

Table of Contents

- 2** **Editor's Column**
Bruce A. Ware
- 4** **Manliness and the Marital Vow**
Mark Liederbach
- 10** **Profiling Christian Masculinity**
Stuart Scott
- 19** **Radical Feminism and Abortion Rights:
A Brief Summary and Critique**
Alan Branch
- 26** **The Influence of the World**
Martha Peace
- 30** **Manhood, Womanhood, and Therapeutic Morality**
Daniel R. Heimbach
- 35** **Gender Roles and the Glory of God:
A Sermon on 1 Corinthians 11:2–12**
James M. Hamilton Jr.
- 40** **Celebrating Biblical Womanhood:
Philosophies of Beauty in Conflict**
Nancy Leigh DeMoss
- 42** **A Response to *Marriage Made in Eden*:
A Pre-Modern Perspective for a Post-Christian World**
John Tarwater
- 49** **Annotated Bibliography for Gender Related Articles in 2003**
Rob Lister

JOURNAL FOR BIBLICAL MANHOOD AND WOMANHOOD

is a biannual publication of the
**Council on Biblical Manhood
and Womanhood**
ISSN: 1544-5143

JOURNAL STAFF

Editor

Bruce A. Ware

Managing Editor

Rob Lister

Layout and Design

Bowin Tichenor

Commentators

Russell D. Moore

Nancy Leigh DeMoss

Todd L. Miles

CBMW

Chairman of the Board

J. Ligon Duncan, III

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.

Contact CBMW for institutional rates.

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)

UK Address:

CBMW

9 Epsom Rd.

Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, CV32 7AR

Annual Subscription £10

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

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

Editor's Column



Bruce A. Ware

*Editor, Journal for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood;
Senior Associate Dean,
School of Theology
Professor of Christian Theology
The Southern Baptist
Theological Seminary
Louisville, Kentucky*

Whether from attending scholarly meetings that deal with the Bible and gender, or from emails sent from pastors and teachers telling of developments in their denominations, churches, and institutions, or from reading the morning paper most days of the week—one thing is crystal clear: issues related to God's design of human masculinity and human femininity are far from going away! Perhaps all reading this editorial would echo agreement to the observation that it seems that gender issues are "front burner" issues of our culture, ones where the church has the opportunity to bear witness to God's wisdom and truth, or issues over which Christians may stumble and falter, bringing harm to themselves and to their communities of men and women, to the greater dishonor of Christ and the gospel. If the ministry of CBMW was important seventeen years ago when it commenced, its contribution within the body of Christ today is urgently needed. To the end that God and his word may be honored in our lives, our churches, and witnessed to in our communities, we gladly offer the insight and help that this journal may bring.

This issue of the journal offers two fine articles on the broad theme of biblical masculinity. Over the past several decades, men have been told repeatedly by the culture-shapers

what they are *not* to be, so they now lack any clear understanding or vision of what it means to be a man. Into this void come two excellent discussions of the "manliness" of being male. Mark Liederbach focuses attention on the requisite manliness of the husband in a healthy and happy marriage relationship, and Stuart Scott (author of *The Exemplary Husband: A Biblical Perspective*) extends the discussion of masculinity to see many of its central, biblical features. If one of the great needs of homes, churches, and communities is for men to know what it is to be men, these articles will give much direction from Scripture, and much encouragement for men to see afresh what they are created and called to be.

Alan Branch's contribution on the seduction of abortion rights helps us see better why commending biblical manhood and womanhood is such an enormous challenge. We live in a world marked by opposition and we best see what the "other side" thinks. In a similar vein, Martha Peace (author of *The Excellent Wife: A Biblical Perspective*) helps us see better the many seductions of the world around us all. What stands in opposition to biblical gender values and commitments is not only the organized efforts of abortion advocates but also the multitude of worldly influences that ride in the air we breathe. Dan

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Daniel L. Akin
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

Joshua Harris
Daniel Heimbach
H. Wayne House
Susan Hunt
Elliott Johnson
Peter Jones
Rebecca Jones
Mary Kassian
Heather King
George W. Knight, III
C. J. Mahaney
R. Albert Mohler, Jr.

Dorothy Patterson
John Piper
James A. Stahr
K. Erik Thoennes
Bruce A. Ware

BOARD OF REFERENCE

Gary Almy
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
David M. Howard
R. Kent Hughes
James B. Hurley

Paul Karleen
Charles & Rhonda Kelley
D. James Kennedy
Beverly LaHaye
Gordon R. Lewis
Robert Lewis
Crawford & Karen Loritts
Erwin Lutzer
John F. MacArthur, Jr.
Connie Marshner
Richard Mayhew
Marty Minton

J. P. Moreland
J. Stanley Oakes
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

F. LaGard Smith
R. C. Sproul
Joseph M. Stowell, III
Larry Walker
Stu Weber
William Weinrich
Luder Whitlock
Peter Williamson

Heimbach (author of the newly released *True Sexual Morality: Recovering Biblical Standards for a Culture in Crisis*) confirms one of the areas that even we in the church are most susceptible to is in the lure of seeing sexuality as a form of therapy. His warnings here are wise, and his appeal is consistently to see and engage in sexual experience only in accord with the good and wise design of our Creator.

Jim Hamilton provides a rich and insightful sermon in this issue on 1 Cor 11:2-12, and we gratefully continue our “Celebrating Biblical Womanhood” column with Nancy Leigh DeMoss’s helpful analysis of true beauty. As in the past several issues, we offer again here one sustained book review and then our annotated bibliography on key books on gender matters published in the year 2003. We hope readers will be made better aware of both some of the wonderful gains made and deep concerns before us in resources that come from our publishing houses.

As always, we hope and pray that God will be pleased to use this journal for the edification and strengthening of his people, whether by warning them away from dangerous paths or by calling them more zealously to continue on the faithful path, the path of life itself. We have no truth on gender matters—or any other matters—apart from the gracious revelation of God. We trust that readers will detect our ambition to be faithful to that revealed truth. To God alone be the glory. ■

Manliness and the Marital Vow:

A Look At The Meaning Of Marriage And Its Implications For Men As They Enter Into The Covenant Of Marriage

Mark Liederbach

*Associate Professor of Christian Ethics,
Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary
Wake Forest, North Carolina*

I. Introduction

There are two ways to keep a man from drowning in the river of marital divorce or despair: throw him a lifeline or go upstream and keep him from falling in. When it comes to the issue of marriage and divorce, there is an amazing amount of energy spent on rescue operations for those who are either in the stream of struggle or who have already divorced and are asking “where do I go from here.” Relatively speaking there are far fewer efforts to “go upstream and keep them from falling in.” Thus, the intent of this article is to focus energy on preventative action. As David Clark and Robert Rakestraw rightly comment, “the church must teach a positive and proactive theology of marriage. It must build a captivating vision of God’s will for marriage.” Only by doing so can one “be part of a preventative strategy to help stem the tidal wave of divorce in the church.”¹

The purpose of this article, then, is to address, with specific regard to men (although the application to women is closely related), what I believe Scripture reveals as the primary purpose of marriage. Having done so I will then explore the implications of how that purpose ought to shape a man’s marital commitment in light of the New Testament model God provides for marriage. It is my conviction that if a man properly understands the meaning and purpose that under-girds the institution of marriage, and if he were to study and emulate the model God has provided on how to live out his marital commitment, then he has a far greater chance of not only staying out of the “river of divorce” but also entering into the floods of joy God intends for those who marry.

II. The Purpose of Marriage: Worship

Genesis 1 and 2 indicate that God designed, created, and instituted marriage prior to the Fall. Because of this, his purpose and agenda for marriage is embedded in the created order and is, therefore, still meant to be the driving force behind all marriages today. Recapturing and reasserting this idea, then, is the first step in revitalizing and redirecting modern culture’s (and the church’s) understanding of marriage. The narrative accounts of God’s creation of Adam and Eve are vital to understanding God’s ultimate purpose in creating marriage.

Then God said, “Let us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” And God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. And God blessed them; and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it” (Genesis 1:26-28a).²

As the pinnacle of his creation, God specially designed human beings and set them apart in two significant ways. First, he gave them a nature distinct from all other parts of the creation: he made them image bearers. Second, God blessed them and as part of that blessing he gave them a dual task. They were to be *fruitful and multiply* in order to fill creation, and they were to *subdue and rule* over creation as be-

nevolent stewards accomplishing the tasks God assigned. It is in fulfilling God's agenda for them that they would experience the promised blessing and presumably its accompanying joys.

The following three passages from the second chapter of Genesis are central to understanding God's purposes for marriage. The first two passages provide two essential clues to understanding God's purpose in creating marriage, referred to in the third text:

Then the LORD God took the man and put him into the Garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it.

Then the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him."

So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh at that place. The LORD God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man. The man said, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of Man." For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed. (Genesis 2:15, 18, 21-25)

The first clue relates to the purpose for which God placed Adam in the Garden. In working with the Hebrew text, U. Cassuto makes the case that the English translations of Genesis 2:15 rendering God's intent for putting Adam in the Garden to "cultivate and keep it" miss an important nuance of the original text. While the English phrase "cultivate and keep" is technically accurate, the original language and context strongly suggest the idea of worship and obedience.³ John Sailhamer highlights this important linguistic nuance. Most English translations, he argues, overlook the "specific purpose for God's putting man in the garden. In most [English versions] man is 'put' in the garden 'to work it and take care of it.'" Sailhamer objects, however, and argues "a more suitable translation of the Hebrew . . . would be 'to worship and obey.'" That is, "Man is put in the garden to worship God and to obey him. Man's life in the garden was to be characterized by worship and obedience."⁴

Thus, in the safety of the perfect environment that God created for him, Adam's primary task (the ultimate end for which he was created) was to worship God through obedience to the instructions God gave him. Worshipful obedience in the garden would lead to experiencing God's full blessing.

One can find the second clue regarding God's purpose for marriage in Genesis 2:18. This passage indicates that Adam was alone and God saw this was "not good." The text then indicates that God created the animals and paraded them before Adam so that he could name them. It is only after this that the text indicates Adam became aware that he was "alone," and that there was no "helper suitable for him."

One must be careful not to misinterpret this passage by mistakenly understanding Adam's being "alone" primarily in the emotional sense of "loneliness." While God certainly created Adam as a social and emotive being, it is more than reasonable to conclude that having perfect fellowship with God (the most personal being in the universe) hardly lends itself to the conclusion that Adam was "lonely" in the emotionally needy sense that is so often associated with the word today. Instead the text seems to indicate that God is concerned not so much with Adam's emotional neediness as he is with making it possible for Adam to fulfill the purpose of his existence: to worship and obey and fulfill God's agenda for creation. Further evidence for this conclusion is the fact that the Scriptural account indicates that Adam does not even seem to be aware of his aloneness until God points it out to him. Adam needed a "helper" not because he was lonely, but because it would be impossible to be fruitful, multiply, and fill the world with worshipers if he were to remain "alone."

So, in his grace, God created a perfectly complementary helper for Adam: Eve. Sailhamer comments, "in what sense was the woman created to be a 'helper'?" "[I]n light of the importance of the blessing ('Be fruitful and increase') in the creation of the man and woman in 1:28, it appears most likely that the 'help' envisioned is tied to the bearing of children."⁵ God remedied Adam's aloneness not so much because he was emotionally needy but because remaining "alone" would make it impossible to fulfill the very purpose he was created to fulfill. He needed a companion—a suitable helper—for that task.

By piecing together these two clues one can see that if God created Adam and placed him in a garden of perfect safety and peace in order to worship and obey, and if God created Eve as Adam's perfectly complementary helper so that together they could fulfill his agenda and experience his full blessing, then one has to wonder what the world would have been like if Adam and Eve had never given in to Satan's temptations in Genesis 3. What would have happened if they had remained pure, obeyed God, and fulfilled the task to be fruitful and multiply and to rule the world and subdue it? What kind of people would have filled creation? What would Adam and Eve's fruitful oneness have accomplished?

The answer, at least in part, is a world filled with God-honoring, sinless worshippers united under one purpose: to subdue and rule the world for the glory of God! One can

conclude, then, that while the union of the man and woman and the procreation of offspring are immediate ends of marriage, the ultimate purpose is the experience and expansion of the worship of God in all the earth!

To summarize and restate the point, it is important to understand that when God ordained in Genesis 2:24 that it was “for this reason” that a man shall leave, cleave, and become one flesh with his wife, the “reason” was that the marital union and procreation of the man and woman would result in the extension of the worship of God to the uttermost ends of the earth! As David Atkinson points out, “whereas both Reformed and Catholic theologies have usually answered the question as to the purpose of marriage in terms such as the following: the procreation of children, the mutual help and comfort of husband and wife for each other, the ‘prevention of unchastity’—and whereas all this may well be true—there is a prior answer given.”⁶ The evidence of Scripture indicates that this “prior answer” giving ultimate meaning to marriage is the worship of God through the fulfillment of a “pre-Fall Great Commission.” That is, that marriage is for a husband and wife to unite and fulfill the divinely given task, so that the glory of God may be known throughout the earth!

In regard to the implications of this point, as it specifically relates to a man and his commitment to marriage, one is wise to see that a proper understanding of marriage must be linked to an agenda far higher than unity with one’s spouse or the procreation of children. While each of these are important proximate ends of marriage, they must be pursued secondarily in importance to God’s ultimate agenda. While it is good and right to assert both procreation and oneness as proper ends of marriage, the “why” behind both procreation and unity offers a bigger, more captivating vision for life and marriage. In his grace God indicates that a husband and wife are to “leave,” “cleave,” and become “one flesh” so that humans can attain to, and encourage others to pursue, the full expression of what they were made for: the worship and glory of God.

When a man enters into marriage and takes a vow of commitment, that vow links him to an overarching purpose much bigger than is usually understood or encouraged, and he is wise to understand it in light of this high and glorious calling. It is his responsibility to lead and guide his marriage to reflect and advance the glory of God. As John Piper writes, “Marriage exists to magnify the truth and worth and beauty and greatness of God; God does not exist to magnify marriage.”⁷ Filling the earth with the worship and praise of God is the driving purpose behind making and keeping a marriage vow and ought to be chief on the heart and mind of a man as he enters into marriage and takes responsibility for leadership.

III. The Model of Marriage: Christ’s Relationship with the Church

If worship is the purpose behind marriage that ought to drive a man’s commitment, what plan has God put in place to help facilitate the accomplishment of his agenda? Prior to the Fall, God’s agenda was simply and inherently bound up with the life and experience of the sinless first couple. After the Fall, however, Scripture indicates that the human heart no longer naturally moves toward the heart of God or the fulfillment of his agenda (Romans 3). Thus, in his grace God initiated a series of covenantal relationships with his people to provide salvation from the wages of sin, and to offer hope and guidance through the wilderness of their now sinful existence. The covenantal promises God initiated with Abraham, Jacob, and David find their fulfillment in Jesus Christ’s covenantal love and promises to his bride—the church (Luke 1:67-79). Through his life, death, and resurrection Jesus graciously embodies the means and example by which human beings can once again know and pursue God’s agenda of filling the earth with worshipers (Matt 28:18-20; Titus 2:11-14; Rev 5:9). Thus, in order for a man rightly to fulfill his marital commitment, he not only needs to orient his life and marriage toward the expansion of God’s glory throughout all the earth, but also must do so in a manner that mirrors Christ’s love for the church.

It is Paul’s teaching in Eph 5:22-32 that specifically makes this point.

Wives, be subject to your own husbands, *as to the Lord*, for the husband is the head of the wife, *as Christ also is the head of the church . . . as the church is subject to Christ*, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything. Husbands love your wives just *as Christ also loved the church* and gave Himself up for her . . . For this cause a Man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh. This mystery is great; *but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church* (Eph 5:22-23a, 24-25, 31-32; emphasis mine).

Christ’s relationship with the church is to be the primary model for understanding the nature and intensity of the marital vow. Paul’s teaching is that marriage ought to picture Christ’s relationship with the church and that husbands ought to love their wives in a manner reflective of the sacrificial way Christ loved his bride.

How does this relate to the marital vow a husband makes to his wife? Christ’s vow to the church is to love her with an everlasting love. He accomplishes this by fulfilling his promises *regardless* of his bride’s actions. By analogy, then, when a man enters into a marriage covenant, God’s design is

that the new marriage will provide for the world a picture of Christ's covenant relationship with the church.

Scripture teaches clearly that those who have placed their faith in Christ for the forgiveness of sins can rest assured in their relationship with Christ. This is so because Christ's covenant with his bride (the church) is dependant upon his work on the cross, his immutability, his unfailing nature and his faithfulness to his covenant promises. The relationship does not center on the ability of sinners not to sin!⁸ Christ promises that he will never leave nor fail his bride (Heb 13:5). While sinful humans are obviously not God, and while a sinful man *cannot* fulfill his marital vow as perfectly as Christ loves the church, that does not affect the standard of what marriage was designed and *ought* to be! Image bearers are to grow in the likeness of God and be conformed to the image of Christ (Rom 8:29). Therefore, when a man enters marriage he *ought* to attain to the perfect standard Christ set for him.

IV. Understanding Our Vow to One Another: Three Points of Application

Following this pattern, then, the marital commitment a husband makes should have at least three points of focus.

First, and far too underemphasized by most Christians, the marital vow must not be divorced from the ultimate purpose that grounds marriage in God's universal agenda. When a man enters into marriage, his marital vow and marital practice should not only seek the mutual gain possible between marriage partners, but must be first of all oriented in every respect toward individual and corporate worship of Christ. It is important to note that Paul's pre-eminent discussion of marriage in the book of Ephesians falls in the midst of a larger discussion in which he is encouraging the believers to put on godly behavior *so that* their lives, and the life of the church, would be *as a fragrant aroma* unto God (Eph. 5:2). The point is that marriage must be understood in light of a larger perspective in which Christians, whatever they do, are to do everything for the glory of God (1 Cor 10:31; Col 3:17).

Second, as one seeks to worship the Savior in and through marriage, it almost goes without saying that a serious pursuit of one's marriage vow should lead to a radical demonstration of sacrificial love and devotion of a man toward his wife. In a day and age of revolving-door marriages, it is important to reemphasize that a man's devotion to his wife ought to be radical in nature. Like Christ loves the church, a man should, without exception, tenaciously hold to his vow "for better or worse, in sickness and in health, for richer for poorer."

Finally, Jesus came to seek and to save the lost (Luke 19:10). He commissioned his church to do likewise (Matt 28:18-20). By its very nature, then, Christ's relationship with

his bride has a salvific, evangelistic intent and fragrance. Because marriage, by God's design, is supposed to be the closest picture of Christ's relationship with his church available in a sinful world, it is imperative that a man understand the evangelistic nature of his marital vow. It is God's intention that, when a marriage covenant reflects the divine covenant, it not only serves as a pleasing aroma of worship but also as an aroma that draws others to salvation (2 Cor 2:14-16). In this way marriage is meant to increase God's fame throughout the earth both by example and intent. As marriage was linked in the Old Testament to the filling of the earth with worshippers (Gen 1:28), so also ought a man understand that his marriage is linked to the "Great Commission" of the New Testament (Matt 28:18-20).

The stunning nature of these points ought to both amaze and stagger us. The sheer privilege it is that a man can both worship God in and through his marriage, as well as mirror Christ's love for the church in such a way that it has evangelistic power, ought to wake him (and all of us) to the high and glorious calling that marriage is. The wonder of God's plan and purpose for marriage is so far above the common idea of marriage that permeates modern culture, that when a man considers entering into a marriage he ought to be astounded, and perhaps even frightened, by the immense meaning and responsibility his marital vow entails. Only through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the filling of the Holy Spirit can he have confidence that he will lead his marriage toward these lofty ends.

On the other side of the coin, a man ought to be saddened and repentant whenever his choices in marriage reflect to the world something not true of Christ and his relationship to his bride. Perhaps such amazement, healthy fear, and even repentant sorrow would motivate re-appraisal and recommitment toward the God-intended nature of our marital vow. Worshiping Christ, and encouraging others to do likewise, in and through one's marriage is simply a fundamental reason marriage exists, and it ought to be a foundational understanding underlying every man's marital vow, for it is the means to experiencing God's fullest blessing.

V. The Implications of Our Marital Vow: A Christ-Centered Understanding

Having explored the biblical and theological foundations behind a man's marriage vow, the application to life and practice (ethics) is relatively straightforward. Because marriage is to model Christ's relationship with the church, it is only reasonable to conclude that the way Christ understood and kept his covenant with his bride ought to be the standard by which a man keeps his promises. Practically speaking, questions one might raise about the marital vow can and ought to be answered in light of Christ's example in loving the church (Eph 5:25).

In keeping with this, the following four questions asked about marriage—but answered in light of Christ’s covenant-keeping love—highlight the kind of practical understanding a man should have in regard to making and keeping his own marital vow.

1. What is the purpose of marriage? In light of the fact that marriage is to be a picture of Christ’s relationship with the church, the answer can be found in answering this analogous question: “What was the purpose of Christ’s love for the church?”

Two answers (at least) are clear. First, according to Phil 2:8-11 Christ was committed as a covenant keeper to humble himself and lay down his life for the church so that one day every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. In other words, Christ kept the covenant in order to fulfill the highest calling—to worship and glorify God. In addition, Christ was committed to keep the covenant in order that he might radically serve and forgive his bride.

The implications from these answers to a man’s marriage, then, are likewise two-fold. In regard to the purpose of one’s marriage consider the following implications:

a. Like Christ, a husband must be committed to keeping his vow as an act of worship and glorification of God.

b. Like Christ, a man must be committed to a radical service and forgiveness of his wife.

2. Why should a man keep (honor) his marriage vow? In light of the fact that marriage is to be a picture of Christ’s relationship with the church, the answer can be found in answering this analogous question: “Why did Christ fulfill his vow?”

Once again two answers present themselves. First, according to Luke 22:39 Christ fulfilled the covenant and kept the vow because it was God’s will. Jesus was committed to aligning his will with the Father’s—“yet not My will, but Thine be done.” In other words, he was committed to radical obedience to the Father’s will and the rules for fulfilling the covenant. Second, contrary to the sinful tendency to maximize one’s own fleshly pleasures according to one’s own agenda, Hebrews 12:2 indicates that it was “for the joy set before Him” that Jesus was willing to endure the cross knowing God’s way would produce the highest joy.

In regard to the reason why a man keeps his marriage vow then, consider the following implications:

c. Like Christ, a man must be committed to a radical willingness to obey his marital vow.

d. Like Christ, a man pursues and finds the highest, most fulfilling joy possible in marriage through obeying and keeping his vow.

3. What if my spouse is unworthy of my love? In light of the fact that marriage is to be a picture of Christ’s relationship with the church, the answer can be found in answering this analogous question: “What if the church is unworthy of Christ’s love?”

If one hasn’t seen the radical nature of the marital vow until now, certainly the answers to this question will demonstrate why the marital vow must be treated with solemnity and utmost respect. First, obviously the church was and continues to be unworthy of Christ’s love. Every person who has ever lived (with the exception of Christ) has rightfully earned death (Rom 3:23; 6:23). Yet through his love and his forgiveness, Christ was (and is) willing to overcome human sin and then continue unflinching in his commitment. Christ’s love and willingness to keep the covenant was (and is) not dependent on the behavior of the other.

Thus, what should a man do if his wife is unworthy of his love? In light of Christ’s example it is clear that:

e. Like Christ, a man must be committed to a radical willingness to overcome and forgive what seems “unforgivable.”

f. Like Christ, a man must be committed to a persevering, relentless love that is not dependant upon the actions of the other.

Along these lines T.A. Lacey correctly comments that, “If marriage were a contractual relation, an artificial partnership, it would be terminable not only by a failure to achieve its object, but even more equitably by mutual consent.” However, because it was created by God as a permanent institution prior to the Fall (in the order of nature) “it is indissoluble except by an event equally in the order of nature, and this can be found only in death.”⁹

4. What if the cost for a man keeping his marriage together is very, very high? In light of the fact that marriage is to be a picture of Christ’s relationship with the church, the answer can be found in answering this analogous question: “What if the cost of Christ keeping his covenant with the

church is very, very high?"

Consider the model of Jesus that we are to emulate. He was willing to surrender his own "rights" completely when he uttered in Gethsemane "not my will, but Thine be done" (Luke 22:39). This act was the ultimate act of worship portrayed in the Scriptures. Jesus was willing to demonstrate his love for us in that "while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom 5:8).

Regarding the cost a man must be willing to pay in order to keep his marital vow then, it is clear, in light of Christ's example that:

g. Like Christ, a man must be committed to a radical willingness to surrender his own "rights" for the sake of his wife and the marriage for the glory of God.

h. Like Christ, a man must be willing to die for the benefit of his wife.

VI. Conclusion: The Treasure

Jesus said, "The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in the field, which a man found and hid again; and from joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field" (Matt 13:44). While the wisdom of the man purchasing the field is noteworthy, the focus of the passage is on the source of great joy through the pursuit and finding of the treasure. God himself is the treasure! Only in the pursuit of him will one find true joy!

In his amazing grace God has designed marriage to be a vehicle for pursuing him. Like a luxurious ship that can carry one through the waters of struggle and despair in times of doubt or trouble, God created marriage as a means to a wondrous end. Unfortunately, because of sin, men do not always follow the intended route and end up falling into the river of disobedience, despair, and divorce.

To say that it is unfortunate that this emphasis on God's high and wondrous designs for marriage are lost on modern culture is a serious understatement. What is even more tragic is the reality that many Christian men enter into marriage with no idea of what they are actually entering into. Perhaps the most tragic thing of all is that many pastors and teachers who do pre-marital and marital counseling do not emphasize these points. Nonetheless, a man will only begin to experience the greatest possible joy in marriage when he pursues God's purposes and does so according to his plan.

It is the job of a man to lead by his life and demonstrate in his commitments his aim toward the goal of filling the

earth with the worship of Christ. When a man understands and lives out his marriage vow modeled after Christ's example, the implications may seem demanding, but they are also compelling. It is the high and lofty dream that enflames the heart of a man. Following the pattern Christ laid out in the way he demonstrated love for his bride so that worship and glory come to the Father is the highest and loftiest goal a man can have and pursue in marriage. It is also the path to the greatest joy possible one can experience in marriage.

God designed marriage to be so much more than we can imagine! It is vital that when a man enters into it he does so standing on the firm foundation of its purpose and goal and with anticipation and determination to exemplify Christ-like love in a manner that shouts out the wonder of God's love to a dying world that longs to know what it is all about. ■

¹David K. Clark and Robert V. Rakestraw, "Divorce and Remarriage" in *Readings in Christian Ethics: Issues and Applications* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1996) 228.

²Scripture quotations taken from the *New American Standard Bible*.

³U. Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1978) 122.

⁴John H. Sailhamer, *Genesis*, in vol. 2 of *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, ed. Walter C. Kaiser & Bruce K. Waltke (Grand Rapids: Regency, 1990) 45.

⁵*Ibid*, 46.

⁶David Atkinson, *To Have and To Hold: The Marriage Covenant and the Discipline of Divorce* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979) 75.

⁷John Piper, "The Surpassing Goal: Marriage Lived for the Glory of God" in *Biblical Foundations for Manhood and Womanhood*, ed. Wayne Grudem (Wheaton: Crossway, 2002) 93.

⁸See, e.g., Romans 3 and John 10:27-30.

⁹T.A. Lacey, *Marriage in Church and State*, rev. R.C. Mortimer (London: SPCK, 1947) 15.

Profiling Christian Masculinity¹

Stuart W. Scott

Associate Professor of Biblical Counseling,
The Master's College
Santa Clarita, California

A biblical worldview must definitely encompass one's view of men and women. Basic beliefs about who each sex is and what each should be like greatly impacts one's own gender evaluations as well as the shaping of boys and girls, the education of young men and women, the success of marriages, the effectiveness of the church in the world, and even the stability of society. One's view of a man or a woman affects attitudes, character, and interaction with one another.

In some very key ways, men and women *are* the same but they were not created to be exactly the same: "male and female he created them" (Gen 1:27). There are not only opposing opinions over whether or not there is any significant difference between the sexes, but also over what those differences really are. Surely, Christians need a clear understanding of what distinguishes a man from a woman *according to their Creator*. The focus of this article will be devoted to understanding what *true masculinity* is and is not. The question of how a man knows whether he is a *real man* or not will be discovered from Scripture.

Imagine this topic being discussed on one of America's most prestigious college campuses. The ideas expressed would be as varied as the many strong opinions found there. One might hear, "A man should be macho and self-reliant," while another may say, "A man should be interdependent and sensitive." Others might insist, "A real man must be romantic," while still others would offer, "All boys should be raised to be good at sports in order to express their masculinity and relate to other men." Perhaps another would say, "A man's man is successful and a leader," while someone else may inter-

ject, "A respected man sees himself as an equal—a non-leader, a fifty-fifty partner." Another student could possibly declare, "A man is not a man unless he can rule his family without any questioning from them." How can there be so many opinions among supposedly learned individuals? There are at least two key reasons: the sinfulness of man and the loss of absolutes.

Sinfulness Affects One's Concept of Masculinity

The history of the world's concept of masculinity is a sad commentary of how far man had strayed from God's original intent. It is a confusing and disappointing history. In the beginning, of course, God created the man at his best—Adam. He, being created by the perfect Creator, was the epitome of true masculinity. However, shortly after Adam's creation, his soul and body were gravely affected by his choice to sin (the Fall; Gen 3:1-8). From that point on, left to himself, man's depravity (inherent sinfulness) pushes him to stray in every aspect of life (Jer 17:9). Masculinity is just one of the areas that has been corrupted. One does not have to look far beyond the Fall to see the effects of depravity on the concept of masculinity.

Depraved ideas about what is *manly* have affected men and women negatively through the ages. In the ancient world, there was everything from the mild mistreatment of women to full-scale barbarism. In the early Greek culture, "real men" looked down on their wives as mere child bearers and housekeepers. They also did not allow them at the dinner table or in any assembly.² In the Roman culture, women were no more

than a means to bear children legally as well as a temporary fancy that could be discarded on a whim.³ In contrast, men living in a matriarchal society were absorbed into their wife's family, followed the mother-in-law's or the grandmother's lead, and faded into the background.

Throughout history, some cultures have devised rather extreme ways for young men to prove their masculinity or manhood. While it is not necessarily wrong to have a visible rite of passage ceremony for young men, it has historically been a *very* bad idea for a man to have something to prove. In America, the feminist movement came on the scene at least partially in reaction to actual injustices by men against women. With the passing of time, that movement has grown into a far-reaching, immoral catalyst that has further confused and even redefined the lines of gender.

A Loss of Absolutes Affects One's Concept of Masculinity

In more recent western history, the increasing relativism (the belief that there is no ultimate standard) and the resulting individualism ("only I know what is right for me") have had a great impact on gender concepts. This "no absolutes" mentality means that each man is left to his own "wisdom" on the subject of masculinity. That wisdom, of course, is totally subjective and may be based on one's own desires, culture, and/or educational training in the academic fields of psychology, sociology, or anthropology. There are a number of reasons why this kind of wisdom will get a person nowhere close to God's standard. First of all, man's own ideas and desires are very often selfish and self-serving. Second, culture has historically followed man's depravity. Third, American role models today basically consist of pathetic, immoral sports figures, movie stars, and rock musicians. Finally, the higher educational systems of the day are for the most part based on the study of unsaved people by unsaved people. As a result, there is a great reluctance on the part of typical Americans to make any statement about what is *truly masculine*. In fact, the earlier hypothetical college discussion might well be cut short with the postmodern declaration that each man must determine for himself what masculinity is and live within that without imposing his belief on another. This statement could very well be followed by the idea that one really should *not* be thinking in terms of masculinity but rather of genderless individualism.

It is clear from both Scripture and history that the unashamed and unchecked expression of depravity is continually on the increase, and the recognition of God's truth is on the decline (2 Tim 3:1-5). J. I. Packer sees society's decline in this way: "The truth is that because we have lost touch with God and his word we have lost the secret both of community (because sin kills neighbor-love) and of our own identity (because at the deepest level we do not know who or what we are, or

what we exist for)."⁴

The first step to regaining a true understanding of masculinity is to acknowledge that man's wisdom is misleading. Here is what the Bible says about personal opinion: "There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death." (Prov 14:12, ESV).

Men must not follow the way that seems right to them or to society. In reality, following what seems right about masculinity is doing great damage to men's lives. Young men are floundering and grasping at wrong ways to express their manhood. Marriages are also paying the price. Even many Christian women are regularly lamenting that their husbands are either timid or violent. More men seem to be experiencing depression and abandoning their societal responsibilities during their supposed midlife crises. In the church, there seems to be a growing dearth of exemplary male leadership. Further complicating the problem for God's people is the rise of "Christian" feminism, which clearly departs from Scripture and the will of God. On a larger scale, society as a whole has experienced a great and unfortunate loss of the significance of gender. So much so that it is very acceptable in today's culture even to *deny* one's gender and try to switch to the other.

God's Truth Will Lead the Way

Without an absolute standard, the confusion about masculinity can only worsen. There is no hope of improving people's depraved inclinations or making sense of the confusion. The *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary* definition of *masculine* is certainly an accurate picture of the ambiguity that surrounds this subject in our culture:

Masculine: 1 a: male b: having qualities appropriate to or usually associated with a man.⁵

There is no clear understanding of masculinity in society because it has generally forsaken the only dependable absolute there is—i.e., God's Word. Humans need to know what God has to say about man and his masculinity. God's truth is timeless and transcultural. Furthermore, it is a completely sufficient guide for becoming the kind of men God intended (Ps 119:105; John 17:17; 2 Pet 1:3). One must, in submission and obedience, align his thinking and actions with Scripture in order to understand and live out masculinity for the right reason (God's glory).

Basic Characteristics of Masculinity

Understanding masculinity must begin with acknowledging some very basic truths about humans that are found in

the Bible. These are characteristics that are true of both men and women. A man cannot begin to be the man God intended him to be unless he fully acknowledges who *mankind* is. God had a design in mind when he created human beings, and he created just what he intended. Those who are unwilling to acknowledge God as Creator do not have a stable and definitive beginning on which to look back. As a result, they will never be fully able to understand who they are or what they should be like. But those who believe in a perfect, good, and personal God, and who have been given a new heart by the forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ can learn greatly from some basic things God has to say about people. There are at least six basic characteristics of humans, as God describes them, that have specific implications as they relate to the subject of masculinity.

1. *Man was created in God's image* (Gen 1:27). This means that he finds his identity in the person of God rather than the animals. He is rational, creative, and relational. Unlike the animals, he has an eternal soul that needs to find its meaning and rest in God alone. Being creative and relational are part of being made in the image of God. Unfortunately, many men try to escape these aspects of their manhood, claiming that they are feminine qualities. Furthermore, if a man sees himself as a mere animal, he can excuse all sorts of behavior and uncontrolled passions.

2. *Man was created a worshiper* (John 4:23; Rom 1:21-25). Because man has been given a soul, he is by nature a *religious* being. He *will* worship something. Though he was given a soul for the purpose of worshiping God alone, the depravity that was discussed earlier pulls him in other directions. Until he bows the knee to Jesus Christ, he might worship himself, another person, money, success and its accompaniments, false gods, or a myriad of other things. Worshiping something or someone other than God is not what man was created to do. This kind of worship is neither manly nor true. Conversely, it *is* manly to seek and passionately love the God of the Bible.

3. *Since the Fall, man has been a sinner by nature* (Rom 3:12). Man was not initially created this way, but he *was* created with the ability to choose rationally. Soon, he embraced this basic characteristic with his choice to sin against the one and only prohibition that God gave him. Therefore, a man must be aware, contrary to what his pride or his society may tell him, that he can be very wrong. At the core of his very being there is an innate sinfulness and imperfection that will be with him throughout his life. This being true, it is certainly *manly* to admit when he is wrong in his thinking or actions, rather than try to hide it or deny it. It should also be mentioned at this point that, as a result of the Fall, a struggle has continued through the ages concerning the God-given roles of men and women. Scripture implies that the woman would “desire” to rule over the man. Put this together with man’s sinful inclinations to dominate or shirk responsibility and the outcome is great dif-

ficulty, conflict, and a distortion of God’s wonderful plan (Gen 3:16). It is only through redemption and an appropriation of God’s daily grace that one can overcome these effects of sin.

4. *Man is in need of God's saving grace* (John 3:16; Titus 3:4-7). It stands to reason that when God gave Eve to Adam, making it clear that he was to love and lead her, he would also give him a protective or salvific inclination. Through the ages men have protected and come to the rescue of women, children, societies, and even ideologies. However, man must realize that he also needs a savior and protector. Admitting his utter helplessness and need of salvation is a doubly humbling experience for a courageous man. And yet, any man who hopes ever to be a real man must acknowledge his need to be saved by God. He must be rescued from himself, the evil one (Satan), and the ensuing judgment for his sin by bowing the knee to Jesus Christ as the only Lord and Savior of his life.

5. *Man was not created self-sufficient but needing God and others* (John 15:5; Gal 5:14; Heb 4:16). By virtue of being a created being and a fallen individual, it is obvious that man needs God for even more than salvation. He needs God’s enduring strength, guidance, and wisdom. It is also obvious that God made him to need others by statements like, “It is not good for man to be alone” and “I will make him a helper fit for him” (Gen 2:18). John MacArthur writes, “In marriage men cannot be faithful to the Lord unless they are willingly and lovingly dependent on the wife He has given them.”⁶ The over thirty commands in the Bible pertaining to “one another” reinforce this truism.

6. *Man was created to be different from woman* (Gen 1:27). The fact that God created man unlike woman in appearance is a clear indication that they are different in other ways as well. In his wisdom, God has fashioned them uniquely inside and out, perfectly corresponding to how they are to *be* different and *function* differently. There was no mistaking God’s desire for an outward difference. Adam and Eve’s pre-covering existence in the garden reveals that God obviously intended for men and women to look different to themselves and others. There is subsequent Scripture clearly supporting this fact (Deut 22:5; 1 Cor 11:14-15). A timeless principle that can be observed from all of this is that God wants individuals clearly to express their own given gender. Today, there is less difference in how men and women look, and even act, than ever before in America’s history. Though culture is pushing for unisex everything, men and women need be careful that they are distinguishably different from the opposite sex in appearance, mannerisms, and cultural concepts of appropriate gender behavior. Some men might need help to recognize and change effeminate habits, which they have inadvertently developed.

The fact that men and women were created with differences does not mean that they are different in every way. Both genders are equal personally and spiritually. No one should

argue that women should not be treated with equal appreciation and dignity. Nor should their input or opinions be discounted on either societal or familial levels. Furthermore, the sexes are alike in that they are both able to communicate and even able to cling together as one in marriage. But, many want to overlook the existence of the comprehensive difference between a man's and woman's being. By the 1960s and 1970s, the feminist movement took a decidedly new path that has led to a current, full-blown assault on any traditional concept of what constitutes a man or woman.⁷ Many proponents go as far as Shulamith Firestone, who pushes for the total obliteration of gender differences.⁸ Also, she is not alone in her preference of artificial procreation and the full dismantling of the family, substituting a group setting for the upbringing of children.⁹ Werner Neuer accurately writes in his book, *Man and Woman*, "The feminist movement tends to confuse a real equality of men and women with their being identical."¹⁰

Many are not aware (or perhaps want to overlook) that the differences in God's design for the sexes reaches far beyond outward appearance. These dissimilarities are amazingly and beautifully consistent with the roles he has set forth in Scripture. Neuer skillfully joins both of these ideas by compiling scientific evidence and research that reveal the extensive physiological and personal differences between men and women. Such differences include: bone structure and constitution, muscles, skin, sexual organs and function, blood constitution, bodily liquids, hormones, chromosomal cell structure, cognitive function, abilities, outlooks, and relations. Men and women are distinctly different beings.¹¹ With this great plan of God in mind John Benton writes, "In particular, gender difference is not fortuitous. It is not a product of chance. It is not something unreasonable and unintelligible. It is not something to be regretted, or to fight against. It is to be gratefully accepted as the good gift of a loving God."¹²

A man cannot ever be a man in the truest sense unless he, in his mind, attests to these basic realities and gives his very life over to them and the One who created him. Masculinity then is a matter of the mind. A man can go to the gym to work out and even gain the physique of Charles Atlas or Arnold Schwarzenegger but this will not make him any more masculine. It is important to keep in mind A. B. Bruce's statement, "What tells ultimately is, not what is without a man, but what is within."¹³

was unmanly. The following is a chart of Christ-like character qualities (attitudes and actions) that will help explain authentic manhood more specifically.

Characteristics of the Perfect Man—Jesus

Jesus, the God-Man, is portrayed in the Scriptures as the only perfect man (1 Pet 2:21-22). This being so, he is the perfect picture of what one should strive to be as a man. Christ is the pristine example of masculinity in every way (1 John 2:6). Surely, no one would say that any quality he possessed

Qualities of the Perfect Man as Seen in Christ

ATTITUDES	ACTIONS	REFERENCES
Eternal Mindset	Did the will and work of the Father Not working towards his own success/desires	John 4:34; 5:30; 8:28-29
	Was filled with the Spirit (Word) Not the world's wisdom/ways	Luke 4:1, 14
	Gave the gospel to others Not temporary pleasures or relief	Mark 1:14-15; John 3-4
	Lived a holy, obedient life Not sinful	1 Pet 2:22; Phil 2:8
Love/ Understanding	Sought to meet needs of others Not uncaring/self-focused	Matt 4:23; Luke 4:18-21
	Sacrificed self and own desires Not self-preserving/selfish	Luke 22:42; Phil 2:6-8
	Was gentle whenever possible Not harsh/demanding	Matt 11:29; John 21:15-19
Zeal/Courage/ Confidence (because of God and His promises)	Led the disciples and others Not a follower when he shouldn't be	John 6:2
	Showed initiative when He should have Not waiting for someone else	Mark 6:34-44; Luke 6:12-16
	Confronted when necessary Not a compromiser/man-pleaser	Matt 23:1-36; Mark 11:15-18
	Was decisive according to God's revealed will Not wishy-washy or afraid	Matt 4:1-11; Mark 8:31-38
Conscientiousness	Fulfilled responsibilities Not irresponsible	John 17:4; 19:30
	Was diligent Not lazy or a quitter	John 5:17; Heb 12:2-3
Humility	Served and listened to others in His leadership Not proudly lording it over others	John 13:12-17; 6:5-10
	Glorified another (the Father) Not greedy for attention or recognition	John 8:50, 54; 17:1,4

God's will for men is to put on Christlikeness (Rom 13:14). One cannot be a *real man* unless he is increasing in Christ's qualities. Men should pray about them regularly and seek to emulate them in daily living (2 Pet 3:18).

Characteristics Drawn from the Qualifications of Male Leadership in the Church

More insight can be gained into God's expectations about masculinity by examining what God has said concerning male leadership in the church. In the Scriptures, we find two very precise lists of positive and negative qualities by

which leaders are to be measured: 1 Tim 3:2-7 and Titus 1:6-9. Although Paul, in these passages, correlates this set of characteristics with church leadership, these qualities (except for “able to teach” and “not . . . a recent convert”) are addressed elsewhere in God’s Word for the non-elder Christian as well. The instructions were given to ensure that male leaders were habitually the kind of men that God wants *every* man to be. Because a leader is always some sort of example (good or bad), it is very important to God that every male leader reflect Christ (1 Cor 11:1). Therefore, since these two passages were specifically given by God to men, the basic instructions found in them are profitable for understanding what is truly masculine and what is not. It could even be said, from God’s perspective, that these commands and prohibitions are prerequisites to genuine *manliness*. A godly man must be:

- **Above reproach:** blameless, not able to be accused, having a good reputation.
- **The husband of one wife:** a pattern of singular affection for one’s wife.
- **Sober-minded:** temperate, alert, clear-headed, watchful.
- **Self-controlled:** in control of thinking, emotions and passions; prudent, thoughtful, decent.
- **Respectable:** orderly in time, responsibilities, and behavior; not chaotic.
- **Hospitable:** welcoming to others, loves strangers, serves others.
- **Gentle:** considerate, gracious, patient, kind in dealing with others.
- **He must manage his own household well:** governs, presides over, has authority over; is faithful to lead spiritually, cares for, protects; has children who are not riotous or insubordinate; oversees and/or fulfills affairs of the home.
- **A lover of good:** loves virtue and good men.
- **Upright:** just; upholds righteousness.
- **Holy:** pure, devout.
- **Disciplined:** persevering, steadfast, restrained.
- **Holding firm to the Word:** learns and upholds sound doctrine; holds to it tightly; able to exhort and convict

In contrast, a godly man must not be:

- **A drunkard:** not addicted to strong drink.
- **Violent:** violent, quickly angered, explosively angry.
- **Quarrelsome:** contentious, argumentative.
- **A lover of money:** covetous, greedy for money, materialistic.
- **Arrogant (self-willed) rather than a steward:** pushing his own ideas, desires, goals or gain.
- **Quick tempered:** inclined to anger habitually; quickly angry.

Examining the qualities for godly spiritual leaders helps us further refine what it means to be a man. When defining masculinity, it is futile to concern oneself with qualities that should be distinctly different from feminine counterparts, unless one has first thought about the more foundational traits of manhood. Hopefully, it has been made clear that one cannot be truly masculine by centering on only a few distinctive characteristics. Up to this point, the basic characteristics of man, the fundamental character of the perfect man (Christ), and some primary qualities that are specifically directed toward men have been discussed. That being accomplished, attention is now directed to those qualities directly related to man’s unique, God-given role.

Role Characteristics in Which a Man Must Excel

By exploring God’s intention concerning gender roles it becomes clear how a man should differ from a woman. Herein lies the key to distinctive masculine qualities. After understanding from Scripture what God intended for a man to *do*, then it is much easier to determine what characteristics must be emphasized. In this process, it will become obvious that women may also be expected to possess these qualities to some extent or in certain situations. But, a man must excel in them in order to fulfill his major roles. This concept is very similar to spiritual gifts. For example, all Christians are commanded to evangelize and to be hospitable. However, some have been given the gift of evangelism or hospitality, and therefore will *excel* in that ability so that they might fulfill their role in the body of Christ. A strong and godly man will be characterized by the qualities that are necessary to fulfill the roles that God has given to him.

Leader

When God placed man in the garden, he gave him specific instructions. Adam was to care for the garden—i.e., to oversee it (Gen 2:15). He was given charge of it even though God could have done a much better job himself. Adam also had dominion over and named the animals (Gen 1:28-30; 2:20). He was given these tasks before Eve came on the scene. When God placed Eve in the garden, he made it clear that she was to assist Adam in the work he had been given to do. She was to be his helper (Gen 2:18). God didn’t say, “Here Eve, you take this half and Adam, you take the other.” Adam was to lead; Eve was to help and follow.

Later in Scripture, husbands are clearly instructed to be the head in the marriage relationship, and women are commanded to submit to the husband’s leadership and respect his God-given position (Eph 5:22-33). It was to men that God

gave leadership positions in the nation of Israel.¹⁴ Furthermore, it is to men that God gave the position of leadership in the church (1 Tim 2:11-12). It is obvious that God has given man the role of ultimate leadership.

This says absolutely nothing (positive or negative) about a woman's capabilities or personal equality. God simply chose to give this role to the man. In any endeavor, there must be an ultimate leader. God chose and equipped Adam for this role. If leadership is a God-given role for men, then each man needs to find the way to lead. For some men, who did not develop leadership skills while growing up or who have habitually shied away from leadership, it will be necessary to develop leadership skills over time rather than incompetently try to lead in a full or total capacity. Granted, some men are gifted by God with exceptional leadership abilities to be leaders of leaders. If all Christian men were taught that it is *manly* to initiate and lead, there would not be such a lack of male leadership in the home and the church. In regard to teaching young boys leadership, Douglas Wilson writes,

Our boys need to learn humility, and they also need to learn boldness and courage. The only way to accomplish this balance is through a grasp of who God is. Because we have ceased teaching that God is our Father, with the attributes of divine Father, we have lost an understanding of imitative masculinity. Because of this, our boys veer into one of two ditches. Either they embrace humility without boldness which in boys is effeminate, or they embrace boldness without humility which is destructive.¹⁵

The qualities that one must strongly possess in order to carry out a leadership role are wisdom (by a full knowledge of the Word of God, facts, and persons, and then thoughtful application of biblical principles), initiative, decisiveness, humility, courage, and personal involvement.¹⁶

Lover (the 1 Corinthians 13 Type)

At creation, Adam and Eve were given to each other as marital companions. This intention for marriage is further made clear later in Scripture (Mal 2:14). Certainly, love is involved in this kind of companionship. In the New Testament, husbands are singled out as needing to exemplify the kind of sacrificial love that Christ has for the Church (Eph 5:25). They are also specifically commanded to live with their wives "in an understanding way" (1 Pet 3:7). Clearly, husbands are to excel in this love. Also, Christ commanded the men he left behind to love and serve one another (John 13:15). John Benton writes:

There is need for repentance. Perhaps single men have used the strength they have to serve them-

selves rather than other people. Perhaps husbands have used their strength to dominate their wives and children. We need to learn to come back to God, back to his Word of Scripture, and learn again to walk with him. To be a loving sacrificial servant of others, as Jesus Christ was, is not to be namby-pamby. It is to be a true man.¹⁷

A true man, then, will excel in qualities that show love, such as giving, gentleness, consideration, kindness, servanthood, and self-sacrifice.

Protector

A natural outworking of the roles of leader and lover produces the role of protector. After the Fall, it certainly became part of Adam's job description to protect his wife. As the supreme leader and lover, God has made a commitment to protect believers (2 Thess 3:3). A man must make the same commitment to protect his wife, his children, and his church. Though God in his love does not always protect people from the consequences of their sin or every evil in the world, his protection definitely involves both *physical* and *spiritual* aspects, just like a husband's love. However, it must be remembered that only the all-knowing and all-wise God has the right and the wisdom to allow evil purposefully to befall another.

In the Old Testament, men made up the army to protect cities, women, and children (Num 1:2-3). In 1 Corinthians 16:13, God commanded the brethren of the Corinthian church to protect the faith (the Word of God) with the words "act like men"—i.e., be courageous! Christ certainly protected the disciples he loved and led (John 17:12). He also expected all the church leaders to protect the body of Christ (Acts 20:28). Being manly involves protecting. The qualities a man must clearly possess before he will be a good protector are *courage*, *boldness*, *strength* (both physical and spiritual) and *watchfulness*.

Provider

The roles of leader and lover automatically encompass the idea of *provision*. God, as the one who leads and loves, also provides for every true need (Ps 34:10). Husbands and fathers are specifically given the role of provider in the New Testament (Eph 5:29; 1 Tim 5:8). Leaders of God's people are given this role as well (Ezek 34:1-4; John 21:15-17). Men should seek to meet the true needs of those whom God has placed in their care, whether physical or spiritual. In order to fulfill this role, a truly masculine man will abound in the characteristics of *diligence* (hard work), *personal involvement*,

and *servanthood*. He will also do all that he can to acquire a *good job* that allows him to care well for those he must love and lead.

A man will be better able to fulfill God's intention as he puts off sin and grows in Christlikeness. There are many sins that will keep a man from possessing these qualities and fulfilling his God-given roles. These sins include fear of man, self-pity, love of pleasure, pride, laziness, selfishness, idolatry (e.g., work, money, possessions, success, one's wife), and a lack of trust in God and his truth. A real man will, by God's grace, strive to put off these and any other sin that stands in the way of his masculinity. He will seek God's help to implement all of these godly (Christlike) qualities into his daily affairs. John Piper writes, "At the heart of mature masculinity is a sense of benevolent responsibility to lead, provide for and protect women in ways appropriate to a man's differing relationships."¹⁸

The extent to which these role qualities are present in a man's life determines how well he displays these distinguishing aspects of his masculinity. He should surpass his counterpart in them. Furthermore, he has the freedom to exercise them with both of the genders. Women, on the other hand, may *at times* need to assume these roles with children, other women and men outside the realm of the church; but she will find true identity and satisfaction if she is *more* characterized by the role of assistant or helper, so far as marriage and spiritual instruction are concerned (Gen 2:18; 1 Tim 2:12).

Furthermore, a woman in the work place must be able to deal with a male employee under her in a way that preserves his masculinity and her femininity. Though many women have found a certain prideful satisfaction in leading, they are surely missing a far more pure and holy satisfaction that is found only in fulfilling the roles that God has given her.

Similarly, if men were to be more consistent in living out these role qualities they would not be inclined to strive toward counterfeit expressions of masculinity such as machismo or authoritarianism. Men of this persuasion have fallen into one kind of unbiblical extreme. The other extreme, of course, is that of passive or effeminate men. If a man overly focuses on any one of the characteristics described in this chapter, he will cause him to err toward one extreme or the other—to be unmanly and sin in his duties and relationships. Instead, a man must fully embrace God's superior design for the sexes. About this, John MacArthur observes, "They are perfect complements—one the head, leader, and provider; the other the helper, supporter, and companion."¹⁹

The Bottom Line

So what does it mean to be a *real man*? It means not to trust in one's own judgment about masculinity but, instead

to cling to the fact there *are* absolutes outlined in the Word of God. It means to understand the basic characteristics of mankind and recognize that there should be a difference between the genders. It means possessing saving faith in and a likeness to the person of Christ. It means striving to emulate the qualities that God outlines for godly men in the church. Finally, it means to capitalize on the specific qualities that are needed to fulfill our God-given roles. In short, it means to live out a biblical worldview of masculinity.

Boys need to be taught the characteristics of biblical manhood by parents and other spiritual teachers. Furthermore, these are qualities that should be presented to the male population in all Bible-believing churches and institutions. Christian men need to take personal responsibility to study Scriptural teaching in this area, communicating with other godly men about it, and depending on God's grace to change.

Though many of the masculine qualities discussed in this article were related to the husband, Scripture also presents them as pertaining to those single men who are God's servants. Therefore, these truths are for each and every man, single or married, young or old. All men should fervently seek to pursue a true and life-changing understanding of the basic characteristics of man and Christ, take to heart specific biblical charges to men, and look for opportunities to lead, love, protect, and provide. Then, he will be a *real man*.

Masculinity: The possession and pursuit of redeemed perspective and character, enhanced by qualities consistent with the distinguishing male roles of leading, loving, protecting, and providing—all for the glory of God. ■

¹This article was originally published as, and has been slightly adapted from, chapter eight ("Profiling Christian Masculinity") in *Think Biblically! Recovering A Christian Worldview*, ed. John MacArthur (Wheaton: Crossway, 2003) 155-168. Used by permission of Crossway Books, a division of Good News Publishers, Wheaton, IL 60187, www.crosswaybooks.org.

²Demosthenes, "Speeches 51-61" <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/cgi-bin/ptext?doc=Perseus:text:1000.01.0080&query=section53>.

³Jo-Ann Shelton, *As The Romans Did* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998) 37-55.

⁴J. I. Packer, *Knowing Man* (Westchester, IL: Cornerstone, 1978) 43.

⁵*Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary* (1980), s.v. "masculine."

⁶John MacArthur, Jr., *Different By Design* (Wheaton: Victor, 1994) 44.

⁷Werner Neuer, *Man & Woman* (Wheaton: Crossway, 1991)

15-16.

⁸Shulamith Firestone, *The Dialectic of Sex: The Case for Feminist Revolution* (New York: Bantam, 1971) 1-13.

⁹Ibid. 223, 261-62.

¹⁰Neuer, *Man & Woman* 25, referencing Werner P. Lersch, *Vom Wesen der Geschlechter* (München-Basel: n.p., 1968) 126.

¹¹Ibid. 26-51.

¹²John Benton, *Gender Questions* (London: Evangelical Press, 2000) 18.

¹³A.B. Bruce, *The Training of the Twelve* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1971) 38.

¹⁴John M. Frame, *The Doctrine of God* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 2002) 384-85.

¹⁵Douglas Wilson, *Future Men* (Moscow, ID: Canon Press, 2001) 49.

¹⁶Stuart W. Scott, *The Exemplary Husband* (Bemidji, MN: Focus Publishing, 2000) 117-42.

¹⁷Benton, *Gender Questions* 43.

¹⁸John Piper, *What's the Difference?* (Wheaton: Crossway, 1990) 22.

¹⁹MacArthur, *Different by Design* 44.

Radical Feminism and Abortion Rights: A Brief Summary and Critique

Alan Branch

*Vice President for Student Development,
Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary
Kansas City, Missouri*

Several years ago while serving as a pastor in Raleigh, NC, I saw an unforgettable bumper sticker. Emblazoned in white letters on a purple background was the following message: “Forgive me for not being in church this Sunday. I was too busy practicing witchcraft and becoming a lesbian.” This intentionally provocative statement illustrates a profound fact about the worldview of radical feminists—their counter-Christian morality is strongly rooted in paganism, an important point for us to understand lest we mistakenly assume all radical feminists are irreligious. In reality, many if not most radical feminists are quite religious. However, their religion is pantheistic and not theistic in nature.

The purpose of this article is to summarize the worldview of radical feminism and its approach to abortion, to suggest some possible public policy implications, and then to offer a brief theological critique. In speaking of radical feminism and its approach to abortion, I am differentiating between first, second, and third generation feminists. First generation feminism was seen in the suffrage movement here in the United States. The second phase of feminism was the “women’s liberation” and sexual liberation movement of the 1960s and 1970s. Radical feminism is the “third wave” and is explicitly pagan in nature. In order to demonstrate the challenges of radical feminism, I have selected Rosemary Radford Ruether, Mary Daly, and Ginette Paris as primary examples. At key points I will refer to other feminists in order to amplify particular emphases.

I. Rosemary Radford Ruether

For twenty-five years, Rosemary Radford Ruether taught at Garrett Evangelical Seminary, a United Methodist School. She recently took a position at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley. Ruether herself has self-identified as a Roman Catholic, though she clearly rejects basic teachings of the church. A graduate of Claremont Graduate School, Ruether’s thought has evolved from a feminist theologian who opposed patriarchy to one who aggressively embraces a counter-Christian worldview.¹

In *Sexism and God Talk* (1983), Ruether combines a higher-critical view of scripture, a pagan worldview, and a socialist economic analysis into a feminist critique of society. She accepts the findings of the Documentary Hypothesis and argues that Patriarchy is most prevalent in the “J” or “Yahwist” source. She says, “Although the predominantly male images and roles of God make Yahwism an agent in the sacralization of patriarchy, there are critical elements in Biblical theology that contradict this view of God.”² Instead of the “patriarchal” Yahweh, Ruether urges women to worship the “goddess”:

An ecological-feminist theology of nature must rethink the whole Western theological tradition of the hierarchical chain of being and chain of command. This theology must question the hierarchy of human over non-human nature as a relationship of ontological and moral value. . . . The God/ess who is the primal Matrix, the ground of being-new being, is neither stifling immanence

nor rootless transcendence. Spirit and matter are not dichotomized but are the inside and outside of the same thing.”³

Thus, for Ruether the “goddess” designates the divine or ultimate reality. She then moves from this foundation to what can best be described as a socialist-feminist economic critique of the West and the United States in particular. She concludes, “We seek a democratic socialist society that dismantles sexist and class hierarchies, that restores ownership and management of work to the base communities of workers themselves, who then create networks of economic and political relationships.”⁴

Elsewhere, Ruether argues for a hermeneutic informed by Liberation Theology. According to Ruether, the key to proper interpretation of Scripture is for women to become critically aware of the falsifying and alienating experiences imposed on them by male-dominated culture. Thus, “Women’s experience, in this sense, is itself a grace event, an infusion of liberating empowerment from beyond the patriarchal cultural context, which allows them to critique and stand out against . . . androcentric interpretations of who and what they are.”⁵

A prolific author, Ruether’s thought has continued to develop and can now be best described as a form of “ecofeminism,” a combination of the radical ecology movement and feminism. Ecofeminism as a movement posits that destruction of natural resources is closely related to the religion of patriarchy, which they see as hopelessly violent and exploitive. In contrast, feminine images of God encourage a kinder and gentler approach to environmental management. Thus, ecofeminists believe they can save the earth by worshiping the earth as a goddess.⁶ Ruether’s most expansive presentation of ecofeminism is found in *Gaia & God: An Ecofeminist Theology of Earth Healing* (1992). “Gaia” is the name for the Greek earth goddess. The term itself was adopted by biologist James Lovelock in the early 1970’s to describe his thesis that the entire earth is a living system behaving as a unified organism.⁷ In *Gaia and God*, Ruether rejects the traditional Christian categories of creation, judgment, sin, fallenness, and redemption and suggests instead that we utilize the categories of creation, destruction, domination, deceit, and healing.

How does Ruether’s worldview affect her approach to abortion? In “A Community Prayer for Choice,” Ruether expresses her conviction that abortion is a right women should have and they should make the choice whether or not to abort based on their own convictions. In this prayer, Ruether posits that abortion is a case of rights in conflict—the mother’s, society’s, and the pre-born child. These conflicts make Ruether “sad” and “angry that we are faced with such choices.”⁸ Echoing common abortion rights rhetoric, Ruether goes on to say:

We are surrounded by many children who came into the world without the most minimal opportu-

nities for love and development. We do not want to create life in that way. We want to create life that is chosen, life that is cherished and can be sustained and nourished.⁹

In summary, Ruether believes children without certain unstated “minimal opportunities” should be aborted. Presented in this manner, abortion can become an environmental issue for ecofeminists since an expanding population is viewed as a primary threat to the earth itself.

II. Mary Daly

Daly was raised a Roman Catholic and spent her professional life teaching at a Roman Catholic School (Boston College), but has advocated a neo-pagan approach to theology. Her educational dossier includes three doctorates.¹⁰ For most of her career, Daly refused to allow men to take her “Feminist Ethics” class because she felt they negatively affected class discussion. She was sued by a male student in 1998 who claimed his civil rights under Title IX had been violated by Daly’s “women only” policy. This led to her dismissal/retirement. There is much debate over whether Daly resigned or was fired in early 1999 by Boston College. Ultimately, the two sides settled out of court in February, 2001.

Daly’s book *Beyond God the Father* (1973) is the seminal book for radical feminist theology. Like other feminists, she identifies patriarchy as the great evil in the world and states, “The biblical and popular image of God as a great patriarch in heaven, rewarding and punishing according to his mysterious and seemingly arbitrary will, has dominated the imagination of millions over thousands of years.”¹¹ Furthermore, patriarchy is the origin of artificial sex roles/distinctions: “The roles and structures of patriarchy have been developed and sustained in accordance with an artificial polarization of human qualities into traditional sexual stereotypes.”¹² Daly also argues that patriarchy perpetuates male dominance and violence: “The character of Vito Corleone in *The Godfather* is a vivid illustration of the marriage of tenderness and violence so intricately blended in the patriarchal ideal.”¹³ Daly seems to have argued in the past that androgyny is the ultimate goal of feminism, though her thought is hard to follow and very fluid on this point. Apparently, she thought androgyny was a good ideal in 1973, but changed her mind by 1985. Perhaps she can be described as supporting a blending of sex-roles in 1973 while she moved to a position where all sex roles are obliterated. In 1973, she said, “The becoming of androgynous human persons implies a radical change in the fabric of human consciousness and in styles of human behavior.”

Daly argues that women should abandon the masculine noun “God” when referring to the ultimate spiritual reality and should instead refer to the Deity as “Be-ing,” a verb. Mary

Kassian emphasizes that much of Daly's anger comes from inequities she perceived in the Catholic church. According to Kassian, "Daly's journey is ending far from where it began. Spinning her own definition of reality—based on the goddess she has found within—Daly has woven a system of be-ing that is antithetical to the God of the Bible."¹⁴ Daly moved in a decidedly more pagan direction in *Gyn/Ecology* (1978) where she explicitly ties feminist ethics to worship of nature. In this work Daly excoriates men as "lethal organs" of a "rapist society". Furthermore, men feed parasitically on female energy and invent evil technologies to compensate for their inability to bear children. Women who don't share her views are mocked as "honorary white males." Daly also claimed that she no longer had any use for the words God, androgyny, and homosexuality. She argued that each of these terms was unalterably burdened by patriarchal connotations.¹⁵

According to Daly, the account of the Fall in Genesis perpetuates women's subordination. She describes Genesis 3 as an exclusively male effort in a male-dominated society which succeeded primarily "in reflecting the defective social arrangements of the time."¹⁶ Furthermore, she claims the story makes subjection of women justified because she had her origin in man and "was also the cause of his downfall and all of his miseries."¹⁷

For Daly, liberalizing of abortion laws is crucial to women's liberation. Daly said anti-abortion laws at that time (1973) were reflective of the patriarchal domination and the systemic evil of patriarchy. She said, "At this moment in history [1973] the abortion issue has become a focal point for dramatic conflict between the ethic of patriarchal authoritarianism and the ethic of courage to confront ambiguity."¹⁸

In *Gyn/Ecology*, Daly argues that many men are "pro-life" because they have "fetal identification syndrome." By this, she means that men identify with the fetus because they see in the fetus their own role as "controller, possessor, inhabitator of women."¹⁹ Furthermore, men identify with the fetus because they both drain female energy. Daly offers her own analysis of the subconscious fears of men and says, "Since this perpetual fetal state is fatal to the Self of the eternal mother (Hostess), males fear women's recognition of this *real* condition, which would render them infinitely 'unwanted.'"²⁰ Hence, from Daly's perspective, men who oppose abortion are really struggling with their own dependence on feminine energy and obsession with dominating women. Essentially, she argues men have a fear that if women stop wanting babies, they may also stop wanting men!

III. Ginette Paris

Ginette Paris holds a Ph.D. from the University of Montreal and now teaches mythology and archetypal psychol-

ogy at Pacifica Graduate Institute in California, a graduate school dedicated to Jungian and mythological studies. The Jungian influence in Paris's thought cannot be understated for Jung himself advocated a new kind of paganism. Richard Noll offers a succinct summary of the pagan influence on Jung when he says Jung's "earliest psychological theories and method can be interpreted as perhaps nothing more than an anti-Christian return to solar mythology and sun worship based on Romantic beliefs about the natural religion of the ancient Aryan peoples."²¹ Likewise, Paris boldly argues for a blatant paganism as was first seen in her 1988 work, *Pagan Meditations*.²²

Paris clearly connects her pagan beliefs with abortion rites in *The Sacrament of Abortion* (1992). She begins her work by saying that she has "drawn inspiration throughout this book from a guiding image, the Artemis of Greek mythology."²³ Paris goes on to state that Artemis is the appropriate image for women to worship when addressing the issue of abortion because in classic mythology, Artemis offered both protection and death to women, children, and animals. Building on her Jungian background, Paris then asks if the image of Artemis reflects a form of feminine power:

Why these apparent contradictions . . . personified in a feminine divinity? Is it a way of saying that a woman's protective power cannot function properly if she does not also possess full power, namely, the power over death as well as life? Her image belongs to us as well as to antiquity, because like all fundamental images of the human experience, which C.G. Jung called 'archetypes,' she never really ages but reappears in different forms and different symbols.²⁴

Jeffrey Satinover argues that the Jungian "archetypes" Paris refers to are a modern variant of mystical, pagan polytheism in which the multiple "images of the instincts" (Jung's archetypes) are worshiped as gods.²⁵

According to Paris, the ethics of ancient goddess religions affirm that it is "morally acceptable that a woman who gives life may also destroy life under certain circumstances."²⁶ Since good and evil essentially disappear as discernable categories in Jungian thought, it is not surprising that Paris moves on to say, "It is not immoral to choose abortion; it is simply another kind of morality, a pagan one."²⁷ Consistent with her "value neutral" spin on abortion, Paris argues that new rituals are needed to complement the new pagan spirituality, especially in the area of abortion: "Our culture needs new rituals as well as laws to restore abortion to its sacred dimension, which is both terrible and necessary."²⁸ The focus of these new rituals should be Artemis herself who should be worshipped through abortion: "Abortion is a sacrifice to Artemis. Abortion is a sacrament for the gift of life to remain pure."²⁹ Lest we miss the force of Paris' argument, she states elsewhere, "Obviously,

everyone has a right to his or her religious beliefs, but what if mine are Pagan?"³⁰

IV. Implications and Brief Critique

Ruether, Daly, and Paris represent three radical feminists on a continuum of paganism.³¹ All three link goddess worship, earth worship, and ecological concerns into a comprehensive approach that affirms unrestricted access to abortion as a fundamental right. Of the three, Ruether has the most ties remaining with the church and wants to bring feminist reforms to liturgy. Daly represents someone who has openly left the church in favor of a blatant paganism. Paris has apparently never sought to work from any form of orthodox grid and is the most explicitly pagan of the three. Two key issues seem to emerge from these radical feminist arguments for abortion rights. First, what are the public policy implications for such arguments and, secondly, what critiques can be made of these arguments?

A. Public Policy and Radical Feminism

Abortion rights in the United States emerged from earlier cases involving contraception, most notably *Griswold v. Connecticut* (1965), the first instance in which the Court acknowledged a Constitutional "right to privacy."³² Soon after *Griswold*, Roy Lucas published his seminal article in *The North Carolina Law Review* in which he argued that *Griswold* established a precedent for a right to abortion as a "privacy" issue.³³ In the landmark *Roe v. Wade* decision, Justice Brennan appealed to the right to privacy discovered in *Griswold*. After almost twenty years of vocal opposition, many thought that *Roe* would be overturned in 1992 and *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*. Optimism was especially high among pro-life activists after twelve years of Supreme Court appointees from Reagan and Bush. In reality, *Casey* upheld the core finding of *Roe*, but shifted abortion rights from a debated "right to privacy" supposedly discovered in the Fourteenth Amendment to the more explicit liberty interests found in that amendment.

When one looks closely at the Supreme Court decisions involving abortion and other reproductive issues over the last forty years, one philosophical principle emerges as the driving force behind abortion rights: *autonomy*. Specifically, a radical notion of autonomy devoid of any concept of transcendent moral accountability. This is most clearly seen in the famous passage from the *Casey* decision where the Court said,

At the heart of liberty is the right to define one's own concept of existence, of meaning, of the universe, and of the mystery of human life. Beliefs about these matters could not define the attributes of personhood were they formed under the compulsion of the state.³⁴

Larson and Amundsen offer a trenchant analysis of this statement when they say, "The justices obviously wrote this with abortion in mind, but by trying to state a general principle, they created a limitless category."³⁵ Indeed, the category is limitless, for the paragraph from *Casey* was cited by the Ninth Circuit Court in *Compassion in Dying v. Washington* (1996) when they affirmed a Constitutional right to assisted suicide. Most recently, the Court cited this paragraph in *Lawrence v. Texas* (2003), the most significant challenge to traditional marriage to date. It seems that the Court believes the primary purpose of government is to permit each autonomous individual to decide for himself or herself what is good, true or beautiful. Beckwith and Koukl argue that the Court genuinely believes that it is neutral and nonjudgmental since it considers alternative lifestyles as equal. In reality, this is "nihilism with a happy face."³⁶

What does the legal history of abortion have to do with the public policy implications of radical feminism? This radical form of autonomy advocated by the Court is consistent with the ethical approach of radical feminism. The public policy goal of radical feminism is absolute reproductive autonomy. For example, Feminist author Christine Overall argued in 1990 that the procedure known as *selective reduction* is central to a woman's reproductive autonomy. Selective reduction is the process of selectively aborting certain fetuses in a woman who does not want to carry multiple children to term. The procedure itself is an outgrowth of artificial reproductive technologies which place multiple zygotes within a woman in an attempt to increase the chances of implantation and a full term pregnancy. Stating her case for selective reduction, Overall says,

Fetuses do not acquire a right, either collectively or individually, to use a woman's uterus simply because there are several of them present simultaneously. Even if a woman is willingly and happily pregnant she does not surrender her entitlement to bodily self-determination, and she does not, specifically, surrender her entitlement to determine how many human entities occupy her uterus.³⁷

Thus, women not only have the right to access to artificial reproductive technologies, they also have the right to choose which children resulting from these pregnancies should live.³⁸

Radical feminism understands the current culture, including public policy, to be hopelessly influenced by patriarchy. Thus, the overthrow of all vestiges of patriarchy is at the core of the "meta" goals of radical feminism. In order to achieve this goal, radical feminism indeed demands that society provide abortion to those who seek it as a social good on the path to destroying patriarchy. Thus, beyond the negative right

not to be interfered with in reproductive choices, we move towards a public policy which demands a positive right to have abortion services provided. In the name of personal autonomy, other citizens are coerced into participation via tax-supported abortions. In a striking bit of irony, the principle of autonomy is thus used to justify coercion of the non-compliant, the very antithesis of autonomy.

B. A Brief Critique

Radical feminism is basically pantheistic in its worldview. Though not exhaustive, I will offer a brief theological critique of radical feminism at three levels. First, I will attempt to evaluate some of the ethical implications of goddess-based pantheism. Then, I will explore the distorted sexuality that informs the goddess-based worldview. Finally, I will critique the autonomy-driven public policy theory of radical feminism.

Radical feminism blurs the distinction between the creature and creator, a key theological error of ancient Near Eastern religions. In fact, the current debate with radical feminists mirrors the struggle with paganism the Israelites faced. As Bill Arnold notes, “The worldview expressed in Genesis 1-4 is not just *different* from its counterpart in the literature of the ancient world; it is *opposed* to it.”³⁹ Fundamental to the biblical worldview is a cosmology which affirms the world is neither “divine” (pantheism) nor an extension of the divine (panentheism). The doctrine of creation *ex nihilo* is closely related to the truth of God the Father found in Scripture as opposed to God as “mother” in pagan religions. Though I disagree with Grenz and Kjesbo’s overall egalitarian exegesis of Genesis 2, they accurately summarize the worldview differences between God the Father as creator versus cosmologies which postulate a “mother god” creator when they say:

God is ultimately transcendent, creating the world as a reality outside Himself. In emphasizing male images, the ancient Hebrews set their understanding of God apart from that of the surrounding nations. Rather than a Mother Goddess who brings forth creation as a child is brought forth from the womb, the Old Testament writers teach that God created by fiat a universe that is external to God.⁴⁰

Grenz and Kjesbo make an accurate critique of feminist theologies at this point. Feminine images of God tend towards pantheistic or panentheistic worldviews because the mother god “gives birth” to the world. In contrast, by emphasizing God as Father, the Bible highlights the theistic worldview and the fact the universe is not a part of God or an extension of God, but is a reality created by God that exists outside of Him and is under His providence.

By blurring the distinction between creature and creator, radical feminism encourages generational conflict, sexual chaos, and violence. Paul makes clear the dangers of worshipping creation in Rom 1:18-32. Romans 1:25 in particular stresses the tragedy of nature worship: “For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.” As a result, sexual chaos followed (Rom 1:26-27) as well as intergenerational conflict (“Disobedient to parents,” Rom 1:30) and violence (“envy, murder, strife,” Rom 1:29). Why is this so? Because pantheistic and panentheistic worldviews make humans a god, the ultimate statement of autonomy. This is the type of radical autonomy that is at the heart of the historic, space-time fall. R.C. Sproul states, “They [Adam and Eve] reached for autonomy, stretching greedy arms toward the throne of God, only to fall headlong into the abyss of evil.”⁴¹

Though radical feminists profess to be wise, they have actually become fools (Rom 1:22). The thrust of Rom 1:18-32 is that pagan worldviews weaken people so they become less, and not more, capable of directing their own lives.⁴² Radical feminism loses any sense of ethical direction because it makes a divinity out of fallen human nature. The serpent’s lure to “be like God” is a recurring refrain in human religious experience. To borrow an idea from C. S. Lewis, the pantheistic expression of current radical feminism is “congenial to our minds not because it is the final stage in a slow process of enlightenment, but because it is almost as old as we are.”⁴³ In the long run, pantheism does not elevate humanity; it only degrades. In his criticism of pantheism, Lewis stresses its downward spiral when he says, “So far from being the final religious refinement, Pantheism is in fact the permanent natural bent of the human mind; the permanent ordinary level below which man sometimes sinks . . . but above which his own unaided efforts can never raise him for very long.”⁴⁴

Radical feminism encourages a distorted form of sexuality that denies the goodness of God’s creation and God’s commands. Goddess spirituality naturally leads towards abandoning all sexual restraint. For example, one popular variant of goddess spirituality is found in Wicca. In her work, *Philosophy of Wicca*, Wicca devotee Amber Laine Fisher plainly states the implications of goddess worship for sexual ethics:

Goddess religion and goddess spirituality endeavor to release us from the taboos of sex and sexuality, to untie our hands, freeing us from certain paradigms or ideals that we are taught to accept as ‘normal.’ The general Western public fears homosexuality, fears sadomasochism, fears polyamorous relationships. For whatever reason (and there are many), we as a society have deemed these types of behavior as socially unacceptable or at the very best ‘fringe’—and for what reason? Who are we to decide what is normal,

what is healthy, what is appropriate for someone else?⁴⁵

Fisher misses the point that *we* do not define appropriate boundaries for sex. Trapped in her pantheistic prison, she is unable to acknowledge that God, who has revealed himself in the Bible and through Jesus Christ, defines sex. Throughout Scripture, sexual ethics receive priority. For example, among the works of the flesh mentioned in Gal 5:19-21, the first three (*porneia*, *akatharsia*, and *aselgeia*) seem to emphasize loose sexual relations. Timothy George contends that the reason these come first is that they display more graphically the self-centeredness and rebellion against God's norm that mark all other works of the flesh as well. George says, "Acts of sexual immorality, though often done in the name of love, are really the antithesis of love which is the foremost fruit of the Spirit."⁴⁶

Taken to its logical extreme, the worldview of radical feminism has disastrous public policy implications. Public policy in the United States and the West in general has been based on the concept that moral absolutes exist, though debate has been fervent at times about what those absolutes are. This view of law flows from a monotheistic worldview. Since there is one God, there can only be one standard of moral evaluation. In contrast, pagan societies are polyvalent. Satinover summarizes the societal implications for this worldview when he says, "No single moral standard governs the lives of men, and except by the power of force, no god, and no corresponding set of human values, is superior."⁴⁷ Satinover goes on to argue that such societies become *inegalitarian* as different groups participate in factional competition.

Radical feminist demands for abortion are a grave portent of how a violent society based on pagan values might look. With abortion on demand, the weakest and most defenseless are targeted for destruction and become a kind of "synecdoche" for the way other people in society can expect to be treated. Leviticus 18:21 reminds of us of another time when, much like Ginette Paris, some desired to sacrifice children for their own pantheistic purposes: "You shall not give any of your offspring to offer them to Molech, nor shall you profane the name of your God; I am the LORD." Molech was a pagan Canaanite deity whose worship was connected to a cult of the dead involving divination and to some extent child sacrifice.⁴⁸ Evidence indicates that children were incinerated as part of worship to this god, though it is not clear if they were killed first.⁴⁹ Note that infanticide is irrevocably tied to a pagan worldview. This same pagan worldview is at the heart of radical feminist abortion arguments.

Summary

Radical feminism is based on a worldview that is antithetical to biblical Christianity. The ethics of radical feminism lead naturally to sexual chaos, intergenerational conflict, and violence. Should such a worldview pervade public policy, society will become less egalitarian, more prone to use force in order to suppress dissent, and violent towards the weakest and most defenseless. ■

¹Ronald Nash places Ruether in the category of anti-evangelical feminism, but I contend that her thought is really anti-Christian and pagan. See Ronald Nash, *Great Divides: Understanding the Controversies that come Between Christians* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1993) 65-76.

²Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Sexism and God Talk* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1983) 61.

³Ibid. 85.

⁴Ibid. 231.

⁵Rosemary Radford Ruether, "Feminist Interpretation: A Method of Correlation," in *Feminist Interpretation of the Bible*, ed. Letty Russell (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1985) 114.

⁶For more information on ecofeminism see the website of Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics and Ritual at www.hers.com/water.

⁷See James Lovelock, *Gaia: A New Look at Life on Earth* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979).

⁸Rosemary Radford Ruether, "A Community Prayer for Choice," [cited 26 Sep 2003]. Online: www.syrf.org/syrf/sacredresource.htm. This prayer has been endorsed by the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Daly's homepage can be found at www.mdaly.com. She self-identifies as a "positively revolting hag."

¹¹Mary Daly, *Beyond God the Father: Toward a Philosophy of Women's Liberation* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1978; new reintroduction, 1985) 13.

¹²Ibid. 15.

¹³Ibid. 16.

¹⁴Mary Kassian, *The Feminist Gospel: The Movement to Unite Feminism With the Church* (Wheaton: Crossway, 1992) 233.

¹⁵Mary Daly, *Gyn/Ecology: The Metaethics of Radical Feminism* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1978) xi.

¹⁶Daly, *Beyond God the Father*, 46.

¹⁷Ibid. 47.

¹⁸Ibid. 110.

¹⁹Daly, *Gyn/Ecology* 59.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Richard Noll, *The Jungian Cult: Origins of a Charismatic Movement* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994) 136.

²²Ginette Paris, *Pagan Meditations: The Worlds of Aphrodite, Artemis, and Hestia* (Dallas: Spring Publications, 1988).

²³Ginette Paris, *The Sacrament of Abortion* (Dallas: Spring

Publications, 1992) 1.

²⁴Ibid. 2.

²⁵Jeffrey Satinover, *Homosexuality and the Politics of Truth* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996) 239.

²⁶Paris, *The Sacrament of Abortion* 53.

²⁷Ibid. 56.

²⁸Ibid. 92.

²⁹Ibid. 107.

³⁰Ibid. 57.

³¹Grenz and Olson apparently do not see Ruether in quite as radical a light as I myself do, for they say that Ruether's goddess is "only a hairsbreadth from the nature-personification Mother Goddess of the radical feminists who worship the earth and themselves." Stanley Grenz and Roger Olson, *Twentieth Century Theology: God & the World in a Transitional Age* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1992) 233. I see no ambiguity on the matter: Ruether's ecofeminism is plainly pagan.

³²The concept of a "right to privacy" originated in Justice Harlan's dissent in *Poe v. Ullman* (1961).

³³Roy Lucas, "Federal Constitutional Limitations on the Enforcement and Administration of State Abortion Statutes," *North Carolina Law Review* 46.4 (June, 1968) 755 ff.

³⁴*Planned Parenthood of Southeastern Pennsylvania v. Casey*, 505 U.S. 833 (1992), section II. Available in electronic format at www.caselaw.lp.com/scripts, [cited 11 June 2003].

³⁵Edward Larson and Darrel W. Amundsen, *A Different Death: Euthanasia and the Christian Tradition* (Downers Gove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1998) 211.

³⁶Francis J. Beckwith and Gregory Koukl, *Relativism: Feet Firmly Planted in Mid-Air* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998) 128.

³⁷Christine Overall, "Selective Termination of Pregnancy and Women's Reproductive Autonomy," *The Hastings Center Report* 20:3 (May/June 1990) 10.

³⁸In fairness, Overall is critical of the cavalier approach of the artificial reproductive technology industry.

³⁹Bill T. Arnold, *Encountering the Book of Genesis* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998) 49.

⁴⁰Stanley Grenz and Denise Muir Kjesbo, *Women in the Church: A Biblical Theology of Women in Ministry* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1995) 148.

⁴¹R.C. Sproul, "You Shall Not Be Gods," in *Playing God: Dissecting Biomedical Ethics and Manipulating the Body*, ed. R.C. Sproul, Jr. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1997) 53.

⁴²James D.G. Dunn, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 38a, *Romans 1-8* (Dallas: Word, 1988) 72.

⁴³C. S. Lewis, *Miracles* (New York: MacMillan Publishing, 1960) 82.

⁴⁴Ibid. 82-83.

⁴⁵Amber Laine Fisher, *Philosophy of Wicca* (Toronto: ECW Press, 2002) 185. In some modern forms of witchcraft, sexual techniques are used to alter one's state of consciousness. See Margot Adler, *Drawing Down the Moon* (New York: The Viking Press, 1979) 154.

⁴⁶Timothy George, *Galatians*, in *New American Commentary*, vol. 30 (Nashville: Broadman, 1994) 392.

⁴⁷Satinover, *Homosexuality and the Politics of Truth* 232.

⁴⁸E. Ray Clendenen, "Religious Background of the Old Testament," in *Foundations for Biblical Interpretation*, eds. David S. Dockery, Kenneth S. Matthews, and Robert B. Sloan (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1994) 298.

⁴⁹Gordon J. Wenham, *The Book of Leviticus*, in *New International Commentary on the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979) 259.

The Influence of the World

Martha Peace

*Biblical Counselor and Author,
Peachtree City, Georgia*

Introduction

All my life I have been influenced by what others have thought. Thinking back to my childhood, I can remember believing that everything my parents said was right and true. It was quite unsettling the first time I realized they were wrong about something. As I got older, I was more influenced by television, education, and friends. I graduated from high school and also nursing school in the sixties. Those were the years of the Vietnam War, the sexual revolution, and the beginnings of the modern feminist movement.

I remember when the abortion debate was raging and I hoped fervently that Roe V. Wade would pass. But what really got my attention and my heart was the lure of wanting to be someone significant. That, according to the feminists, would only happen through my education and career. To be relegated to a life of servitude to a family was to be sentenced to a life of being a “non-person.” After all, I was certainly as important as my husband-to-be! Gone were the days of “McCall’s Magazines” full of articles reminding wives to vacuum under their beds and sofa cushions once a week. And gone were the wives and mothers who (almost magically) appeared in the mornings fresh with their starched cotton dresses, high heels, make up, and ruffled white aprons to begin their day of work at home. What had come in her place was a newer version of “thoroughly modern Milly” who would forever more be searching for her identity.

nists. Her book, *The Feminine Mystique*, took the country by storm.¹ Women embraced her philosophies and any man in his right mind certainly wanted to become sensitive and not remain a male, chauvinist pig! What the sixties feminists wanted were equal rights and equal pay and they believed that their identity was determined by what they personally accomplished through education and career. Back then almost all pastors were men and, of course, all soldiers were men. Little girls played with doll babies and their fondest dreams were to marry and have children. Well, those were what my children call the “old days.” It would be nice to think that the “new days” are better but, in truth, they’re not. People are still self-focused, sinful, and have come up with new and ever-so-creative labels for the same old sin – love of self and a lack of love for God and others. Non-Christians and Christians alike are searching for *their* identity, *their* significance, *their* worth, *their* esteem, or *their* security. Many people, even Bible believing Christians, have been much more influenced along these man-centered/psychological lines of thinking than they would like to think. For the purposes of this article, our focus will be on the feminist philosophy that has so infiltrated our thinking that it has sown the seed of dissatisfaction in the lives of many Christian wives and mothers and has perverted the biblical roles of men and women. In order to understand how the feminist influence has affected us as Christians and how, then, our minds must be renewed to think biblically, we need to begin with some understanding of Friedan’s beliefs, how she was influenced, and how her beliefs play into the “victim” mentality. Lastly, we will consider how the modern feminist movement has influenced the church and how we must change.

Betty Friedan led the search of the early sixties femi-

Background

As I reread the book, *The Feminine Mystique*, for the first time in thirty plus years (and as a Christian), it was obvious to me that author Betty Friedan was searching for some sort of meaning in her life.² At the time she wrote her book, she was married with three children and writing occasional women's magazine articles, but she was yearning for something more. She concludes that her problem was seeking identity from her husband's job and his world instead of from her own identity forged from her own achievements.

Betty Friedan's beliefs were built upon previous work done by two psychologists – Abraham Maslow and Erik Erikson. Abraham Maslow studied under Sigmund Freud; Erik Erikson studied under Abraham Maslow; and Betty Friedan studied under Erik Erikson.

Abraham Maslow was one of the original signers of the "Humanist Manifesto" which brazenly declares that there is no God. He is known as the Father of Modern Psychology and is most famous for his theory of mature personality development called the "Hierarchy of Needs." Maslow believed that in order to become a mature person ("self-actualized") and thus be able to reach out and help others, you must first have your underlying needs met. Among those underlying needs were the need for significance, self-esteem, love, and security. In *the Feminine Mystique*, Friedan often writes of the need for significance.

The other psychologist besides Maslow who greatly influenced Friedan was Erik Erikson. Erikson's theory of personality development differed from Maslow's. His was a series of twelve crisis points in life that must be overcome before one can mature to the next level.³ One of these crisis points occurs during adolescence when the teen *must* rebel against his parents in order to find his own identity. This adolescent identity crisis was what happened, according to Erikson, to the young priest Martin Luther. Thus, this is the reason for Luther's rebellion against the Catholic Church. Erikson was so entrenched in his "identity crisis" beliefs that he wrote an entire book, *Young Man Luther* (1953),⁴ about the "crisis of the young Martin Luther, who left a Catholic monastery at the end of the middle ages to forge a new identity for himself and Western man."⁵ In *the Feminine Mystique*, Friedan calls Erikson "brilliant" and adapts his identity crisis teaching to her feminist philosophy.⁶

The feminist philosophy is a belief that women are not fully developed as human beings unless their identity needs are met through school or work. Women who stay home and care for their husbands and families never quite become all they can be. They deal with petty, unimportant things while the men deal with the world and important things. The women, therefore, do not really have their own identity. They are not as

significant as the men are. Friedan believes their development has been arrested at a child-like state, passive and dependant. In *The Feminine Mystique*, she wrote

In a sense that goes beyond any one woman's life, I think this is the crisis of women growing up – a turning point from an immaturity that has been called femininity to full human identity. I think women had to suffer this *crisis of identity*... and have to suffer it today, simply to become fully human.⁷

Women as Victims

In the feminist literature, you read statements such as "women are being denied human dignity," "she is a non-person," "a second class citizen," "something missing in their lives," "wasting their lives by staying home," "a target and a victim of the sexual sell,"⁸ and "breeder-servanthood, position of subhuman inferiors."⁹ Painting such a sad picture of the woman's plight makes her a "victim." Somehow, she has gotten a raw deal and deserves better than this!

Being a "victim" fans the flames of rebellion. For example, at the "March for Right" in 1970, Friedan said, "This is our hour of history, we are going to take it." Also in the 1970's, consciousness-raising groups began to encourage women to express their frustration and anger over being used by their families. Women demanded equal authority and that the men must equally share in child-care and housework. They believed whole-heartedly that it is a virtue *not* to let someone dominate you.

Feminist Marilyn French in her 1992 book, *The War Against Women*, explains where she believes the Bible errs.

The Bible was compiled in a period when patriarchy was spreading and its editors altered early materials to eradicate signs of an earlier female dominance and to make male supremacy a divine principle. Like the Iliad and the Aeneid, the Old Testament is great literature that stresses war, male dominance, and murder (of enemies more than compassion or tolerance). If it [the Bible] is God-given and without error, then its values, also God-given, are eternally right. Conservative evangelical Protestants use an inerrant Bible as a major weapon in their war to retain the separate spheres that guarantee male dominance. Women are not immune to the fundamentalist message, and the extreme right often places them in visible positions, usually in movements aimed at impeding or revoking women's rights.¹⁰

It is easy to see how those who reject the Scriptures as God-breathed and without error would also fail to grasp their obligation to God as Creator and Lord over them. For them, giving God glory is an absurd idea but fighting for their rights is a call to battle! Their battle is apparently so important to them as to justify (as French did in her book) rewriting history (e.g. the claim of earlier female dominance) to prove her point.

Friedan and the more recent feminists of our day are *searching for* and, at times, *demanding* their significance, their identity, and their rights. Their ideas are not new, though perhaps they are shrouded in modern psychological vocabulary. Sadly, it is not only the non-Christians who have embraced all or parts of these beliefs but it is also the Christians. It is obvious that those who reject the truth of the Scriptures need the gospel. But what about the Christians?

How have we been influenced and how should we change?

The Feminist Influence	How we should change
Husbands and/or pastors may be intimidated and afraid that they are being too assertive or domineering over women if they (even in love and after careful deliberation) make firm decisions.	<p>If you are a husband or a pastor, understand that it is God's will that you lead your flock or family. This means that you should and will have to make decisions and that you will eventually give an account to the Lord over how you lead.</p> <p>Heb 13:17</p> <p>If you are a wife or a church member, see submission to your husband or pastor as God's will for you (unless your husband or pastor asks you to sin, then God is the higher authority whom you must obey).</p> <p>Eph 5:22-24</p>
Women think and say things like, "What about me?" "What about my rights?"	<p>Instead she should be thinking and saying, "What about God?" "How can I most please Him?" "What are some practical ways that I can show love to others and thus give glory to God?"</p> <p>Matt 22:36-40</p>
Submission of a wife to her husband is an outdated concept. Today, the emphasis is on "mutual submission."	<p>Study Ephesians 5 and understand that "be subject to one another in the fear of Christ" is a general command that is explained through specific commands that we are to be submissive to those whom God has placed in authority over us – i.e., wife to husband, child to parent, and slave to master.¹¹ It is also one fruit of being "filled with the Spirit."</p>
Women think things like, "women are not inferior to men. I have just as much right to my opinion and way as he does."	<p>Think instead, "There is no partiality with God – whether we are male or female, we are both creatures created in the image of God. My responsibility is to offer wise advice to my husband but that doesn't mean that I always have the right to express my opinion. God knows better than anyone how I can best glorify Him."</p> <p>Gal 3:28</p>

“I deserve better than this.”	“If I got what I deserved it would be death and hell. My focus should be on what I can do to please the Lord Jesus Christ and not on myself.” Rom 6:23
“Nobody is going to tell me what to do.”	“Those who are in authority over me have been given that authority by God Himself. My responsibility is to see their directives as good for me or God would not permit it.” Rom 8:28-29
“Can you believe that our pastor won’t let my girlfriend teach the couples Sunday School class? How ridiculous. He’s living in the dark ages.”	“The Scriptures are clear that in the church, women are not to ‘teach or exercise authority over a man...’ My pastor is right. I should support his decision.” 1 Tim 2:12
“I can’t take much more of this (laundry, house cleaning, kids). Nobody cares about me.”	“Whether they care or not I am to work at training the children and doing my work heartily as unto the Lord. I am also to be thankful in all things for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning me.” Col 3:23; 1 Thess 5:18
“What about my needs?”	“I must discern that the ‘needs’ psychological theories are unbiblical. It is wrong and unbiblical to think in those self-serving terms. The only thing that I really need is forgiveness through Christ and to be placed in a right standing with God. Instead of thinking about my needs, I should think, ‘God <i>has</i> given us everything we need pertaining to life and godliness.’ How can I show love to Him? How can I please Him? What can I do to give Him glory? 2 Pet 1:3

Conclusion

Colossians 2:8 tells us to “see to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ.” We have all been more influenced than perhaps we would like to believe. It is only through the empowering grace of the Holy Spirit and the Scriptures that we can be “renewed in the spirit of our minds” (Col 4:23). We must study, believe, and embrace what God has told us in His Word.

Women are not victims. They are creatures created in God’s image for the purpose of proclaiming His excellencies; and God, not man, is the determiner of how best, and in what role, men and women can most give him glory. Many in the Christian world are searching for their needs to be met, for their identity or significance. The feminist philosophy is one of the influences of the world. It comes from a combination of humanistic psychology and sinful, self-deceived, self-absorbed

hearts. Instead of searching for our identity, we need simply to bow before God, our Creator, turn our focus from ourselves and say, “Look what God has done! He alone is worthy!” ■

¹Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique* (NY: Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, 1963).

²Ibid. 77.

³Erik H. Erikson, *Identity, Youth and Crisis* (NY: W.W. Norton and Company, 1968) 91-92.

⁴Idem, *Young Man Luther* (Peter Smith Publisher, 1953).

⁵Friedan, *Feminist Mystique* 78.

⁶Ibid. 77.

⁷Ibid. 79.

⁸Ibid. 205.

⁹Marilyn French, *The War Against Women* (NY: Summit Books, 1992).

¹⁰Ibid. 59-60.

¹¹John Piper and Wayne Grudem, eds. *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* (Wheaton: Crossway, 1991) 493, n. 6.

Manhood, Womanhood and Therapeutic Morality¹

Daniel R. Heimbach

*Professor of Christian Ethics,
Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary
Wake Forest, North Carolina*

In recent decades, a new message has arisen in popular music that justifies sex as therapy. In “Natural Woman,” Carole King explained her “soul was in the lost-and-found” and she did not know “what was wrong with me.” But then she is revitalized through sex. From feeling totally worthless with no self-esteem, she experiences sex so fulfilling it restores her sense of self-worth and leaves her crooning about feeling “like a natural woman.”

More recent songs—such as “Whole Again” (Atomic Kitten), “I Gotta Be” (Jagged Edge) and “Make Me Whole” (Amel Larrieux)—have focused on the same theme. But so far the most blatant is “Sexual Healing” by Marvin Gaye who says, “sexual healing is something good for me” because when “emotional stability is leaving . . . I can get on the telephone and call you up . . . And, honey, I know you’ll be there to relieve me.”

Turning to movies, New Line Cinema released *Pleasantville* in 1998, and the entire message of this block-buster production was that all good comes from and depends upon fulfilling sexual experiences. Two teens from the late nineties are pulled into an old black-and-white television program, much like *Leave It To Beaver* or *Father Knows Best*, that idealizes small town life in the fifties. The teens are at first overwhelmed by the “pleasantness” of traditional moral values as compared to all the confusion and rebellion that characterizes the contemporary life. But, rather than respect these values, the teens lead a rebellion that changes the television world from black-and-white to color as characters discover personal fulfillment through sex outside traditional moral boundaries.

The movie openly attacks biblical standards that sustain traditional views about manhood and womanhood and how these genders are meant to relate. But shocking as this should be, application of the message is not nearly as worthy of examination as the cause which drives it. A growing number of attacks in the entertainment media targeting biblical standards having to do with sexual morality and gender roles is being justified by what might be called “therapeutic” sexual morality. And because this new view is spreading rapidly and gaining ever more influence in our culture, Christians must understand and learn to refute this challenge.

Description of Therapeutic Sexual Morality

Therapeutic sexual morality justifies sex based on ideas about human psychology. Sex is regarded as moral or immoral depending on how it relates to things such as mental health, personal development or social success. Therapeutic morality believes people “fulfill” or “actualize” themselves through sex, and everyone must have sex to be “whole.” No sexual behavior is right or wrong in itself because what matters is a person’s inner sense of satisfaction. Homosexual sex, prostitution, and adultery are not necessarily bad; being faithful to a spouse is not necessarily good; and no one can judge sexual morality for anyone else.

Therapeutic morality began with Sigmund Freud who saw human behavior in terms of what is done to express or deny the sex drive. Freud claimed that the sexual instinct

must always have an outlet, and if not expressed normally it will produce neuroses and perversions. He said sexual desires behave “like a stream,” and if the main channel gets blocked they will take “collateral channels which may hitherto have been empty.”² And, of course this made sexual abstinence bad, not only psychologically but in a moral sense as well.

Carl Jung, who dismissed Christian theology as “a specimen of uncommon stupidity whose sole aim was to obscure the truth,”³ pioneered the idea of “wholeness” to describe ideal human integration. In Jung’s view, “wholeness” is produced by satisfying human instincts like sex, and the self is “stunted” if natural instincts are not satisfied. For Jung, the “dark side” is as necessary for reaching full human integration as its opposite. So he decided the figure of Christ given in Scripture is “so one-sidedly perfect that it demands a psychic complement to restore balance.”⁴ As a consequence, Jung claimed that Christ’s “Luciferian opponent,” the “Antichrist,” is needed to form a “balanced” sense of human wholeness. The result was that Jung’s idea of “wholeness” required sexual immorality, and he himself lived in adultery most of his life. In fact, Jung once wrote Freud to say he believed “the prerequisite for a good marriage . . . is the license to be unfaithful.”⁵

A third pioneer in psychotherapy, Erich Fromm, thought sex was “discovering” the self in the act of “penetrating” another, which meant no one could ever “discover” himself without having sex.⁶ In fact Fromm decided self-discovery through sex was so important it did not matter who the sexual partner happened to be. He said “erotic love” shows us “We are all part of One; we are One. This being so, it should not make any difference whom we love.”⁷ So, while Freud said it was bad to deny sex and Jung suggested sexual sin is part of becoming whole, Fromm justified sex with anyone without regard to gender or marriage.

Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers carried on from Freud, Jung, and Fromm and are responsible for the form of therapeutic morality most popular in American culture today. Maslow said sex is part of the “essential core of the person” and believed everyone must have sex to become fully “human.” In his view, people become “human” by “self-actualizing” themselves through sex. Thus sexual abstinence was a “failure to grow one’s potential” and something that stunts “personhood.”⁸ In fact, Maslow claimed the natural human capacity for sex must be used or it will “atrophy” and diminish the person.⁹ This gave everyone a moral duty to have sex, whether they are married or not, and made restricting sex as evil as withholding food from someone who is dying of starvation.

Like Maslow, Carl Rogers also thought everyone must have sex to be whole, but Rogers went on to separate marriage from sexual morality completely. Rogers treated marriage as a social option, but he did not think it had anything to do with

deciding when sex is moral. For Rogers, sex had to do with actualizing “life-enhancing” possibilities. He believed this made sex as necessary and moral for unmarried persons as for married and meant people could be sexually active with different partners even if they were married. He also decided the sexual instinct demands satisfaction “in ways that enhance, rather than diminish, self-esteem,”¹⁰ which meant he thought sexual desires should be satisfied in whatever form they arise.

Therapeutic sexual morality already has many strong advocates in the culture, and in one generation has risen to become the dominant view among liberal reformers in mainline denominations. In 1982, the Social Justice Committee of the Minnesota Council of Churches, issued a statement that substituted Maslow and Rogers for Scripture saying,

God’s intended wholeness includes human sexuality as a gift for the expression of love and the generation of life There may be creative and whole expressions of one’s sexuality at various levels in relationships between men and women, between men and other men, and between women and other women. We seek to enable persons to understand and to act out their sexuality in ways which are life-giving to themselves and to other persons with whom they are in relationship.¹¹

More recently, in 1993, a task force of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shocked Lutherans by recommending sexual standards based on psycho-philosophy as opposed to the Bible. And now bishop John Shelby Spong of the Episcopal Church is saying that Christianity is going to die if Christian ethics is not freed from trying to control human behavior by “imposing on it the will of some external deity.” And to solve this threat, Spong urges rejection of the Bible and reconstruction of Christian ethics on a therapeutic foundation instead, which we can all discover as we ask ourselves questions such as, “What gives us life?” and “What lifts us into wholeness?”¹²

Evaluation of Therapeutic Sexual Morality

As Christians address therapeutic morality, we must first agree that God has designed sex in a way that satisfies a deep need for interpersonal connection and must certainly affect a person’s sense of well-being. And we can affirm that sex does touch something at the core of human identity, and it does indeed express something that is vital to human life. Nevertheless, biblical Christians must always object when therapeutic sexual morality elevates psycho-philosophy over Scripture and makes every person’s own individual sense of sexual satisfaction the ultimate measure of moral good.

Biblical Christians do not oppose therapeutic morality for recognizing that sex is psychological but because it uses psycho-philosophy to oppose biblical morality. Christians oppose therapeutic morality just because it opposes the Bible, but looking more closely we can find seven additional reasons that explain what makes therapeutic morality so wrong.

1. It Reverses Satisfaction and Morality

The first reason we must reject therapeutic morality is because it misunderstands the way sexual satisfaction relates to morality. There is indeed a connection between sexual satisfaction and morality. But, whereas God promises satisfaction to those who act morally, therapeutic morality reverses this to say whatever a person thinks is satisfying must be moral. In other words, biblical morality promises satisfaction as a reward for moral behavior, while therapeutic morality treats satisfaction as a cause that makes sex moral.

By treating sexual satisfaction as a cause, not a result, therapeutic thinking produces a version of morality that only indulges the individual desires and has no way to judge what is good for all. Talking about normal sexual behavior becomes impossible and no one ever needs to change. When individual satisfaction becomes everything, responsibility for others degenerates into competition, self-discipline becomes nonsense, and no one is motivated to care for anyone else.

But biblical morality affects responsibilities in the opposite way. God promises satisfaction as a reward for obedience (Ps 103:5). The husband who guards sexual purity in marriage will be delighted and satisfied (Prov 5:19). Healing, well-being, and completeness follow as blessings when people turn from wickedness to please and honor God (Exod 15:26; John 5:14; 1 Thess 5:23). In this way, sexual satisfaction adds strength and support to social responsibilities under biblical morality and never opposes doing what God says is right and good in social relations with others.

2. It Takes a Developmental View of Personhood

A second reason Christians reject therapeutic sexual morality is because it relies on the same developmental view of personhood used to justify destroying innocent human life by abortion, infanticide, or euthanasia. When proponents of therapeutic morality say persons must have sex to be “whole,” they are not saying something about satisfying godly purposes for human life but are claiming something about degrees of personal worth. According to therapeutic thinking, personhood grows with sexual activity and diminishes for lack of it. Those who have sex become full persons, while the personhood of

those who do not have sex fails to rise to the level of those who do, because it is “incomplete.” So if I refrain from having sex for any reason, then I am not a complete person and do not have all the value and dignity of full personhood.

In the Bible, the value of a person’s life is not measured by the use of natural functions like sex, because the value of personal life comes from bearing God’s image (Gen 1:27; 9:6; Rom 8:29; 2 Cor 3:18). This is evident in the way God treats us as persons from conception (Ps 139:13-6; Jer 1:5), and is why harming a person in the womb is as bad as harming a mature adult (Exod 21:22-5). By measuring personhood according to sexual activity, therapeutic morality not only devalues human life but also ends in awful blasphemy. If one must have sex to be fully human, then Jesus was never completely incarnate, and the spotless Lamb of God is jeered for sacrificing a life that was not worth as much as those he came to save.

3. It is Completely Self-Centered

A third reason to reject therapeutic morality is because it is totally self-centered. Therapeutic morality is all about self-actualization, self-fulfillment, and self-esteem. Sex is treated as an investment in self with no reason to satisfy anyone else unless as a strategy for getting something in return. Therapeutic sexual morality makes self an idol, and leaves individuals no sense of moral direction other than following themselves only because they refuse to acknowledge anything greater than themselves. Morally speaking, the result is much like a dog chasing its tail or an idiot babbling to himself in a language no one understands. By turning inward, the self loses reference to anything higher than itself and ceases to improve. And the more intently the self focuses on itself, the more it also risks collapsing in upon itself.

The Bible explains that fulfillment in life centers on Christ, not self, and personal development comes from serving objectives set by God (Phil 3:12-4), not from self-centered sex. All we do in the body—including sex—must be for Christ, not self (Gal 2:20). Jesus rebuked Pharisees for being full of “self-indulgence” (Matt 23:25). And Paul explains that our natural self-centered way of thinking has to be “transformed by the renewing of your mind,” so that psychology in all areas (including sex) is true and pure only if we learn to pursue God’s “good, pleasing and perfect will” over self-centered passions and wants (Rom 12:2).

So, while therapeutic sexual morality expects the self to satisfy itself, through itself, by focusing only upon itself, the Bible orders that we “put off your old self” in order “to be made new in the attitude of your minds” and to instead “put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness” (Eph 4:22-24). Therapeutic morality assumes the natural self-centered self is sufficient to define and meet all per-

sonal needs for itself, but the Bible teaches that the source of true satisfaction always lies outside ourselves and that humble self-knowledge should lead us to acknowledge we are not “sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God” (2 Cor 3:5).

4. It Makes Sex Non-relational

The fourth reason Christians cannot accept therapeutic morality is because it makes sex non-relational. By placing exclusive attention on individual selves, therapeutic sexual morality hinders couples from working on relational goals that go beyond individual wants and desires. If sex is all about self-satisfaction, then building a relationship with one person in particular does not matter, and if a partner fails to satisfy there is no relational purpose to justify staying around to work out common problems in order to reach common goals.

At creation, God revealed two main purposes for sex, both of which are relational. First, he made sex for generation and made this clear in commanding Adam and Eve to be “fruitful and multiply” (Gen 1:28). Second, he designed sex for relational union and explained that at the institution of marriage (Gen 2:24). Both generation and relational union are matters of relationship that demand cooperation between sexual partners. And, because God designed sex for relational purposes, sex is never moral when it is made non-relational. Without relational purposes to lift sex above self-centered competition, therapeutic morality treats sex like a ride in bumper cars at an amusement park. But relational purposes in biblical morality affect sex like glue that joins parts in a whole that surpasses the value of its parts and achieves goals far beyond anything the parts could ever achieve independently.

5. It Disintegrates Sexuality

A fifth reason for opposing therapeutic morality is because it empties sexuality of meaning and leaves it in pieces with no plan for how they should fit together. Like Humpty Dumpty who fell into so many pieces “all the King’s horses and all the King’s men” could not put him back together, therapeutic morality leaves sexuality in a heap with no particular shape or purpose.

“Integration” has to do with fitting pieces together in a way that forms something harmonious and whole. It assumes a master plan that assigns each piece a place and requires something to hold them together once the pieces are properly assembled. By comparison, “disintegration” is when pieces meant to go together fall apart, either because what holds them together is removed or the master plan is lost and no one knows how or even if the pieces should fit together. It is ironic therefore that,

despite emphasizing wholeness in human sexuality, therapeutic morality ends up disintegrating sexuality by removing the key to real integration and denying the existence of a master plan.

We have already considered how sex has relational purposes, but meaning in God’s plan for sex involves even more. God is orderly in all he does and remains sovereign over all he has made. He is the one in whom all “live and move and have our being” (Acts 17:28); he is the “head over everything by means of the church” (Eph 1:22);¹³ and he is the one who determines how every part is “joined and held together” (Eph 4:16). So, because it is part of God’s order, human sexuality is not just a pile of blocks in a child’s nursery to build up any way we choose, but is something that holds together only when sexual beings accept what God has given and act in ways that follow his plan.

In Scripture, sex is spiritual, emotional, and physical as well as psychological. And while the psychological dimension is very important, it is not the most important aspect of sex. Nor is it the key to integrating the rest of life. The source of real integration in life is spiritual, not psychological. And it comes from Jesus Christ, not from trying to define sexuality for ourselves. Real integration is something we attain by growing “to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ” (Eph 4:13), and by separating sexual identity from the source of true integration, therapeutic morality leaves sexuality disintegrated and meaningless.

6. It Denies Corresponding Difference

A sixth reason Christians reject therapeutic morality is because it rejects the need for corresponding difference in God’s design for sexual union. When God first created human beings, he began with a solitary male. Adam was a real man with all that comes with manhood at all levels of his being. Manhood defined him physically, but it shaped him emotionally, psychologically, and spiritually as well. So after naming all the creatures and realizing none corresponded to himself, Adam became aware of a sense in which he was “alone” (Gen 2:18).

This sense of being “alone” can seem rather odd unless we pay attention to what God was doing. Adam was not alone for lack of companions, because he was surrounded by animal friends; and he was not alone for lack of intelligent communication with some other person, because he surely had that with God. Rather, Adam was “alone” only because there was no one else of his kind to complete his manhood. And only after Adam realized that manhood does not complete itself, that manhood is meant for something greater than itself that cannot be reached by manhood alone, and that manhood therefore needed something corresponding, did God then make Eve to complete that for which Adam’s manhood was intended. Eve

was of Adam's kind, but her sexuality was different. And yet, while different, neither was it foreign. Rather, it corresponded. God made Eve's womanhood to correspond to Adam's manhood, and their union was intended for a purpose that was greater than either. So Eve's sexuality fit Adam's, but it was definitely not a duplication of something Adam already had.

By God's plan, this union of corresponding sexual difference is so essential to sexual morality, no sex is moral without it. But the therapeutic approach denies all this. Therapeutic morality treats corresponding sexual difference as if it does not matter, and if a person desires sex with someone of his or her same gender, it all gets justified in the quest for self-fulfillment.

7. It Destroys the Wholeness It Promises

The seventh reason Christians have to reject therapeutic sexual morality is because it actually destroys the very thing it promises in the first place. Therapeutic morality promises "wholeness" while in fact keeping people from finding completion in Christ and from knowing the satisfaction of relational wholeness that comes from uniting real manhood and womanhood. The irony here is truly immense because, while biblical morality leads to real satisfaction in all areas of life including sex, therapeutic morality leads to emptiness and only intensifies dissatisfaction. In fact, Francis Schaeffer got to the crux of the matter explaining that,

If man tries to find *everything* in a man-woman or a friend-to-friend relationship, he destroys the very thing he wants and destroys the ones he loves. He sucks them dry, he eats them up, and they as well as the relationship are destroyed. But as Christians we do not have to do that. Our sufficiency of relationship is in that which God made it to be, in the infinite-personal God, on the basis of the work of Christ in communication and love.¹⁴

Sex should be satisfying, but it was never meant to satisfy everything completely. Ultimately only God completely satisfies the deepest needs we have in life. It is God, not sex, who "saves those who are crushed in spirit" (Ps 34:18). It is God, not sex, who strengthens our "inner being" (Eph 3:16). It is God's provision in Christ, not sex, through whom we have life "to the full" (John 10:10). And it is God in Christ, not sex, who enables us to "grow up" in all things and so to attain "the whole measure" of true "fullness" (Eph 4:13, 15). By expecting sex to completely satisfy everything on its own, therapeutic morality destroys true wholeness, but by respecting God's design for sex in human relationships, biblical morality supports and helps to assure the sort of relational wholeness of which therapeutic morality only dreams.

I knew an evangelical Christian family some years ago that seemed to have everything together. The parents were both successful professionals, and the children were all active in church and school activities. But then the wife went to counseling sessions with a local minister, and the family fell apart. She was looking for something more out of life, so the minister recommended sex with a fresh partner and supplied the opportunity himself. Soon the wife divorced her husband, abandoned her children and redefined her views on morality. What had been a "strong Christian family" disintegrated when just one member accepted the idea that sex, not God, is the origin of wholeness, growth, and abundant life.

Of course this was all terribly shocking! But we can be shocked only as long as we affirm biblical truth! Tragedy arose because therapeutic morality was seeping into the life and ministry of the church. When this happens, those affected not only cease to be shocked when families disintegrate, they soon start promoting it as well. ■

¹ This article is excerpted from the book, *True Sexual Morality: Biblical Norms at the Flash Point of Cultural Crisis* (forthcoming, Crossway). Used by permission of Crossway Books.

² Sigmund Freud, *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, trans. James Strachey (New York: Basic Books, 1962) 36.

³ Carl Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, ed. Aniela Jaffe, trans. Richard and Clara Winston (New York: Pantheon, 1963) 59.

⁴ Carl Jung, *Aion in Collected Works*, vol. 9:2, trans. R.F.C. Hull (Routledge, 1959) 42.

⁵ Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung, *The Freud/Jung Letters: The Correspondence between Sigmund Freud and C. G. Jung*, ed. William McGuire, trans. Ralph Manheim and R. F. C. Hull (Harvard, 1988) 289.

⁶ Erich Fromm, *The Art of Loving* (New York: Harper, 1956) 31.

⁷ Ibid. 55.

⁸ Abraham Maslow, *Toward a Psychology of Being* (Princeton: Van Nostrand, 1968) 193.

⁹ Ibid. 201.

¹⁰ Carl R. Rogers, *Becoming Partners: Marriage and Its Alternatives* (New York: Delacorte, 1972) 214.

¹¹ "Statement on Homosexuality" (Minneapolis: Minnesota Council of Churches, Social Justice Committee, 1982); quoted in Roger Magnuson, *Are Gay Rights Right?* (Sisters, OR: Multnomah, 1990) 117-8.

¹² John Shelby Spong, *Why Christianity Must Change or Die* (San Francisco: Harper, 1998) 160-5.

¹³ I am translating the Greek dative in the instrumental sense. See A. T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research* (Nashville: Broadman, 1934) 532-4.

¹⁴ Francis Schaeffer, *True Spirituality* (Wheaton: Tyndale House, 1971) 161.

Gender Roles and the Glory of God:

A Sermon on 1 Corinthians 11:2–12

James M. Hamilton Jr.,
Assistant Professor of Biblical Studies,
Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary
Houston Park Place Campus
Houston, Texas

Editor's Note: This sermon was preached at Mills Road Baptist Church in Houston, Texas, on October 12, 2003.

Introduction

Our society hates gender distinctions. Specifically, contemporary American culture hates any indication that there are certain things that men should do but that women should not do. So now we send nineteen year old girls, like Jessica Lynch, into battle. We can now buy “unisex” cologne/perfume and “unisex” clothing.

The culture's war on gender includes a battle over Bible translation. The frontal attack can be seen in the publication of *Today's New International Version*. The *TNIV* systematically avoids masculine elements of language, even in texts that refer to the “Son of Man.” So, for instance, rather than translating the Christological reference in Heb 2:6 as it should read, “what is man that you are mindful of him, the SON OF MAN that you care for him,” the *TNIV* renders it, “what are mere mortals that you are mindful of them, HUMAN BEINGS that you care for them?” The result is that a text that refers to the SON OF MAN, Jesus, cannot be read as alluding to Jesus' favorite self-designation. Now Heb 2:6 can only be interpreted as referring to human beings.

Examples of this cultural drive to obliterate gender distinctions could be multiplied, but as we see from Genesis 1 and 2, gender is God-made not man-made. Everything that God makes is for his own glory. This sermon, titled “Gender Roles and the Glory of God,” intends to connect the dots between

gender and the display of God's beauty and genius.

As Christians, we must develop a biblical view of masculinity and femininity. We cannot allow a culture that has rejected our God and his Word to teach us what it means to be male and female in the image of God. In order to understand anything, we must first understand its ultimate purpose. As we examine 1 Cor 11:2–12, we will see the ultimate purpose of males and the ultimate purpose of females.

The main point of this sermon is that gender is for the glory of God. We are going to see that gender is for the glory of God in 1 Cor 11:2–12, because here Paul uses his biblical understanding of gender to address a specific issue that the Corinthian church is dealing with. They were evidently failing to reflect God's created order in the way that they worshiped, so Paul teaches them that gender is for the glory of God. Once he has established this truth, he gives them directives as to how they should reflect that truth in their worship.

We are going to proceed through this text tracing Paul's argument and seeking to apply it to our contemporary situation. As I see it, there are three movements in Paul's thought here: first, we see the God-ordained structure of authority in verse 3. Then we find Paul's instructions for the Corinthians as they worship in verses 4–10. Paul then seeks to balance the essential equality between men and women with the functional subordination of women to men in verses 11–12.

The context of this passage is that Paul is addressing Corinthian worship in general. He is going to address the way

they pray and prophesy in church in 11:3–16, the way they celebrate the Lord's supper in 11:17–34, and their use of spiritual gifts in chapters 12–14.

Since 1 Cor 11:2 says, “Now I praise you because you remember me in everything, and hold firmly to the traditions, just as I delivered them to you,” Paul seems to be commending the Corinthians before he begins to instruct them. They have done well to remember Paul, and they have done well to hold firmly to the traditions. But apparently he is not pleased with the way they are praying and prophesying, celebrating the Lord's Supper, and exercising spiritual gifts, so he spends four chapters addressing these aspects of their church life.

I. The God-Ordained Structure of Authority (11:3)

Paul begins to address the way that the Corinthians are praying and prophesying by making a theological assertion. Paul consistently proceeds in this way, applying theology to practice. Paul knows nothing of impractical doctrine.

Before we look at verse 3, we can observe that Paul explains why women should cover their heads when they pray and prophesy, and why men should not cover their heads when they pray and prophesy in verses 4–10. From this we can conclude that the Corinthians were not doing these things. Paul is displeased with the way they are praying and prophesying because what people do shows what people believe.

The Corinthians' theology results in their behavior. In response, Paul makes a theological assertion in verse 3. He makes this assertion because the behavior of the Corinthians while they pray and prophesy indicates that they do not understand this theological point.

So after commending the Corinthians for holding to the traditions he passed on to them in 11:2, he adds to what he wants them to hold to in verse 3. In 1 Cor 11:3 Paul says, “But I want you to understand,” and then he makes three succinct assertions:

“Christ is the head of every man, and man is the head of woman and God is the head of Christ.”

In these statements Paul articulates a “Structure of Authority” that has God at the top, then Christ, then man, then woman. Before we move into a consideration of why Paul thought the Corinthians needed to understand this theological reality, we should note two things:

First, each assertion refers to someone being the “head” of someone else—Christ of the male, the male of the female,

and God of Christ. This word “head” means “authority.” So what Paul is saying is that the Structure of Authority that he is passing on to the Corinthians means that males have authority over females, Christ has authority over males, and God has authority over Christ.

Second, this “Structure of Authority” is not a “Chain of Being,” or “Hierarchy of Worth.” In other words, Paul is not saying here that God is more God than Christ or that males are more human than females.

No, Paul believes that Jesus is God. Speaking of Jesus in Rom 9:5 Paul refers to him as, “Christ . . . who is God over all, blessed forever, amen!” Similarly, as we will see in a moment, in verses 11–12 Paul will warn against the conclusion that males are more human than females.

Just as the Father and the Son are equal in essence, males and females are also equal in essence. Theologians refer to this as *ontological* equality. But, just as Paul says that Jesus is going to surrender the Kingdom to the Father in 1 Cor 15:28, indicating that Jesus is *functionally* subordinate to the Father, so also females are *functionally* subordinate to males.

We must articulate this *ontological* equality and this *functional* subordination because there are many people who want to accuse Paul (and those of us who adhere to what he said) of demeaning women. Men and women are equal in what they *are*, that is, ontologically. We are not demeaning women, though we are insisting that women are not equal when it comes to exercising authority, that is, women are *functionally* subordinate to men.

As an illustration of this principle, we can say that a private in the U.S. Army is *ontologically* equal to a general in the U.S. Army. The private is just as human as the general. The private, however, is *functionally* subordinate to the general—if he knows what is good for himself.

So what we mean is that in terms of what people *are*, men and women are equal; but in terms of what people *do*, there are distinct roles. The Bible indicates that males and females are equally in the image of God, “And God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them” (Gen 1:27). But the Bible also indicates that in what people do, males have authority over females, “man is the head of woman” (1 Cor 11:3). We could paraphrase this statement, “man has authority over woman.”

Paul's reasons for making this theological point become evident in the verses that follow.

II. Paul's Instructions for Corinthian Worship (11:4–10)

Evidently the Corinthians were demonstrating that they were unaware of the “Structure of Authority” that Paul articulates in verse 3. They were showing their ignorance in the way that they were praying and prophesying. The gist of these verses is that when the Corinthians pray and prophesy, which evidently both men and women do, they must give outward evidence that the males have authority over the females.

Paul says in verse 4 that “every man who prays or prophesies having his head covered dishonors his head.” Paul is not saying that when a man prophesies or prays with a head covering he dishonors his own skull, because in verse 3 Paul said that the head of every man is Christ. So it would seem that if males pray or prophesy with their heads covered they dishonor Christ.

Then in verse 5 Paul says, “But every woman who prays or prophesies having her head uncovered dishonors her head.” Just as males dishonor Christ if they pray or prophesy with covered heads, females dishonor males if they pray or prophesy with uncovered heads.

How is it dishonoring to one's authority to pray or prophesy with one's head covered if male, or uncovered if female? We are helped here by what Paul says in verses 13 and 14. There he says that males are dishonored if they wear long hair, while long hair is the glory of females. So why is Christ dishonored if men pray the way that women are supposed to pray? And why are men dishonored if women pray the way that men are supposed to pray?

The answer to both questions is that the Structure of Authority inherent in male and female gender is not being observed. Christ is dishonored when men forsake their ordained roles as men and act like women when they pray. Men are dishonored when women forsake their ordained roles and act like men when they pray.

Paul addresses this in verse 7 where he says, “For on the one hand a man ought not to cover his head because he is the image and glory of God, but on the other hand the woman is the glory of the man.” The point here is that the glory of God is at stake in gender roles.

Men should pray like men, who have authority, for the glory of God. When men pray as they are supposed to, Christ is not dishonored but honored. Similarly, men are honored when women pray with their heads covered. We see this in verse 10, “on account of this the woman ought to have a sign of authority upon her head because of the angels.” Women honor God by honoring men by accepting their gender roles in faith.

When Paul says “because of the angels” here in verse 10 he is probably referring to the angels who are present when Christians gather for worship. These heavenly beings want to see the Structure of Authority that God has built into his creation honored in the way believers worship.

We skipped from verse 7 to verse 10. In verses 8 and 9 Paul argues for the Structure of Authority he is teaching the Corinthians to observe from the creation account in Genesis 1–2. He first notes that Eve was built from Adam in verse 8, and then he notes in verse 9 that Adam was not made to be a helper for Eve but that Eve was made to be a helper for Adam. Though some argue that gender roles are a result of the fall, Paul bases his argument for male-headship on the situation in Eden before the fall.

Before we move on, we should pause here to consider the fact that this passage indicates that it is acceptable for women to pray and prophesy in church. On the other hand, 1 Cor 14:34 says, “Let the women keep silent in the churches; for they are not permitted to speak . . .” The best conclusion is not that Paul is contradicting himself. The difference between these two contexts is that in 14:29 Paul had said, “let two or three prophets speak, and let the others pass judgment.” Then when he says in 14:34 that women are not to speak but to keep silent, I take it that he is referring to the evaluation of the prophecies. Further, we should acknowledge that there is a distinction between “praying and prophesying,” which the women are permitted to do in 1 Cor 11:4–10, and “teaching and having authority,” which the women are not permitted to do in 1 Tim 2:12. Many texts seem to indicate that “prophesying” is a Spirit-inspired utterance, not a sermon (cf., e.g., Matt 26:68; Luke 1:67; John 11:51; Acts 2:17–18; Rev 10:11).

Putting 1 Cor 11:4–10 together with 1 Cor 14:29–34 and 1 Tim 2:12, we see that women can pray and prophesy, but they are not to speak when prophecies are being evaluated and they are not to teach and exercise authority over men. So we should not conclude that women are not to speak at all in church, or that women have no roles in ministry. Clearly, in 1 Corinthians 11 women have the ability to pray in church and to prophesy in church, and the men are present. Paul is eager to establish, though, that when this praying and prophesying is done by the women, they are to demonstrate by the visible token of a head-covering that they are recognizing their place in God's created order and submitting themselves to male authority.

Now that we have looked at verses 3–10, we can see that God's glory is the burden of Paul's instructions throughout this passage. The Corinthians are not observing the Structure of Authority that God has built into his world because, evidently, the women are not testifying to the fact that they are submitted to male authority by praying and prophesying with their heads covered. By praying with uncovered heads, the women are obliterating gender distinctions, which dishonors God.

God is honored when the women pray and prophesy in such a way that they display their submission to male authority. God is also honored when the men pray and prophesy in such a way that they show both that they have authority over the women and that Christ has authority over them. Observing these gender roles to the honor of Christ honors God.

God is honored when people gladly accept his created Structure of Authority because to do so is to testify that we believe that God knows best. To humbly live by faith within God-given boundaries is to declare that even if we do not understand at present why God would do what he has done or command what he has commanded, we believe that he is worthy of our trust. God is honored when we are committed to doing what he says whether we understand it or not.

Now, how does this apply to us today, since in our culture head coverings are fashion statements not indicators that women are submitting to male headship?

We have no grounds for the conclusion that since the sign of authority—the head covering—is not a cultural norm for us, the God-Created Structure of Authority no longer applies. No, since Paul appeals to the pre-fall order of creation, we must conclude that the principle here—that women are to demonstrate their submission to masculine authority in church by a visible sign—is trans-cultural.

This trans-cultural principle can be acted upon in a variety of ways. Women can demonstrate this by their attitudes, by taking on their husband's name when they marry, by wearing a wedding ring when they marry, and by dressing in ways that are overtly feminine and not masculine (which does not mean no pants). Women must make the fact that they are female obvious, they must embrace what God made them to be, and relish the fact that they are man's glory. This is no low position; after all, Jesus is God's glory.

In the Kingdom of God, the first are last. So also here, females, who are the glory of males, submit to males. By doing this, women, you will honor God.

Lest wrong-headed conclusions be drawn from what he has taught, Paul balances his argument in verses 11–12.

III. The Balance of Essential Equality within Functional Subordination (11:11–12)

Paul accomplishes several things in these verses. He says, “Nevertheless, in the Lord neither woman is independent of man nor is man independent of woman; for just as the woman came from the man, so also the man through the

woman; and all things come from God.”

First, Paul urges that women and men are to maintain their gender roles in harmonious ways. This is the point of saying that women are not independent of men, and men are not independent of women.

Second, though Paul has acknowledged that the woman was made on behalf of the man in verse 9, in verse 12 he makes the point that apart from women there will be no more men! All babies come into the world through women. This guards against males thinking that they are somehow absolute.

Finally, by stating that all things come from God, Paul is reminding everyone that their gender roles are God given. Men should hold their authority under God, and women are to submit to men under God. No one is to regard him or herself as autonomous.

Brothers and sisters, for the glory of God, let us be men and women!

Conclusion

Daniel Akin, president of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, relates some humorous observations on men and women in his book, *God on Sex*. He asks:

Is it a cat? Is it a woman? Maybe it's both! Why?

1. They do what they want.
 2. They rarely listen to you.
 3. They're totally unpredictable.
 4. They whine when they are not happy.
 5. When you want to play, they want to be alone.
 6. When you want to be alone, they want to play.
 7. They expect you to cater to their every whim.
 8. They're moody.
 9. They can drive you nuts and cost you an arm and a leg.
 10. They leave hair everywhere.
- Conclusion: Cats are tiny little women in fur coats.

Is it a dog? Is it a man? Maybe it's both! Why?

1. They lie around all day, sprawled out on the most comfortable piece of furniture in the house.
2. They can hear a package of food opening half a block away, but they can't hear you even when you're in the same room.
3. They leave their toys everywhere.
4. They growl when they are not happy.
5. When you want to play, they want to play.
6. When you want to be left alone, they still want to play.
7. They are great at begging.
8. They will love you forever if you feed them and rub

their tummies.

9. They do disgusting things with their mouths and then try to give you a kiss.

10. They can look dumb and lovable all at the same time.

Conclusion: Dogs are tiny little men in fur coats.

Try as it may, secular culture will never succeed in obliterating gender differences between men and women. As Christian men and women, let us not be known for the worldly, humorous aspects of our genders. Rather, let us be godly men and women.

Let us be: Men who love their wives as Christ loves the church, by laying down our lives. Men who lead as Christ led, by washing feet, blessing children, and bearing the burdens of others. Husbands whose faithfulness mirrors the faithfulness of God. Fathers who care for our children as our heavenly Father cares for his. Men who hold their authority as those who will be judged by God. Men like Christ, the first who became last.

If we will exercise our masculinity in these godly ways, we will make it easier for our wives to be biblical women: Women who are inclined to show honor and respect for their husbands. Women who do not seek to be men, but who beautify the world by being what they are, women.

May the Lord reverse the effects of the fall and cause us to bear his image for his glory through the genders he has made. May we be men and women to the glory of God. ■

Celebrating Biblical Womanhood: Philosophies of Beauty in Conflict¹

Nancy Leigh DeMoss

*Host of the Revive Our Hearts Radio Program,
Buchanan, Michigan*

Editor's Note: The following is the third in a series of columns on the issue of modesty by Nancy Leigh DeMoss. This series originally aired as a three week radio broadcast, beginning June 16, 2003. Nancy's radio program—"Revive Our Hearts"—is heard on more than 250 stations.

In preparation for this series on modesty I purchased several popular women's and teen magazines, most of which I was not familiar with. I spent a few days just leafing through these magazines, trying to get a flavor for what women are being exposed to today. And I have to tell you that I had a real awakening.

In fact, after spending those hours I was much more sympathetic to why it is such a challenge for young women today to appreciate the value of modesty and to want to dress modestly or even to have any clue of what it means to dress modestly—because there are so few examples in our culture of what modesty looks like. I also realized why so many Christian women today think they are modest—because in comparison with *Seventeen* magazine or *Cosmopolitan*, they *are*. The problem is that we've been using the wrong standard to determine what's modest.

We need to understand the difference between the world's philosophy of clothing and appearance and the Christian philosophy, based on the Word of God. You see, our outward appearance—whether it's the women in those magazines or the women in your church or your own choices—reveals a way of thinking. It reveals a philosophy; it reveals what women truly believe.

For example, the world promotes the philosophy that beauty is physical and external, whereas the Word of God helps us to understand that beauty is fundamentally spiritual, and therefore, internal. Now, that doesn't mean that there's no such thing as external or physical beauty. Some women possess unusual physical beauty. But we recognize that the heart of beauty is something that is internal and spiritual.

The world's philosophy of the body and clothing is that the body is all-important, and that the spirit is either secondary or simply doesn't exist. The Christian has a different philosophy. She understands that our earthly bodies are temporal—they are going to deteriorate. No matter how much we fight it, our bodies are going to die. The wise Christian recognizes that the spirit of a person is what really matters.

The woman who adopts the world's philosophy, believes that her body is her identity. It becomes the basis for her security or insecurity. So you knock yourself out trying to achieve this beautiful model's figure, and that becomes the basis for your security. Or, on the other side, perhaps you have your fifth child and you're forty pounds overweight; you can't get the weight off and you start to feel insecure about your body. In the world's philosophy the way you feel about your body is the way you feel about yourself. But the Christian woman recognizes that her body is not the sum total of her identity. Rather, it's what is inside—the presence of God dwelling within her—that is the essence of her identity.

The world's philosophy is that you are the product of evolution and as a result you are the highest authority there is

and, hence your body belongs to you. No one else has any say or control over it. The Christian philosophy, on the other hand, is that your body did not just evolve as a result of chance, but that God made your body. It's not by chance that you look the way you do. Your body doesn't belong to you, but to God. And, if you're a married woman, your body belongs to your husband as well. For that matter, if you are ever going to be a married woman, your body belongs to someone else and you're just preserving it for him. As 1 Corinthians 7:4 teaches us, the married man has authority in a godly and loving sense over his wife's body as the wife does over her husband's body. So from God's standpoint, our bodies are not our own.

In the world's philosophy people dress in order for other people to notice them. But the Christian philosophy is that we do not dress primarily for others, but to please God. If He is the one we're trying to please, our objective should be a desire to reflect his glory, even in the way we dress.

In the world's philosophy the purpose of clothing is to *reveal* the body. The purpose is for sexual attraction. Some do it overtly and crassly—exposing most of their bodies. Many of the women in our churches would not do that. But some have adopted the philosophy of showing a little bit to tease. That can be just as seductive, if not more so, to Christian men than some of the more extreme forms of immodesty on the covers of magazines at the grocery store check-out. The Christian understands that the purpose of clothing is to cover the body. We've already seen in Genesis 3 that God gave Adam and Eve clothing to *conceal* their nakedness.² And so the Christian philosophy should be, "I want to draw attention to the life of Jesus within me. I want others to see a reflection of the beauty of Christ."

The world's philosophy is if you want to be loved, you have to be beautiful, sensual and alluring. Now I grant that women who are sensual and physically stunning will likely receive a certain kind of male attention and love. But physical beauty will never get you the kind of love you were created for, the kind of love and attention that your heart as a child of God really longs to have. The Christian woman recognizes that she's already loved by God in a deeper and richer and more meaningful way than she could ever be loved by any human being. Therefore, our hearts as Christian women should fundamentally seek to be beautiful for God, i.e., to cultivate the kind of beauty that he finds attractive.

The world's perspective on clothing is driven by fashion. But the Christian's philosophy is driven by the heart and the Word of God. Now, let me ask which of those philosophies is revealed by your physical appearance and your clothing choices. What are you communicating? When people look at you, what do they learn about what you believe? Christian modesty is first and foremost a way of thinking. It's a way of thinking that manifests itself in the way that we dress, talk, and

act. So ask yourself based on these two philosophies, "Am I living according to the world's way of thinking or am I reflecting God's heart and his way of thinking?" ■

¹Adapted from the *Revive Our Hearts* modesty series broadcast on June 19, 2003. For the companion booklet see Nancy Leigh DeMoss, *The Look: Does God Really Care What I Wear?* (Niles, Mich.: Revive Our Hearts, 2003). For information on Nancy's three week radio series on modesty and other great resources, please visit www.ReviveOurHearts.com.

²See my discussion of Genesis 3 in "Celebrating Biblical Womanhood: Godly Garments," *JBWW* 9/1 (Spring, 2004) 95-97.

A Response to *Marriage Made in Eden: A Pre-Modern Perspective for a Post-Christian World*¹

John K. Tarwater

*Adjunct Professor of Christian Ethics,
Southeastern College
Wake Forest, North Carolina*

In their most recent work on marriage, Alice Mathews and Gay Hubbard—professor and guest lecturer at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary respectively—explore God’s design and purpose for marriage. Having received positive reviews from several leading evangelical scholars, such as Stanley Grenz, Gordon Fee, and Vernon Grounds, *Marriage Made in Eden* warrants considerable attention. Because Mathews and Hubbard’s book represents a significant argument supporting egalitarianism, it also deserves a serious response. In this article, I will concentrate my analysis on the book’s contribution as it relates to the role of women, which appears to be the driving issue for the authors. I will divide this article into two sections. In the first, I will present the contents of the text, giving special attention to the arguments in favor of egalitarianism. In the second, I will evaluate and respond to the authors’ rationale.

Arguments in Favor of Egalitarianism

Mathews and Hubbard claim that the purpose of the book is to explore “what God had in mind when he designed marriage and how the purpose of marriage is both to transform us and to witness to God’s grace and power in a sinful world” (19). In order to accomplish this task, they seek to answer two questions: “First, what is marriage as a social institution in this present culture? Second, what does marriage *for God’s people* look like in this present time, in this present culture” (20)? Organizationally, this becomes the outline of the text: Culture’s case against marriage and God’s case for marriage. Ironically, a large portion of their egalitarian position finds its support in the

section on culture’s case against marriage (91–152) rather than in the section on God’s case for marriage (153–250).

Mathews and Hubbard seek to justify their egalitarian position by utilizing arguments from history, from psychology, and from Scripture. Although they do not explicitly express this intention, these three lines of argumentation are clearly evident.

Arguments from History

Mathews and Hubbard develop their case for egalitarianism from history along two fronts. First, in their presentation of culture’s case against marriage, they suggest that record numbers of women chose not to marry and chose to divorce during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, primarily because of the Doctrine of Separate Spheres. The Doctrine of Separate Spheres, according to Mathews and Hubbard, is the belief that “men and women possess fundamentally different natures and thus must have completely separate spheres of activity” (92). In contrast to the press and clergy who reasoned gender differences were ordained by God, Mathews and Hubbard write that complementarianism distorts the “biblical vision” and represents the idea of “Constantinian accommodation to the culture” (106).

Mathews and Hubbard suggest that the Doctrine of Separate Spheres turned women into consumers of income rather than producers. Consequently, women became dissatisfied with not producing and developed low self-esteem (95). In the seventeenth century, women knew their husband’s business

and often played a vital role in it. Often they were considered “deputy husbands,” which meant that they performed many of the duties often associated with men. Women were politically active and often ran farms and businesses, especially during wartime to help provide for their families (98). In addition to contributing in political and business affairs, Mathews and Hubbard say that women actively participated in revival and congregational activities during the First Great Awakening. Thus, the authors seek to demonstrate that before the eighteenth century, women were active in every arena and that different roles for women based upon gender distinction were absent.

In the eighteenth century, however, as the economy flourished, families gradually changed. The idea of the “pretty gentle woman” emerged, and women began focusing their attention on the home and family. Gradually, Mathews and Hubbard suggest, “women’s work and space were separated from men’s work and space, and a new construct of ideal roles began to emerge” (97). Even the “Declaration of Independence” contributed to this change in understanding women’s role by expressing “all *men* are created equal.” By using the word *men*, the founding fathers excluded slaves, men without property, and women. Citizenship for women was relegated to moral training in the home and “spawned the sentimentalizing of domestic duties” (99).

Mathews and Hubbard argue that the Doctrine of Separate Spheres produced mutual animosity between men and women during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Men resented having to work long hours to produce all of the income, and women became bitter for being confined to the home (114). Consequently, more and more women chose not to marry during this period, and record numbers of women chose to divorce and avoided the emerging structures of male domination.

A second line of argument from history in favor of egalitarianism also stems from culture’s case against marriage. The authors note that in the twentieth century, more and more couples chose cohabitation rather than marriage. First, cohabitation represents the present generation’s fear of divorce (67–69). Second, from the postmodernist perspective, cohabitation is not necessarily morally wrong, since morality is a private matter. Mathews and Hubbard disagree with this ethical stance, but agree that it does faithfully represent postmodernism’s case against marriage. Third, Mathews and Hubbard write, cohabitation permits greater freedom for individuals than marriage does. With this statement, the authors agree. Marriage involves the loss of personal freedom, sexual freedom, and economic freedom. For women, this loss includes control over their own bodies—their safety. Mathews and Hubbard continue, “The church, particularly its evangelical arm, continues to demonstrate a shameful disregard for women’s safety in marriage” (74). In the footnote on this quote, the authors write: “For example, a very large Protestant denomination recently made

part of their statement of faith the requirement that a woman submit ‘graciously’ to the loving leadership of her husband. Nothing was said about her options if he chose to enforce his ‘loving’ leadership with his fists. Still less was said about the denomination’s provisions to deal with the man if violence occurred. Such disregard of women’s safety is not lost on the present generation (men and women) when they consider marriage” (266). Citing Mary Stewart Van Leeuwen, Mathews and Hubbard contend that conservative religiosity—complementarian theology—is the greatest indicator of domestic violence, only second to alcohol (144). Sadly, the authors record, “women in conservative churches and denominations often find little or no sympathy from their ministers” (145). Thus, women should not marry if the institution includes the recognition of God-ordained roles, because such an arrangement threatens their health and well-being. Women are less likely, moreover, to receive help and comfort from churches that teach God-ordained gender differences.

These lessons from history challenge the church’s understanding of how marriage was, and its presuppositions about how it ought to be. History, they record, demonstrates that the pattern of marriage advocated in the Victorian period was a “nineteenth century invention . . . and had little if anything to do with the Christian mandate for marriage” (220). They conclude that the Victorian model, supporting gender-specific roles, did not work and cannot, in good faith, be taught as a biblical model.

Arguments from Psychology

Mathews and Hubbard also argue for egalitarianism from psychology. With a doctoral degree in psychology, Hubbard is certainly qualified to speak from this perspective. In developing their case against biblical complementarity, Mathews and Hubbard consider whether or not women experience protection, provision, and harmony in marriage in exchange for their self-surrender (131–33). In order to understand a woman’s experience in marriage, Mathews and Hubbard utilized macro-sociological analysis developed by Samuel Huntington, which examines possible gaps between an individual’s ideals and his reality. The authors contend that a gap does exist between “a man’s and woman’s commitment to the Doctrine of Separate Spheres in Christian marriage and his or her lived experience within marriage” (134).

According to Matthews and Hubbard, people feel uncomfortable when there is a gap between what is promised and what is experienced, often without knowing why. If people recognize the gap and also believe in the ideal and its promise, they begin to question the authority behind the teaching, such as the church. Or, they will work to reduce the tension between their commitment to the ideal and their experience by experimenting with alternatives. In order to discover what people

believe about and experience in marriage, Mathews and Hubbard distributed questionnaires to men and women in “eleven large conservative churches in various parts of the United States” about Scripture’s teachings in four areas: general roles, sex, decision making, and earning and spending patterns. They claim that in fact a gap existed between what people said they believed and how they actually acted. “For example, while more than half of the women in the study said that they believed fully in hierarchical structures for marriage, only 8 percent held hierarchical beliefs in the specific areas of sex in marriage or decision making in marriage” (138).

When participants were asked about their own experience of marriage and to describe the degree to which they were happy in marriage, Mathews and Hubbard report the results were startling. Among participants who held egalitarian views, *none* rated their experience as poor or negative. However, there were participants who held complementarian views of marriage who rated their experience of happiness in marriage as negative and poor. Thus, Mathews and Hubbard conclude: “When men and women identify for themselves the criteria for happiness in marriage, then rank their own experience of happiness in their marriages as fair or poor, it is difficult to defend hierarchical marital structures as ‘right’” (142–43).

In light of the historical and sociological data, how do Mathews and Hubbard propose people of faith should respond? They maintain that Christians must free themselves from “erroneous ideas about marriage” and stop discussing roles for men and women. Until this is done, marriage will continue “to baffle and disappoint many who have entered it” (147).

Arguments from Scripture

Mathews and Hubbard develop their case for egalitarianism from Scripture along two lines. First, they remind the reader that marriage is part of the whole story of God’s relationship with his people and that it stretches from Genesis to Revelation. Marriage is part of God’s story, and he can tell it the way he chooses. In order for us to hear it, however, we must lay aside personal agendas (160). Mathews and Hubbard write, “Because marriage is embedded within the experience of God’s people, it cannot, in a form of spiritual reductionism, be abstracted into a legalized prescription for marital roles” (162). Sometimes Christians place an irresponsible amount of emphasis on certain passages, such as Paul’s letters about husbands and wives, and assume that these passages are relevant to God’s case for marriage. However, this practice demonstrates a misunderstanding of God’s goal and purpose for marriage in the lives of his people. God calls for Christian marriage to reflect his relationship with his people, the same purpose it had in the beginning. Accordingly, marriage for God’s people should be transformational and missional. Participants, by faithfully

embodying God within communities, become more like God and demonstrate by their lives how others can come to know him.

A second line of argument from Scripture involves the examination of specific passages in the canon. First, they discuss passages from Genesis, which they affirm describes what God had in mind when he designed humans and marriage. The Genesis narrative expresses the foundation of God’s design for marriage: “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh” (Gen 2:24). The phrase, “for this reason,” reflects God’s relational imperative that led to Eve’s creation. “God did *not* say, ‘Adam has too much work to do. Let’s send help.’ God did *not* say, ‘Adam is the important First Man of humanity. Let’s send someone to cook and clean for him.’ God did *not* say, ‘Adam needs help in making babies.’ What God *did* say was, ‘Adam is alone. That aloneness is not good. Let’s make someone like him so that he will be alone no longer’” (177).

God’s relational purpose of marriage was part of his broader plan to manage creation and fill the earth. The first two chapters of Genesis demonstrate three truths about humanity as male and female. First, men and women differ physiologically in order to fulfill God’s mandate to be fruitful and multiply. Second, chapter two indicates that the purpose of masculinity and femininity is to permit men and women to connect in more ways than sexual. “To help,” means “to share the same tasks.” Men and women are dependent and interdependent. Third, God gave his command to be fruitful and to subdue the earth to both men and women. “Both are to share in parenting, and both are to share in dominion” (179).

The fall, however, introduced conflict into the marriage relationship. Adam began to exert power over Eve, a pattern that was unknown in the Garden (184). Mathews and Hubbard maintain that marriage is not about a hierarchy of privilege, authority, or importance. “Marriage does not provide a job description detailing the assignment of the tasks of daily living” (200). Rather, marriage is about helping and caring for one another. God’s desire to restore his creation to shared parenting and shared provision has not changed, and the present tension in marriage is being resolved by the coming of Jesus Christ.

Second, Mathews and Hubbard address various New Testament passages that speak of the husband being the head of his wife and of the wife being in submission to her husband. The authors insist that proper interpretation and application of Scripture necessarily involves determining which commands and practices were only for the audience to which they were given and which ones are permanent and binding for all people in all places at all times. After discussing particular passages, Mathews and Hubbard write that although Christian marriages in the first century were structured hierarchically because the wider culture demanded it, this fact does not necessarily mean

that the household codes were only an interim ethic (214). Instead, the stipulations for husbands and wives are applicable today because they were mandated for the whole body of Christ—all of God's people are to possess submissive spirits. Mathews and Hubbard summarize the New Testament's picture of marriage as shared calling, shared parenting, shared dominion, and shared accountability, which work together to make marriage missional (215–16).

Mathews and Hubbard note that the New Testament has six "household codes," three of which specifically address the husband/wife relationship: Eph 5:15–33; Col 3:18–19; and 1 Pet 3:1–9. The authors contend that Peter's passage, much like Paul's letters to Timothy and Titus, was based upon already existing hierarchical structures and was introduced to maintain order within society (206). Their missional character is evidenced by Paul's statement "to give the enemy no opportunity for slander" (1 Tim 5:14). When Peter writes that women are to submit to their own husbands, he is speaking of a voluntary act for the purpose of demonstrating the gospel, not because men have any God-ordained authority.

Similarly, Paul's injunction in Ephesians is not about authority. The phrase, "For the husband is head of the wife as Christ is head of the church" does not establish a doctrine of headship, which Mathews and Hubbard note is not a biblical term or biblical concept. They maintain that "head of his wife" is not defined in Scripture, but rather, it is described as a metaphor of two becoming one flesh. "Whatever else this metaphor carries, it is not linked to authority," assert Mathews and Hubbard (209). Although they do not discuss Paul's passage of 1 Cor 11:3 in the text, they do make a similar argument in the endnotes. "Those who insist on interpreting *head* to mean 'leader' or 'ruler' or 'authority over' trip up on 1 Corinthians 11:3, which states that 'the head of Christ is God.' While there are other dangers in a doctrine of subordination in the Trinity, in its simplest form it ignores the three-in-oneness of the Godhead" (280). Hence, Mathews and Hubbard reject the notion that Scripture defines certain roles based upon gender. Specifically, the complementarian view cannot find support in the writings of Peter and Paul in the New Testament nor in a doctrine of functional subordination in the Godhead. They conclude, "Only one passage in the New Testament explicitly addresses the question of authority in marriage"—1 Corinthians 7:2–5. In this passage, Paul makes clear that authority in marriage relationships is *mutual* (211–12). Since our bodies belong to God, we can trust them to our mates.

Evaluation of and Response to the Text

The evaluation below will focus on what I consider to be the most pivotal weaknesses in the text. I will organize my remarks according to the same paradigm used above: history, psychology, and Scripture.

Arguments from History

With regard to history, Mathews and Hubbard argue that complementarian theology represents a post-eighteenth century phenomenon that distorts the biblical vision and accommodates culture. Consequently, they continue, greater animosity exists between men and women and more individuals are choosing cohabitation and divorce rather than entering into an asymmetrical marriage relationship. Mathews and Hubbard rightly notice a considerable increase in the number of couples experiencing the tragedy of divorce and separation over the past century. Likewise, they correctly record that more individuals, Christian and non-Christian, are choosing to cohabit rather than to marry. It is not apparent, however, that this increase in divorce and cohabitation stems from a doctrine of complementarity. More pointedly, it is difficult for Mathews and Hubbard to support their claim that complementary ideals only recently appeared and that it is characterized by a "Constantinian accommodation to culture." At least three reasons mitigate against their conclusion.

First, culture affirms exactly what proponents of egalitarianism affirm, namely the impossibility of maintaining simultaneously male and female equality and God-ordained gender roles—exactly what complementarianism rejects. Similarly, egalitarianism and culture agree that gender differences are primarily, if not only, important for biological reproduction, a claim that proponents of complementarianism strongly deny.

Second, culture encourages exactly what some proponents of egalitarianism encourage—the acceptability of the gay and lesbian lifestyles. Consider the remarks of Jack Rogers, the elected Moderator of the Presbyterian Church (USA) in 2001: "I believe if we read the Bible in the same way we learned to read it in order to accept the equality of... women, we will be forced to the conclusion that gay and lesbian people are also to be accepted as equal."² Again, this is in stark contrast to the commitments of complementarianism.

Third, culture rejects exactly what Mathews and Hubbard call the "historical model" of marriage (248). Far from an eighteenth or nineteenth century invention, or even a marked shift in the church's traditional teaching, numerous theologians throughout the history of the church have taught that Scripture prescribes certain gender-specific roles within the family and the church. The following three quotes from Patristic, Reformation, and Modern periods serve as examples:

Augustine: "Nor can it be doubted that it is more consonant with the order of nature that men should bear rule over women than women over men. It is with this principle in view that the apostle says, 'The head of woman is man' and 'Wives submit yourselves to your own husbands.'"³

Calvin: "Thus he [Paul] teaches that, even if the human race had remained in its original integrity, the true order of nature prescribed by God lays it down that woman should be subject to man. . . . Thus, since God did not create two 'heads' of equal standing, but added to the man a lesser helpmeet, the apostle is right to remind us of the order of their creating in which God's eternal and inviolable appointment is clearly displayed."⁴

Barth: "At this point something must also be said about the question of the supremacy of the male and the subordination of the female in marriage. The question has been confused on both sides. . . . What else can supremacy and subordination mean here but that the male is male and the female is female. . . . The simple test is that when two people live together in demonstration of free mutual love this separation of functions will just take place . . . in all freedom . . . so that in fact the husband will precede and the wife follow."⁵

The preponderance of evidence strongly moderates Mathews and Hubbard's claim that the complementarian position is a recent development and that it accommodates society. To the contrary, present-day complementarianism aligns itself well with the Church's historical understanding of authority within the male/female relationship, a position that obviates cultural accommodation.

Mathews and Hubbard also speak to the growing episodes of violence among men and women in marriage relationships. They are correct to call attention to Scripture's prohibition against abuse in marriage or any other relationship. However, they appear to stretch the bounds of credulity when they charge that the evangelical arm of the church demonstrates disregard for women's safety within marriage. Equally disingenuous is their allegation that the Southern Baptist Convention's recent affirmation that a woman graciously submit to the loving leadership of her husband encourages husbands to "enforce his 'loving' leadership with his fists."

While these accusations are sure to incite the emotions of egalitarian readers, they do little to stimulate change and they demonstrate no acknowledgement of the Council of Biblical Manhood and Womanhood's *Statement on Abuse*, which is endorsed by the framers of the Southern Baptist Convention's statement on submission.⁶ This statement by the CBMW makes clear the complementarian position that Scripture does not support but condemns abuse between men and women. Furthermore, the *Statement* insists that the Christian community is responsible for the well-being of its members and has "a responsibility to lovingly confront abusers and to protect the abused." This position by complementarians stands in stark contrast to how Mathews and Hubbard portray them. While I

trust that their depiction of complementarity was not intentionally skewed, their actions, nevertheless, merit concern.

Arguments from Psychology

Mathews and Hubbard also suggest that a gap exists between what men and women say they believe about roles within marriage and what they actually experience within marriage. More importantly, this gap directly relates a poor or negative experience within marriage to participants who hold complementarian views of marriage. Because some men and women who hold to complementary structures within marriage rate their experience in marriage as poor or negative, Mathews and Hubbard conclude that it is doubtful such structures are "right."

Mathews and Hubbard correctly note that not all marriages are filled with happiness and bliss. Often participants articulate dissatisfaction and frustration, evidenced by the growing numbers of divorce. Moreover, the authors rightly warn readers against determining truth by one's feelings (239). Notwithstanding these warnings, the authors position themselves dangerously close to postmodernism's temptation of "truth-by-feel-good." How else are readers to understand the statement, "When men and women identify for themselves the criteria for happiness in marriage, then rank their own experience of happiness in their marriages as fair or poor, it is difficult to defend hierarchical marital structures as 'right?'" Whatever else it means, this statement entreats the reader to determine the rightness or wrongness of marital structures on his experience (i.e., feeling) of happiness within marriage. The problem with making feelings the determinant for right and wrong, Henry Fairlie writes, is that it is possible to feel good about oneself "in states of total vacuity, euphoria, intoxication, and self-indulgence, and it is even possible when we are doing wrong and know what we are doing."⁷ Against this temptation to determine right and wrong by looking within, Scripture implores individuals to fix their eyes on a higher authority: God's revealed Word. Because of the sinfulness of humanity—our righteousness is like filthy rags—faithfulness to God's special revelation must be the final determinant of right and wrong, not one's experience of happiness.

There are other weaknesses in Mathews and Hubbard's argument for egalitarian structures for the marriage relationship, primarily related to their theory regarding a gap between beliefs and experiences. Their subjective conclusions are at best tendentious, triggering more questions than answers. For example, what does it mean to say that "sixty percent of the participants practiced completely egalitarian decision making in the marriage" (140)? By this statement, are Mathews and Hubbard implying the husband consulted his wife in making decisions? Or, do they portend that the husband in these relationships never made significant decisions? Even more

puzzling is their claim that only eight percent of the women in the study “held hierarchical beliefs in the specific areas of sex in marriage or decision making” (138). What can it possibly mean to have hierarchical beliefs about sex? Does this mean women initiated sex? Or, do they mean that these wives were not permitted to say “no” to their husbands? By no means are these ideas synonymous with complementarian doctrine. Whatever Mathews and Hubbard connote by these statements, they do so without clarity. Accordingly, readers should probably temper Mathews and Hubbard’s conclusion that “In light of these facts, Christians cannot in good faith continue to teach” a complementary model of marriage because “as it was practiced [it] did not work well for thousands of men and women” (221). Although all Christians desire for marriage to work well for those involved, pragmatism has never been the arbiter for whether or not a complementary model of marriage should be taught. Faithfulness to Scripture should guide the teachings of Christians. Therefore, I now turn my attention to the authors’ rationale for egalitarianism from Scripture.

Arguments From Scripture

With regard to Scripture, Mathews and Hubbard correctly write that God designed marriage and that proper interpretation of God’s design requires readers to lay aside personal agendas. They are also right when they point to the creation narrative as the most important passages regarding male/female relationships because there God expresses the foundation of his design for marriage. However, I am convinced that their incomplete handling of these passages leads to a distorted view of God’s intentions for men and women within the family and the church and contributed to their choice not to include discussions in the main text on such important passages as 1 Cor 11:3–16 and 1 Tim 2:11–14. Since the creation narrative is most important to the discussion, it is difficult to imagine why Mathews and Hubbard would not discuss these two passages, especially since they appeal directly to Genesis. Perhaps, the exclusion of these passages in the text reveals the authors’ failure to grasp or explain fully the centrality of the creation story for the present debate.

Mathews and Hubbard are correct that Gen 1:26–28 teaches the equality of men and women, even presenting man and woman as co-rulers and equally necessary for multiplication. Thus, they correctly note that Scriptures proposes that participants in marriage share dominion and share parenting. They incorrectly deduce, however, that shared dominion excludes God-ordained, gender-designed roles. Their confusion stems from a failure to comprehend fully chapter two of Genesis. There, Scripture says that God created man first (2:7–9), charged him to care for the garden (2:15–17), and provided him with a set of laws to enforce in the garden. God even gave the man authority to name the animals, as well as the woman (2:19–23). Hence, the male was the first one to care for the

garden, to subdue it, and to enjoy dominion. Consequently, he bore ultimate responsibility before God for the initial mandate to subdue the earth and rule over it. In fact, he could have performed this task alone, but God said it was not good. Accordingly, God made man a helper, not in order that the garden have another leader, but rather, that man may have a helper, connoting functional responsibility. A proper understanding of the relationship between the sexes must include elements from both chapters: Genesis one and two. If this is done, one may rightly conclude that men and women are equal—they are both image bearers—and that they have different roles—the man is to lead and the woman is to come alongside and help.

The New Testament passages excluded from the book lend credence to this interpretation. For example, in his first letter to the church at Corinth, Paul taught that “the head of woman is man” because man was created first: “For man is not from woman, but woman from man” (11:8). Mathews and Hubbard avoid mentioning Paul’s division of roles in his letter to Timothy. There Paul explicitly based his reasoning on the fact that “Adam was formed first, then Eve” (2:13). It is difficult to deny the importance of God creating men and women at different times and of creating man first. One has either to ignore New Testament passages which teach that this is important, or to re-interpret these passages by arguing Paul misunderstood the Old Testament, effectively calling into question the inspiration of Scripture. It is inadequate for Mathews and Hubbard to dismiss the topic of “headship” by merely stating “it is not a biblical term nor is it a biblical concept” (209). Rather, it is incumbent upon the authors to explain Paul’s appeal to the creation narrative for his discussion of the gender roles. In light of this information, one struggles to comprehend Mathews and Hubbard’s claim that 1 Cor 7:2–5 is the only New Testament passage that deals with the issue of authority in marriage.

Mathews and Hubbard do seek to address three of the passages which deal with the husband/wife relationship: Eph 5:15–33; Col 3:18–19; and 1 Pet 3:1–9. While they are right to note the missional character of these passages, they wrongly conclude that these passages do not attend to the issue of authority within the marriage relationship.

In Ephesians, Paul discusses the husband-wife relationship with regard to the Christ-church relationship. For example, the husband-wife relationship described in 22–23a is supported by an exposition of the Christ-church relationship in verses 23b–24a. Likewise, the husband-wife relationship in 24b–25a is illumined by the relationship espoused by Christ and the church in 25b–27. Lastly, the two relationships are brought together in verses 31–32 by a direct quote from Genesis 2:24. Hence, the primary focus of Eph 5:21–33 is human marriage as it is illumined by the Christ-church relationship. Paul’s appeal to the Genesis narrative directs the reader’s attention to God’s design at creation: equal natures with the man leading and the woman helping. In his study on Ephesians, Paul Sampley

insists that Paul relates the accounts of Adam and Eve to the relationship of marriage partners in order to support his argument regarding submission.⁸

The context of Ephesians details the kind of submission that Paul has in mind: wives submit to their husbands (5:22–23), children submit to their parents (6:1–3), and slaves submit to their masters (6:5–8). The egalitarian claim that Paul insists on a “mutual submission” contradicts the context of Paul’s argument and revises the church’s historical understanding of this passage.⁹ It would be absurd to suggest that Paul believes parents should submit to their children or masters to their slaves. Equally outrageous is the egalitarian claim for husbands to submit to their wives.¹⁰ Interpreted consistently, Scripture asserts God-ordained roles for men and women. Not only does this appear to be the straightforward reading of Genesis, but it is also the New Testament’s interpretation and application of the creation narrative.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we can be grateful to Mathews and Hubbard for urging readers to listen to God’s case for marriage. Christians can surely profit from their discussion of the transformational and missional character of marriage. Nevertheless, the book fails to explain fully God’s case for marriage because of the authors’ distorted understanding of God-ordained gender roles. Misplaced emphasis upon history and psychology, accompanied by a less-than-complete handling of Genesis, severely handicaps Mathews and Hubbard’s ability to discern correctly God’s intentions for men in women in the family and in the church. Ultimately, Mathews and Hubbard are unable to heed their own advice to lay aside personal agendas. To summarize, Mathews and Hubbard exegetically fail to make their case for egalitarianism. ■

⁷Henry Fairlie, *The Seven Deadly Sins Today* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1979) 40.

⁸Paul J. Sampley, *And the Two Shall Become One Flesh: A Study of Traditions in Ephesians 5:21–33* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971) 100.

⁹See Daniel Doriani, “The Historical Novelty of Egalitarian Interpretations of Ephesians 5:21–22” in *Biblical Foundations for Manhood and Womanhood*, ed. Wayne Grudem (Wheaton: Crossway, 2002) 203–20.

¹⁰See Wayne Grudem, “The Myth of Mutual Submission as Interpretation of Ephesians 5:21” in *Biblical Foundations for Manhood and Womanhood*, ed. Wayne Grudem (Wheaton: Crossway, 2002) 221–32.

¹Alice P. Mathews and M. Gay Hubbard, *Marriage Made in Eden: A Pre-Modern Perspective for a Post-Christian World* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004).

²Deb Prince, “Presbyterians Push Church to Embrace Gays,” *The Detroit News*, <http://detnews.com/2001/editorial/0106/25/a09-240016.htm>. Accessed 12 Aug. 2004.

³Augustine, *De nuptiis et concupiscentia*, 1.9.10, CSEL; Augustine, *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, NPNF 5:267.

⁴John Calvin, *Commentaries on the Epistles to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon* trans. William Pringle, vol. 10, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1948) 218.

⁵Karl Barth, *Ethics* ed. Dietrich Braun, trans. Geoffrey Bromiley, (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1928–29) 235.

⁶Council of Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, *Statement on Abuse*; http://www.cbmw.org/resources/articles/abuse_statement.php. Accessed 12 Aug. 2004.

Annotated Bibliography for Gender Related Books in 2003

Compiled and Annotated by Rob Lister

Managing Editor

Journal for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood

Louisville, Kentucky

In this issue of the journal we profile some of the most significant gender-related books from 2003. Here is a brief reminder about the categories we are using and our intent in using them. By **Complementarian** we simply seek to designate an author who recognizes the full personal equality of the sexes, coupled with an acknowledgment of role distinctions in the home and church. By **Egalitarian** then, we intend to classify evangelicals who see only undifferentiated equality, i.e. they see no Scriptural warrant for affirming male headship in the home or the church. Under the **Non-Evangelical** heading, we have classified important secular works as well as books that broach the subject of biblical gender issues from a religious, albeit, non-evangelical point of view. This category also serves as our classification for Liberal scholars wanting to retain some sort of Christian identity. Finally, under the **Undeclared** heading, we have listed those books that do not give sufficient indication of their fundamental stance for us to classify them more specifically.

Complementarian Authors/Books

Akin, Daniel. *God on Sex: The Creator's Ideas about Love, Intimacy, and Marriage*. Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2003.

Walking through the Song of Solomon, Akin delightfully details God's plan for marital intimacy. He clearly demonstrates how God planned and rejoices in

the goodness of marital sexuality. Sprinkled throughout with personal reflections and humorous anecdotes, the pages turn quickly. More importantly still is the conviction and encouragement that Akin's book provides when considering how often our own marriages fall short of the biblical ideal. In my own judgment, every married (and engaged) couple should read this book.

Campbell, Ken M., ed. *Marriage and Family in the Biblical World*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2003.

In this scholarly volume, Campbell's six contributors provide a thorough evaluation of the marital and family contexts of the Old and New Testaments. Helpful extra-biblical chapters survey the familial mores of the Ancient Near East, Ancient Greek and Roman societies, and Second Temple Judaism. Daniel Block and Andreas Köstenberger also offer keen discussions of marriage and family in Ancient Israel and in the New Testament respectively.

Caner, Ergun Mehmet, ed. *Voices Behind the Veil: The World of Islam Through the Eyes of Women*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2003.

This remarkable volume is composed of twelve chapters, all authored by Christian women who are uniquely qualified to provide insights into the lives

of Muslim women. Herein, for example, we get a glimpse of what life is like for Muslim wives and daughters. We also hear testimonies of Muslim women who have converted to Christianity, and we learn practical tips for witnessing specifically to Muslim women. This last point makes it especially relevant that this book has been written by women for women, for the Islamic cultural context makes it drastically unlikely that men will have many opportunities to engage Muslim women in public evangelistic conversation. Readers of *JBMW* will want to note that chapter five of this volume ("The Essence of the Veil: The Veil as a Metaphor for Islamic Women") by Susie Hawkins, was reprinted in *JBMW* 9/1 (Spring 2004) 29-34.

Clarkson, Sally. *The Mission of Motherhood: Touching Your Child's Heart for Eternity*. Colorado Springs: WaterBrook, 2003.

Clarkson details a compelling vision of the glorious and eternally significant task of motherhood. According to Clarkson, much confusion has arisen in this area because of a large-scale abdication of God's original design for families. But the recognition of complementary roles in marriage actually frees women to enjoy the great fulfillment found in God's wise purposes for motherhood.

DeMoss, Nancy Leigh. *Surrender: The Heart God Controls*. Chicago: Moody, 2003.

DeMoss encourages her readers to see that our greatest holiness and happiness come together at the point of greatest surrender to the Lord Jesus. In many ways this book is simply a winsome exposition of what it means to be a Christian by addressing the propriety of God's total lordship over the life of the believer. In the course of this discussion, DeMoss hits the nail on the head by depicting the beauty of the surrendered life.

Doriani, Dan. *Women and Ministry: What the Bible Teaches*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2003.

Doriani surveys the issues surrounding the debate over what ministry roles women may occupy in the church. He treats the issue sensitively, stating clearly that we must follow Scripture's teaching while also recognizing that differences in divinely appointed roles in no way undermines the value and worth of women or the wonderful ministries to which they are called. Doriani's treatment examines key texts, offers a theol-

ogy of the gifts, and finally provides his own proposal for how the distinctives of complementarity should be worked out in the context of women ministering in the church.

Ennis, Pat and Lisa Tatlock. *Becoming a Woman Who Pleases God*. Chicago: Moody, 2003.

Ennis and Tatlock base their volume on the Home Economics curriculum at The Master's College where both teach. Their vision receives its impetus especially from the Pauline mandate in Titus 2:3-5, and expands from there to display the conduct of the "wise woman" as applied to a host of responsibilities inside and outside of the home. This is a wonderfully encouraging book, stocked with insights of practical application.

Getz, Gene A. *Elders and Leaders: God's Plan for Leading the Church*. Chicago: Moody, 2003.

Getz provides a thoroughgoing discussion of biblical eldership and leadership, with reference to the first century church as well as contemporary application. Getz affirms that the office of elder should be limited to otherwise qualified males, while also affirming the dignity and value of women and the manifold ministry avenues available to them. Though it stretches beyond 350 pages, the book is actually a very quick read, and it is full of graphics and other visuals designed to condense many of the author's points.

Harris, Joshua. *Not Even a Hint: Guarding Your Heart Against Lust*. Sisters, OR: Multnomah, 2003.

Harris contends that God requires that we not allow even a hint of lust in our lives. He further contends that this is so "not because God is heavy-handed," but because he so lavishly loves us and wants the best for us. Grace-saturated in its exposition and practical in its application, Harris's book sets the standard for honestly addressing and responding to the issue of lust from a Christian worldview perspective.

Hunt, Susan and Barbara Thompson. *The Legacy of Biblical Womanhood*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2003.

Hunt and Thompson provide a wonderful treatment of what biblical womanhood is and how to pass it on to succeeding generations. In the first of three parts, the authors provide a defense of biblical womanhood. In the second part, they address what it means and how it looks to be involved in the transmission of this legacy throughout the various stages of a woman's life. Finally, in the third section, Hunt and Thompson offer encouragement and guidance for conducting the kind of women's ministry that will help ensure the transmission of this legacy.

James, Sharon. *In Trouble and in Joy: Four Women who Lived for God*. Darlington, England: Evangelical Press, 2003.

In this volume, James profiles the lives of four godly women from earlier eras—Margaret Baxter, Sarah Edwards, Anne Steele, and Frances Ridley Havergal. Each biographical chapter contains background and setting information, the story of each woman's life, applications from their lives for women today, and finally excerpts from their own personal writings. This book is honest about the struggles and blessings that each woman faced, and it will provide great encouragement for those seeking to live godly lives, whether in circumstances of trouble or joy.

MacArthur, John, ed. *Think Biblically: Recovering a Christian Worldview*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2003.

Authored by John MacArthur and the faculty of The Master's College, this book seeks to address key planks in the Christian worldview. Contained within this book are two chapters of special relevance to the mission of CBMW—"Profiling Christian Femininity" by Patricia Ennis (reprinted in *JBMW* 8/2) and "Profiling Christian Masculinity" by Stuart Scott (reprinted in this issue of *JBMW*). These companion chapters both demonstrate how the Christian worldview speaks to what it means to be masculine and feminine. Ennis and Scott respectively dispel ignorant (though sometimes popular) stereotypes of femininity and masculinity, and then proceed to show the beauty of the biblical vision.

Mahaney, Carolyn. *Feminine Appeal: Seven Virtues of a Godly Wife and Mother*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2003.

In this delightful book, Mahaney shares seven virtues from Titus 2 that will help women to adorn the gospel with its fruit in their lives. Advocating a Titus 2 form of mentoring and taking up virtues such as loving husbands and children, self-control, purity, and submission, Mahaney wisely articulates that these gospel virtues will transform the lives Christian women and ultimately reveal the beauty of the gospel itself to unbelieving observers.

Patterson, Dorothy Kelley. *Where's Mom? The High Calling of Wives and Mothers*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2003.

Patterson provides a splendid exposition of the importance and value of wives and mothers. Soaked in Scripture, Patterson's volume encourages Christian wives and mothers to consider their priorities afresh by clearly affirming that homemaking is indeed a job that is challenging, fulfilling, and supremely worthwhile. Christian women in all contexts will find great encouragement in this little book—especially those who are doubting the value of their contribution as wives and mothers.

Piper, Noël. *Treasuring God in Our Traditions*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2003.

Piper investigates the importance of God-honoring traditions that God may be pleased to use in drawing and binding us and our children to him. She also helps us to see that a tradition is not just something that makes up a part of our routine. Rather, Piper contends that in the biblical frame, "The things we do regularly that help us in our deepest being to know and love and want God, the things that help our lives to be infiltrated with God—those things are tradition." What a glorious definition! The exposition and practical insights that flow throughout the rest of the book are equally engaging.

Ryken, Philip Graham, Derek W. H. Thomas, and J. Ligon Duncan, eds. *Give Praise to God: A Vision for Reforming Worship*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 2003.

This splendid volume, written in honor of the legacy of James Montgomery Boice, explores a panorama of issues related to Christian worship. For the purposes

of *JBMW*, chapter thirteen deserves special mention—"A Call to Family Worship" by J. Ligon Duncan and Terry L. Johnson. This chapter (which was reprinted in *JBMW* 9/1) displays a deep biblical wisdom regarding the role of parents, and fathers in particular, in leading the household in family worship. Duncan and Johnson also offer time-honored and practical suggestions for implementing family worship. These are worth the price of the book, especially if one finds himself agreeing with the priority of family worship, but wondering how to get started.

Schreiner, Thomas R. *1, 2 Peter, Jude*. NAC. Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2003.

This is a wonderfully insightful and helpful commentary in its entirety. But it deserves special mention in this bibliography for its outstanding exposition of 1 Peter 3:1-7.

Sears, Alan and Craig Osten. *The Homosexual Agenda: Exposing the Principal Threat to Religious Freedom Today*. Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2003.

Sears and Osten provide a telling expose of exactly what their title indicates—the homosexual agenda. The authors provide a clear background to how we got to this point and, with unmistakable clarity, they show precisely where homosexual activists aim to go. The book concludes with several practical and helpful suggestions as to how evangelicals should respond with both love and conviction to this gathering storm. Evangelicals need to read and understand the contents of this book.

Sproul, Jr., R. C. *Bound for Glory: God's Promise for Your Family*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2003.

Sproul, Jr. emphasizes the importance of covenantal relatedness in his exposition of God's plan for the family. Against the backdrop of the many assaults on the family, Sproul, Jr. discusses the family's covenantal relationship with God and the different ways this affects the intra-familial relationship (e.g. the Father's role in leading the family to grow in God's Word). The book is framed by transcripts of discussions between Sproul, Jr. and his father R. C. Sproul, Sr., with their final discussion providing thoughtful insights into questions pertaining to homeschooling and the involvement of parents in the education of their own children.

Egalitarian Authors/Books

Barger, Lilian Calles. *Eve's Revenge: Women and a Spirituality of the Body*. Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2003.

Barger seeks to address how issues pertaining to the female body have impacted women's spirituality negatively and positively. Her primary suggestion for positive growth in this area is that the "spiritual teachings" of Jesus can be particularly valuable to women on such a quest.

Grady, J. Lee. *25 Tough Questions About Women and the Church*. Lake Mary, FL: Charisma House, 2003.

Grady attempts to provide a lay level exposition of egalitarian responses to twenty-five key questions that he has encountered in the ongoing gender debate within evangelicalism. His proposal falls short on a number of fronts however. In the first place, Grady's book proceeds with a tone that is often strident and unhelpful. As a consequence of this, Grady significantly misrepresents complementarianism on a number of occasions (e.g. 10, 91, 96). Secondly, his treatment of key texts falters when he routinely substitutes speculative theories that are not mentioned in these texts, in favor of the reasons that are actually stated in these passages. Finally, he seems to weight the issue of personal experience so strongly that one's personal sense of calling to the pastoral office (i.e. the office of elder) is virtually inviolable. For a more thorough summary and critique of this book see the review by Rob Lister in *JBMW* 9/1 (Spring 2004) 101-108.

Mathews, Alice P. *Preaching that Speaks to Women*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003.

Mathews observes that most preaching has been done from a specifically masculine point of view. She contends that failure on the part of most preachers to connect with feminine experience makes a dangerous communication gap. In laying out her case, Mathews distinguishes between "sex," which she argues is biologically determined and fixed, and "gender," which she argues is socially learned. While she does allow that we experience some gender differences because of our biology, she wants to minimize the significance of such differences. It is interesting then, that on the one hand Mathews wants to minimize the differences between the sexes, while on the other hand she cri-

tiques most preachers for failing to connect with feminine ways of learning, hearing, and understanding. When it comes to suggestions for improving preaching to women, one of Mathews's key exhortations to preachers is to avoid the use of masculine generics (e.g. use "people" instead of "man") when addressing a mixed-gender audience. She is also concerned to use terminology that emphasizes the equality of men and women.

Sumner, Sarah. *Men and Women in the Church*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2003.

Sumner presents her discussion of biblical gender roles as a middle way between complementarianism and egalitarianism. In the end, however, her conclusions are solidly egalitarian, marked by many of the traditional exegetical deficiencies and methodological flaws of egalitarianism. One troubling factor that is particularly noteworthy in this book is Sumner's rather frequent elevation of personal experience over biblical norms. Another troubling factor is found in her many misrepresentations of complementarianism. For a more thorough review and critique of this book, see Dorothy Patterson's review article in *JBMW* 8/1 (Spring 2003) 39-50.

Non-Evangelical Authors/Books

Browning, Don S. *Marriage and Modernization: How Globalization Threatens Marriage and What to Do about It*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003.

Browning argues that for whatever good modernization and globalization might bring, those forces also represent a disruptive threat to marriage. Consequently, he claims that a reformation of marriage and family is in order, along with the need to address other social issues. Among other things, Browning suggests that a reevaluation of marriage from the contexts of the world's major religions is a necessity.

Malone, Mary T. *Women and Christianity: From the Reformation to the 21st Century*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2003.

Malone, a Catholic feminist, concludes her trilogy on Christian women in history by examining their "story" from the Reformation to the present day. According to Malone that history is largely one of oppression and male domination. Not surprisingly then, she

maintains that the arrival of feminism has been a great beacon of hope.

Sakenfield, Katharine Doob. *Just Wives?: Stories of Power and Survival in the Old Testament and Today*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003.

Sakenfield presents a study of the social contexts of several Old Testament women (e.g. Sarah and Hagar, Ruth and Naomi). In so doing, she clearly argues that the meanings of these OT narratives are not the same for everyone. Within each chapter, Sakenfield attempts to show how contemporary women of varying nationalities and contexts have appropriated these narratives. She hopes that readers of this book will likewise appropriate these stories in the way that is most beneficial to them.

Schlaflly, Phyllis. *Feminist Fantasies*. Dallas: Spence Publishing, 2003.

Schlaflly, of great pro-family political renown, offers a collection of essays from her decades in the trenches. Full of wisdom and wit, Schlaflly's essays expose the folly and harmfulness of mainstream feminism.

Watson, Natalie K. *Feminist Theology*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003.

Watson authors a brief volume that has the simple design of introducing the history and key themes of feminist thought to first-time students of the subject. The two major components of the book are a presentation of feminist ways of reading Scripture and then a discussion of major feminist themes (e.g. opposition to patriarchy, questioning masculine God-language, questioning the significance of the Christ's maleness, etc.). The book also includes a lengthy annotated bibliography surveying key works in feminist theology.

Undeclared Authors/Books

Scorgie, Glen C., Mark L. Strauss, and Steven M. Voth, eds. *The Challenge of Bible Translation: Communicating God's Word to the World*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003.

This book is here classified as "undeclared" because of the combination of complementarian and egalitarian contributors. The authors consider a host of issues

pertaining to the history, theory, and practice of Bible translation, most of which are not directly related to the current debate over gender-neutral translation. A couple of chapters, however, are specifically focused on this very issue. Pointed criticism of the work done by Wayne Grudem and Vern Poythress appears in the chapters by Don Carson and Mark Strauss. Since spatial constraints prohibit substantive interaction, readers will want to consult Wayne Grudem's rebuttal of a pre-publication version of Carson's chapter in *JBMW* 7/2 (Fall 2002) 31-66.

Via, Dan O. and Robert A. J. Gagnon.

Homosexuality and the Bible: Two Views.
Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003.

By way of format, this book falls into the recent genre of multiple views books. Via propounds the view that the Bible does not, in fact, condemn homosexual activity as sinful, while Gagnon defends the traditional view that it does. Upon conclusion of the major chapters wherein the respective views are articulated, each author is given a brief space to respond to the argumentation of his counterpart. More specifically, Via argues that homosexual activity in itself—as with heterosexual activity—is not necessarily sinful; rather it is the context in which the sexual activity takes place that determines its morality or immorality. Gagnon's treatment of key passages on homosexuality is clearly superior, and it has much to commend itself. Though it is far from the central issue in this book, it does appear that Gagnon gestures in the direction of egalitarianism on the broader question of gender roles. ■

