.

Bond compares and contrasts two different hermeneutical theories (both subsets of the "hermeneutics of suspicion") that undergird feminist interpretation of the Bible. In short, one approach attempts to deconstruct male "privilege" in interpretation and assert female "privilege," while the other approach attempts to undermine all claims to knowledge.

Bourgeault, Cynthia. "Why Feminizing the Trinity Will Not Work: A Metaphysical Perspective." *Sewanee Theological Review* 44 (2000) 27-35.

Bourgeault finds a feminized Trinity appealing because such a corrective, to her way of thinking, "yield tremendous gains," in terms of valuing females more. Nevertheless, Bourgeault rejects such an interpretation on the grounds that it does not fit her metaphysical grid. From that point on, there is very little discussion of gender and the Trinity, whereas more time is spent unpacking her Trinitarian metaphysic. As it turns out Bourgeault's metaphysic aims at offering more in terms of "gains" for gender equity. In suggesting that the Trinity is primarily to be understood in terms of process and not person, Bourgeault demonstrates that her metaphysic is imposed on the Bible rather than drawn from it.

Brown, Susan L. "The Effect of Union Type on Psychological Well-being: Depression Among Cohabitors Versus Marrieds." *Journal of Health & Social Behavior* 41 (2000) 241-255.

Brown attempts to examine the "psychological well-being" amongst married couples and co-habiting couples. From the data gathered, Brown indicates that

cohabitators experience higher levels of relational instability and therefore report higher levels of depression than do married couples. Brown further notes that her research indicates that such results do not merely follow from the "types of people who choose to cohabit." That is, those who chose to cohabit did not necessarily have a higher predisposition toward depression.

Cahill, Lisa Sowle. "Gender and Strategies of Goodness: The New Testament and Ethics." *The Journal of Religion* 80 (2000) 442-460.

Cahill devotes much of her attention to addressing the issue of how much and what kind of authority the New Testament should be granted in regards to contemporary ethics. Her article starts out flawed by suggesting that the New Testament is one among several authorities for Christian ethics. Then, in the latter third of the article, Cahill turns her attention to the relation between gender and ethics. Here, her treatment of the Bible is evident as she suggests that the "deutero-Pauline" epistles capitulated to cultural pressures and reversed the trajectory that Jesus had set in motion in regards to gender issues. Cahill proceeds to propose a "dialectical social model of Christian ethics." Clearly, however, such a revisionist reading that fails in its view of canonicity and biblical authority will prove unacceptable to evangelical readers.

Chen, Sheryl Frances. "Some Problematic Aspects of Human Sexuality: Psychological Considerations." *Cistercian Studies* 35 (2000) 345-360.

Chen offers a discussion of human sexuality, with particular reference to the issue of celibacy. In the course of the article Chen discusses fantasy, masturbation, and homosexuality. True to the title, Chen is concerned to evaluate issues from a purely psychological perspective. Consequently, a number of her conclusions run contrary to complementarian thought.

Cornish, Blake M. "Sexual Orientation and the Constitution." *Church & Society* (2000) 107-110.

Cornish asserts that the courts, in time, will give equal protection under the law for homosexuals. He offers no biblical justification of homosexuality, but simply assumes that the fully equitable embrace of homosexual activity across the board is a good thing.

Crusemann, Marlene. "Irredeemably Hostile to Women: Anti-Jewish Elements in the Exegesis of the Dispute About Women's Right to Speak (I Cor. 14:34-35)." *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* (2000) 19-36.

Crusemann operates on the assumption that texts that seem to call for submission on the basis of gender are intrinsically "hostile to women." Crusemann interprets these texts as being unabashedly misogynistic. Her exegesis, however, is fully dismissive of authorial intent.

Dixon, Lorraine. "Reflections on Pastoral Care from a Womanist Perspective." *Contact* 132 (2000) 3-10.

Dixon discusses the possible distinctives of pastoral care from black women.

Dowell, Susan. "From Daphne Hampson to Angela West: Some Issues in Recent Feminist Theology." *Sewanee Theological Review* 44 (2000) 50-59.

Dowell discusses some of the recent discussions under the banner of Christian feminism. Dowell presents some of the internal conflicts and then offers her own suggestions for the way forward.

Dufour, Lynn Resnick. "Sifting Through Tradition: The Creation of Jewish Feminist Identities." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 39 (2000) 90-106.

Dufour seeks to examine how women who are both Jewish and feminist and integrate their religious heritage with their feminism. After reporting on the procedure and findings, the author then proposes three primary models as explanations of how these women have assimilated these identities. The failure of this article (and much contemporary assessment) is the default equation of patricentrism with evil. Biblically speaking, however, patricentrism is very different from the evil villain that feminist scholars make it out to be. No doubt in a fallen world, there are evidences of patriarchal abuses. (That the Bible so honestly reports those is one evidence of its truthfulness and trustworthiness.) Nevertheless, the Bible is also clear in its teaching that such abuses spring from the hardness of sinner's hearts in a fallen world and not from the structure that God has created and redeemed as good. Accordingly, what needs correction is not the structure (which of itself is good), but the heart.

Faver, Catherine A. "To Run and Not Be Weary: Spirituality and Women's Activism." *Review of Religious Research* 42 (2000) 61-78.

Faver interviewed fifty Episcopalian women to examine the link between women's activism and spirituality. Accordingly, she theorizes and concludes

that the link was fundamentally relational in nature. This study is nearly a pure sociological endeavor.

Fish, Linda Stone. "Hierarchical Relationship Development: Parents and Children." *Journal of Marital & Family Therapy* 24 (2000) 501-510.

Fish discusses the potential value of hierarchical relationships between parents and children. She is quick to point out that hierarchical relationships are not intrinsically bad. Rather, it is the abuse of hierarchy that is to be avoided. Fish proposes a model whereby parents and children can be aided toward eventual mutuality by progressing healthily through the various stages of hierarchical interaction. From a sociological vantage point, the author presents some helpful insights. From a theological evaluation, however, one finds her definition of complementarity wanting. That is, her equation of complementarianism with hierarchy is only half correct. One wishes that more might be said in regard to things like male/female "equality of essence" and sacrificial love, though from a secular standpoint one can understand why these concepts are not present.

Gaventa, Beverly Roberts. "Is Galatians Just a 'Guy Thing'? A Theological Reflection." *Interpretation* 54 (2000) 520-536.

Gaventa notes that Galatians exhibits a decidedly masculine tone, and as a result she seeks to read the letter in a way that will glean implications for women. Gaventa, then, rightly notes that the most important aspect of any believer's life is his or her "in Christ" union. From this she suggests that women measure their significance via their "in Christ" union and not primarily by other "yardsticks" such as physical attractiveness or workplace achievements. After some of her valuable comments, however, Gaventa appears to push Paul's argumentation beyond Paul's intent. Whereas Paul, in Galatians 3:28, lays out the full essential equality of human beings in regards to redemption, Gaventa presses beyond this to an absolute denial of any gender distinctives in all of life. The problem for her interpretation, however, is that Paul does not so argue, nor does the New Testament anywhere present, androgyny as the product of redeemed humanity.

Greeff, A. P. "Characteristics of Families that Function Well." *Journal of Family Issues* 21 (2000) 948-962.

Greeff attempts to identify key sociological factors in "families that function well." After explaining the method, the participants, and the procedure the author then presents the results along with his analysis of them. Greeff finds that characteristics related to good

communication and conflict resolution are integral to a healthy family life. Other indicators include the sexual relationship, leisure time, and family loyalty.

Jones, Rebecca. "The New Minority to Protect under Title IX." *The Education Digest* 65 (2000) 20-27.

Jones discusses how Title IX has been empowered recently to prevent discrimination against homosexual students in public schools. (*Note: This author should not be confused with CBMW's Council Member by the same name.*)

Kahl, Brigitte. "No Longer Male: Masculinity Struggles Behind Galatians 3:28?" *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 79 (2000) 37-49.

Kahl views Gal. 3:26-28 as a massive throwing off of male distinctives and authority. Clearly Kahl views hierarchy as evil. In her reading of the text, Gal. 3:28 unveils a "liberating vision of egalitarian inclusiveness." It appears, however, that Kahl is doing some reading in, to extend this understanding from the realm of salvation to a repudiation of all authority structure.

Kaufman, Gayle. "Do Gender Role Attitudes Matter? Family Formation and Dissolution Among Traditional and Egalitarian Men and Women." *Journal of Family Issues* 21 (2000) 128-144.

Kaufman conducted a study to examine the "effect of gender role attitudes" (e.g. traditional vs. egalitarian) on the likelihood of cohabitation, the desire for and having of children, and likelihood of divorce over a progression of five years. Her findings indicate that egalitarian men are more likely to cohabit and that egalitarian women are less likely to plan for and then actually have children than their more traditional counterparts. She also found that, in her sample, egalitarian men were less likely to divorce than were those of a more traditional mindset.

Kessler, John. "Sexuality and Politics: The Motif of the Displaced Husband in the Books of Samuel." *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 62 (2000) 409-423.

Kessler admirably attempts an intra-textual reading of the narrative. He is not, however, an evangelical, as he suggests that it matters not whether David was an actual historical figure or just a literary creation. His aim in this essay is to trace the progression of David's relationship to three other marriages in the narrative of 1 and 2 Samuel. From this, he points out that the narrator intends the reader to see a downward progression in David's demeanor. Kessler concludes that David is undoubtedly an example of God's

gracious forbearance. Additionally, Kessler's conclusion serves as an attempt to contrast the two versions of marriage offered in the text. On the one hand it appears that "sexual appropriation" for political status is affirmed. But on the other hand, a compelling vision of monogamous and tender-hearted union is also demonstrated, and is, in fact, esteemed more highly in view of the narrative's progression.

Knox, David. "Attitudes and Behavior of College Students Toward Infidelity." *College Student Journal* 34 (2000) 162-164.

Knox essentially presents a secular sociological study of the attitudes of college students towards unfaithful partners in a dating relationship. Interestingly, there remains on the part of the majority, an instinctual belief that infidelity is wrong. The article does not make clear why these students believe infidelity to be wrong, nor does it offer a basis for doing so.

Konieczny, Mary Ellen. "Resources, Race, and Female-Headed Congregations in the United States." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 39 (2000) 261-271.

Konieczny reports on research conducted on "female-headed" congregations. Accordingly, she reports her findings on the locations, sociological makeup, and characteristics of most "female-headed" congregations in the United States. From her study, she reports that "female-headed" congregations are most often found in urban areas, with the most pronounced numbers in African American and mixed race congregations. Moreover, she reports a general lack of "organizational resources" in the female led churches.

Lehrman, Nathaniel S. "Homosexuality: A Political Mask for Promiscuity: A Psychiatrist Reviews the Data." *Tradition* 34 (2000) 44-62.

Lehrman, a Jewish psychiatrist, attempts to assert the incompatibility of homosexuality with Orthodox Jewish belief. Accordingly, he attempts to expose the false beliefs that support the acceptance of homosexuality, especially in Jewish thought.

Lippa, Richard A. "Gender-related Traits in Gay Men, Lesbian Women, and Heterosexual Men and Women: The Virtual Identity of Homosexual-Heterosexual Diagnosticity and Gender Diagnosticity." *Personality* 68 (2000) 899-911.

Lippa reports on the procedures and results of three studies aimed at examining the relationship between gay persons and their preferences and interests as measured in terms of gender diagnosticity. From these

studies, he concludes that "gay men and lesbian women are intermediate between heterosexual men and women," in terms of their interests.

Lowe, Mary Elise. "Theology Update: Woman Oriented Hamartologies: A Survey of the Shift From Powerlessness to Right Relationship." *Dialog: A Journal of Theology* 39 (2000) 119-139.

Lowe identifies the various themes recently advanced by leading feminist scholars on the doctrine of sin as it pertains particularly to women. After reviewing and evaluating several recent works, Lowe concludes by offering several synthetic suggestions for steering the future development of feminist studies of sin. is helpful insofar as it provides concise summaries of the leading feminist scholarship on the doctrine of sin. Nevertheless, as evangelical readers might imagine most, if not all, of the suggestions advanced are disappointing from the biblical point of view.

Macy, Gary. "The Ordination of Women in the Early Middle Ages." *Theological Studies* 61 (2000) 481-507.

Macy explores the significance of several references to the practice of women's ordination in the Middle Ages. After examining the evidence Macy concludes that "at least some medievals, including bishops and popes, considered deaconesses and abbesses to be ordained as any other cleric, given the definition of ordination used during these early centuries." At that point, Macy attempts not to demonstrate the theological normativity of such a historical finding, but to point out the difficulty of drawing theological norms from historical findings.

McFarland, Ian A. "A Canonical Reading of Ephesians 5:21-33 Theological Gleanings." *Theology Today* 57 (2000) 344-356.

McFarland appears to locate himself in the Post-Liberal community. Hence, the most troubling aspect of the article is his hermeneutical approach. On the one hand, he finds that Paul is actually espousing role differentiation in this text. On the other hand, however, McFarland appears to suggest that such an assertion is a misguided (and therefore not binding) application of the command to mutual submission in verse 21.

Merz, Annette. "Why did the Pure Bride of Christ (2 Cor 11.2) Become A Wedded Wife (Eph 5.22-33)? Theses About the Intertextual Transformation of an Ecclesiological Metaphor." *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 79 (2000) 131-147.

Merz operates on the assumption that Ephesians is a pseudigraphical work. Accordingly she understands there to be tension between the Pauline and Pseudo-Pauline teachings on marriage. In this way, Merz makes a mockery of the Pauline corpus. Hence, evangelical readers are not likely to find this article helpful in seriously engaging the gender issues debate.

Mizell, C. Andre'. "All My Children, The Consequences of Sibling Group Characteristics on the Marital Happiness of Young Mothers." *Journal of Family Issues* 21 (2000) 858-887.

Mizell investigates how the number and gender composition of one's children affects the marital and maternal happiness of young mothers. After a presentation of the method, Mizell reports on the findings, from which he suggests that the issue of family size only becomes significant when the gender composition is under consideration. Mizell then reports that the highest satisfaction is reported for the 'all sons' group. He further reports that having all daughters brings no significant impact either way, and that a group of mixed-gender offspring brings the lowest reports of maternal and marital satisfaction.

Nigosian, S. A. "Feminist Interpretation." *The Near East School of Theology Theological Review* 21 (2000) 74-87.

Nigosian advocates a feminist interpretation of the Bible in response to the patriarchalism of the Bible's own authors. After identifying the male culture of the Bible, the author then turns attention to the significance of many women in the Old Testament narrative. There are however, a couple of problems in this article. First, it appears, at points, that Nigosian is happy to doubt the truthfulness of the Scriptures. For instance, Nigosian insinuates that the depiction of Eve—a woman—as the first to sin against God is a product of patriarchal revisionism. Secondly, no complementarian would dispute the value, dignity, and significance of women in the Scriptures. As such, Nigosian's rehearsal of female significance in the Old Testament, is neither new nor surprising to complementarians.

Noland, John. "Romans 1:26-27 and the Homosexuality Debate." *Horizons in Biblical Theology* 22 (2000) 32-57.

Noland lays out in summary fashion the major objections to taking Rom. 1:26-27 as a straightforward condemnation of homosexuality. Then he singles out one recent objector whose argumentation he perceives to be the strongest. The objector he identifies is Bernadette Brooten, and her objection suggests that Paul's view of homosexuality is born out of his patriarchy and should therefore be discounted as a binding ethic. After outlining Brooten's argumentation, Noland then gives his reasons for disagreeing with her. Nevertheless, Noland clearly has some affinities for the feminist movement. Moreover, while he does conclude that Brooten has misinterpreted Rom. 1:26-27, he never clearly states whether or not Paul's view here should constitute a normative ethic.

Rehmann, Luzia Sutter. "German-Language Feminist Exegesis of the Pauline Letters." *Journal for the Study of The New Testament* (2000) 5-18.

Rehmann documents the hermeneutic of "German-language feminists." In this hermeneutic, much attention is paid to the history of the interpretation of Paul, which, on this view, has been irredeemably androcentric. In place of the "traditional" reading, these feminist scholars believe that an altogether new paradigm is needed.

Rodriguez, Eric M. "Gay and Lesbian Christians: Homosexual and Religious Identity Integration in the Members and Participants of a Gay-Positive Church." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 39 (2000) 333-347.

Rodriguez explores the experiences of gay men and women as they attempt to integrate their homosexual and religious identities in the context of a local church that affirms homosexuality. The findings suggest that their church helped them "achieve" this integration, and that a higher degree of involvement brought a higher degree of satisfactory integration. Of course, the sad fact is that such a church is really only helping persons to integrate sin deeper into their lives, all in the name of tolerance.

Rowe, Mary Hannah. "30 Years of Women's Ordination." *Dialog: A Journal of Theology* 39 (2000) 206-213.

Rowe, an avowed feminist, displays both a remarkable triumphalism and inordinate amount of eisegesis in celebrating her own ordination. Autobiographical in nature, Rowe tears text from contexts to support her various actions and stances. Rowe has also long stood in open support of homosexual ordination. Moreover,

her attitude toward hermeneutics is pluralistic, and it appears that from her vantage point, nothing can disqualify an individual from receiving the grace of God in the person and work of Jesus Christ.

Saller, Richard P. "Pater Familias, Mater Familias, and the Gendered Semantics of the Roman Household." *Classical Philology* 94 (2000) 182-197.

Saller traces the various usages of the Latin terms "Pater Familias" and "Mater Familias." The author recognizes that such terms, as used in the present day, come "heavily loaded with conceptual baggage." Saller attempts to show that the classical understanding and the contemporary stereotype do not necessarily match up.

Sayer, Liana C. "Women's Economic Independence and the Probability of Divorce." *Journal of Family Issues* 21 (2000) 906-943.

Sayer investigates whether or not "women's economic independence" increased the likelihood of divorce. After detailing the procedure and the results, she concludes that the relationship between a wife's economic independence and the likelihood of divorce is insignificant. Sayer suggests that previous studies misidentified such a factor because they failed to account for other variables in the decision to divorce, such as "marital commitment and satisfaction."

Schaeffer, Kim W. "Religiously-Motivated Sexual Orientation Change." *Journal of Psychology and Christianity* 19 (2000) 61-70.

Schaeffer reports on her survey of attendees at an Exodus International conference to examine the viability of changing from homosexual to heterosexual orientation due to religious belief. Following a discussion of the procedure, Schaeffer notes (with certain caveats in place) that participants in the study generally reported an increase in heterosexuality accompanied by reports of high "religious motivation and positive mental health."

Sheehan, Mary Ellen. "Vatican II and the Ecclesial Ministry of Women: Ongoing Challenges in the Roman Catholic Church." *Toronto Journal of Theology* 16 (2000) 51-61.

Sheehan looks at the impact of Vatican II on the ministerial roles of women within the Roman Catholic Church. Accordingly she examines the developments in Vatican II. Then, she traces some of the historical fallout of the Vatican II for women's ministry roles in the "North American context."

Sherkat, Darren E. "'They That Be Keepers of the Home': The Effect of Conservative Religion on Early and Late Transitions into Housewifery." *Review of Religious Research* 41 (2000) 344-358.

Sherkat attempts to examine the link between women of conservative evangelical belief (though the author seems to label these women "fundamentalist" in a disparaging sense, her definition of "fundamentalist" apparently centers on the issue of inerrancy) and the likelihood that they will choose to be housewives during their childrens' "tender years." Not surprisingly, Sherkat finds that evangelical women are more likely to put a priority on being at home over the pursuit of a career.

Snyder, Mary Hembrow. "Feminist Christology: Revelation in Lima." *Toronto Journal of Theology* 16 (2000) 155-166.

Snyder proposes questions aimed at the further development of feminist Christology. Sadly, however, her vision is far removed from anything the Bible would conceive of as Christian. For, instance, Snyder, who is also a Liberation theologian, suggests that "the locus of God's revelation at this point in time is primarily in the violated women of this world." Moreover, she conceives of God as "the Presence" and Christ as the merely human "Christ/a". Accordingly, her syncretistic and pantheistic version of Christology fail to qualify as Christian Christology.

Sorensen, Sandy. "Women's Rights: How Far Have We Really Come?" *Church & Society* (2000) 86-91.

Sorensen decries contemporary American culture as still being too patriarchal and female unfriendly. She exhibits common feminist concerns and complaints, and her comments offer little more than the standard feminist rhetoric.

Standhartinger, Angela. "The Origin and Intention of the Household Code in the Letter to the Colossians." *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* (2000) 117-130.

Standhartinger writes with the intention of explaining the thrust and location of the "household code" in Colossians. On first reading, Standhartinger suggests that Col. 3:18-4:1 has an awkward fit and appears to contradict Col. 3:11. But then she attempts to demonstrate how the household code does not teach subordination. Standhartinger's argument, however, seems to be a case of special pleading.

Tobler, Judy. "Beyond a Patriarchal God: Bringing the Transcendent Back to the Body." *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa* 106 (2000) 35-50.

Tobler, a radical feminist, suggests that the "patriarchal" deity of Judaism and Christianity has been terribly oppressive to women throughout history. And hence to achieve genuine "feminist spirituality," Tobler concludes that women must look past or reconceptualize such a "patriarchal" God.

Wolfinger, Nicholas H. "Beyond the Intergenerational Transmission of Divorce: Do People Replicate the Patterns of Marital Instability They Grew Up With?" *Journal of Family Issues* 21 (2000) 1061-1086.

Wolfinger reports on the findings of a survey examining the generational linkage of divorce. From this study, Wolfinger concludes that virtually regardless of economic standing, children who grow up in homes ruptured by family instability, in terms of multiple divorces, are more likely to experience divorce in their own adult years.

Zimmerman, Toni Schindler. "Marital Equality and Satisfaction in Stay-at-Home Mother and Stay-At-Home Father Families." *Contemporary Family Therapy* 22 (2000) 337-354.

Zimmerman reports on a comparison study of "stay-at-home mother and stay-at-home father families." The findings indicate marital satisfaction in both cases, but also noted that such satisfaction stems more from a perception of equality in the marriage relationship than from the gender of the spouse who stayed at home. The study also notes that mothers, across the board, reported more exhaustion than the fathers. Not surprisingly, however, this study betrayed its captivity to an egalitarian notion of equality. As such, there was no indication that while being equal in terms of personhood and worth, fathers do bear a primacy of responsibility and leadership in the home.

Undeclared Authors/Articles

Adeney, Miriam. "Women in the World Christian Movement." *Crux* 35 (2000) 31-38.

Adeney depicts the various roles of American Christian women in the history of missiological endeavors.

Akkara, Anto. "Church Meeting Challenged by Debate on Human Rights and Homosexuality." *ENI Bulletin* 14 (2000) 25-26.

Akkara documents the debate over homosexuality issues in the World Alliance of Reformed Churches.

Allen, Julie. "Homonegative Christians: Loving the Sinner but Hating the Sin." *Journal of Psychology and Christianity* 19 (2000) 258-269.

Allen attempts to discern whether or not Christians actually practice a "love the sinner, hate the sin" demeanor towards various classifications of homosexuals. She concludes from the study that some Christians do make such a distinction whereas others were simply classified as "homophobic."

Brauns, Frauke. "Germany's Churches Oppose Government Recognition of Gay Partnerships." *ENI Bulletin* 14 (2000) 6-7.

Brauns discusses the resolution of Germany's protestant and Catholic churches to oppose the government's proposal of a bill to legalize homosexual unions.

Brown, Stephen. "Germany's 3rd Woman Bishop Says Her Election Should be Seen as "Natural"." *ENI Bulletin* 18 (2000) 12-13.

Brown discusses the election of Germany's third female Lutheran bishop.

Cloud, Henry. "The Spiritual Dimension of Dating." *Christian Single* 22 (2000) 30-33.

Cloud attempts to offer some basic biblical guidelines for Christian singles in the dating scene. Insofar as the suggestions go, many of them are wise reminders to Christian singles, yet this article is not sufficiently critical of the concept of dating as a whole.

Cole, Sherwood O. "Biology, Homosexuality, and the Biblical Doctrine of Sin." *Bibliotheca Sacra* 157 (2000) 348-361.

Cole attempts to demonstrate the shortcomings of the biologically-based argument in favor of homosexuality. Moreover, Cole, proceeds to show the link between the existence of homosexuality and the "biblical doctrine of sin."

Crampton, Dave. "Sexuality Debate Splits New Zealand's Methodist Church." *ENI Bulletin* 14 (2000) 15-16.

Crampton depicts the division in New Zealand's Methodist Church over the issue of homosexual clergy.

Gay, Craig M. "‘Gender’ and the Idea of the Social Construction of Reality." *Crux* 35 (2000) 2-10.

Gay critiques the notion that "gender" is merely a socially constructed reality. Indeed, Gay takes "gender" as his jumping-off point, and then turns most of his attention to critiquing the inconsistencies of what he terms the "constructionist position."

Hauerwas, Stanley M. "Resisting Capitalism: On Marriage and Homosexuality." *Quarterly Review* 20 (2000) 313-318.

Hauerwas insinuates that the framework for discussing the issue of the church's response to homosexuality points us in the wrong direction. He suggests that the teaching on homosexuality in scripture is unclear. Hence, according to Hauerwas, we should interpret the teaching through the "clearer" lens of Scriptural teaching on singleness and marriage. In this way, Hauerwas sees capitalism as the chief offender regarding the Bible's view of marriage.

Hays, Richard B. "Resisting Capitalism: A Response to Hauerwas." *Quarterly Review* 20 (2000) 324-326.

Hays responds to Hauerwas's view of the homosexual debate in the United Methodist Church. Hays commends Hauerwas for pointing out the influence of capitalism, and suggesting that we discuss this issue in the broader context of marriage. He critiques Hauerwas, however, especially for his insufficient recognition of Scripture's unambiguous teaching in defining our response to homosexuality.

Heckler-Feltz, Cheryl. "African-American Church Elects its First Woman Bishop." *ENI Bulletin* 13 (2000) 13-14.

Heckler-Feltz provides a discussion of the election of the first woman to the office of bishop in the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

Herlinger, Chris. "US Episcopal Church Reaches Compromise on Gay Relationships." *ENI Bulletin* 13 (2000) 17-18.

Herlinger discusses the U. S. Episcopal Church's rejection of the proposal to perform "ceremonial rites" for homosexual and non-married couples. The church, however, did pass a resolution to support unmarried, committed couples.

Jeffrey, Paul. "Gay Christianity Comes Out of the Closet in Latin America." *ENI Bulletin* 18 (2000) 21-22.

Jeffrey depicts the formation and growth of new homosexual denominations in Latin America.

Jones, Jim. "Anne Graham Lotz Launches Five-City Revival Tour." *Christianity Today* 44 (2000) 20.

Jones discusses Lotz's "Just Give Me Jesus" revival tour. It also provides her understanding of women's roles in ministry which does limit the office of Senior Pastor to qualified males but does not prohibit women from preaching.

Kellner, Mark A. "Presbyterians Reject Same-Sex Ceremonies." *Christianity Today* 44 (2000) 28.

Kellner recounts the decision of the Presbyterian Church USA's General Assembly to ban same sex marriage ceremonies.

Larsen, Bjarke. "Oslo Priest's Relationship Prompts Lively Debate in Norwegian Church." *ENI Bulletin* 18 (2000) 8-9.

Larsen discusses the appointment of a homosexual priest in the Lutheran Church of Norway and the subsequent debate that it sparked in the church.

LeBlanc, Douglas. "No Balm in Denver." *Christianity Today* 44 (2000) 25.

LeBlanc recounts the decision of the Episcopal General Convention (Denver 2000) not to bless same sex marriages.

Mattingly, Stacey. "Episcopal Church Faces the Sexuality Divide." *Crisis* 18 (2000) 17-22.

Mattingly recounts and analyzes the discussions and decisions regarding the affirmations of homosexual marriage by the Episcopal Church U.S.A. at the Triennial convention in Denver in the summer of 2000.

Moberly, Walter. "The Use of Scripture in Contemporary Debate about Homosexuality." *Theology* (2000) 251-259.

Moberly is primarily concerned to raise questions and foster discussions. As such, he offers points of consideration for both those who would oppose and those who would endorse homosexuality. To be sure, Moberly certainly raises questions that need to be asked, and he reminds homosexual opponents not to allow their convictions to be an occasion for self-righteousness. Nevertheless, he fails to add any new or previously overlooked elements to the discussion. Moreover, it appears that Moberly does not give adequate play to the overall tenor of the Scriptures in addressing this matter. In the end, he appears to suggest that much of the exegesis is too difficult to sustain dogmatic positions. Hence it appears that for the sake of "love" Moberly would prefer to concede this matter

to the homosexuals; a view which hardly appears "loving" given his own comments regarding the link Paul establishes in seeing homosexuality as an important expression of idolatry in Rom 1:18-32.

Moloney, Daniel P. "Sex and the Married Missileer." *First Things* (2000) 45-51.

Moloney recounts the interaction between the United States Air Force and Lieutenant Ryan Berry. Early on in his career as a missileer, Berry had requested and obtained permission from his superior officers not to be assigned silo duty (which consists of 24 hours unsupervised shifts alone with one other individual) with a female officer. Berry, a Catholic, requested such a scheduling accommodation because, as a husband and father, he wanted to minimize the occasion for temptation in view of his biblical beliefs. Eventually, however, in the face of cultural pressures, some began to question Berry's motivations, and even went so far as to charge him with sexism. The remainder of Moloney's article demonstrates the poor fashion (including smear tactics) in which the USAF handled the situation, evidencing how widespread the cultural repudiation of biblical morality has grown.

Nolan, Michael. "Woman in Aristotle and Aquinas." *The Thomist* 64 (2000) 21-69.

Nolan labors to prove that Aristotle is being misunderstood, when his well-known quote is read as saying that women are defective males. Accordingly, Nolan offers a thorough and detailed exegesis of the phrase in question, calling attention to context, syntax, and how Aristotle used the term elsewhere. Following that lengthy discussion, Nolan then turns his attention to examining the response of Aquinas and Bonaventure to the Aristotelian phrase in question.

Ogletree, Thomas W. "Searching for the Real Problem: A Response to Hauerwas." *Quarterly Review* 20 (2000) 319-323.

Ogletree responds to Hauerwas's conception of the issues in the debate over homosexuality in the United Methodist Church. It appears that Ogletree advocates "optimal homosexual morality." That is, in view of human sinfulness, Ogletree appears to believe that the church should tolerate and incorporate homosexuals who maintain monogamous homosexual relationships.

Paulk, John. "Will We Offer Hope? Homosexuality and the Church." *Cornerstone* 29 (2000) 29-30.

Paulk, a former homosexual, advocates a stance whereby the church biblically opposes homosexuality while also embracing and aiding homosexuals who desire to repent.

Pulford, Cedric. "British Church Calls Moratorium on Homosexual Issue." *ENI Bulletin* 13 (2000) 18-19.

Pulford recounts the decision of Britain's United Reformed Church to leave the "issue of practicing homosexuals in the ministry" unresolved.

Rinehart, Paula. "Losing Our Promiscuity." *Christianity Today* 44 (2000) 32-39.

Rinehart charts the build-up to and consequences of the heavy promiscuity in contemporary society, especially in the teen through thirty age bracket. In response Rinehart advocates a return to traditional biblical abstinence outside of marriage, and she further suggests that there are signs of willingness to receive this message today, if the church will be authentic.

Rollinson, Andrew. "How Many Sexualities?: Norms and Diversity in Ethics and Pastoral Care." *Scottish Bulletin of Evangelical Theology* 18 (2000) 128-141.

Rollinson treats the issue of sexual orientation with particular attention paid to the concerns of pastoral care. Rollinson provides a biblically balanced treatment of the subject. He points out the Bible's rejection of homosexual activity as well as the fallacy of equating sexual orientation with personal identity. But he is also quick to call the church to be a healing community for homosexuals, while standing against all sexual activity outside of marriage.

Sandri, Luigi. "Pope John Paul Expresses "Bitterness" as Gays Hold Festival in Rome." *ENI Bulletin* 13 (2000) 20-21.

Sandri recounts Pope John Paul II's rebuke of the gay World Pride 2000 festival in Rome.

Sneed, Cindy. "For the Love of My Father." *Christian Single* 22 (2000) 16-17.

Sneed encourages the reader to look at earthly fathers through a biblical lens.

Sneeringer, Christine. "Did God Make Me Gay?" *Cam-pus Life* 59 (2000) 60-63.

Sneeringer's teen-oriented article offers testimony to how God freed a young woman from her lesbianism via the prayers and support of Christians in a local church.

Suchard, Derek. "Despite Growing Tolerance, Dutch Churches are Divided on Gay Marriage." *ENI Bulletin* 18 (2000) 10-11.

Suchard notes the remaining division in Dutch churches over the issue of homosexual marriage on the heels of movement in the Dutch parliament toward approving homosexual marriage.

Walker, Jon Kent. "Don't Waste the Grace." *Home Life* 4 (2000) 14-18.

Walker is concerned with reminding his readers to look at marriage from an eternal perspective. From that vantage point then, he seeks to provide a variety of practical and biblical insights for directing Christian marriage.

Wiker, Benjamin D. "Drawing a Hemline." *Crisis* 18 (2000) 33-35.

Wiker advocates a return to modesty via the dress code in the university. After illustrating with a couple of examples, Wiker suggests that "our intellectual and sexual attentions are inversely proportional." Moreover, he argues that immodesty in dress inevitably reduces women to sex objects. Though it appears that Wiker has bought into the fallacy that the only distinctions between the genders has to do with their sexual organs, he nevertheless, rightly recognizes the primary concern that the university should have to educate the intellect.

Wolfe, Christopher. "Born to be Defiled?" *World* (2000) 51-54.

Wolfe takes on the reductionistic "gay gene" theory which attempts to equate homosexuality with race and thereby win legislated acceptance condoning homosexuality across the board.

Zoba, Wendy Murray. "A Woman's Place." *Christianity Today* 44 (2000) 39-48.

Zoba depicts the significant history of women in missions. Tracing that history up to the present, Zoba notes that several features of the 20th century may have stifled women's involvement in global missions. Though she possibly tips her hand with a few subtle comments that could be read as egalitarian, Zoba's primary concern is to call for women's involvement in missions to women. ■■