
KEYNOTE

MODERN ARGUMENTS OF EVANGELICAL FEMINISTS

by John A. Battle

The modern feminist movement has adapted itself to many different situations. While it used to present itself as an enemy of the Bible and traditional religion, it now boasts a large following of “evangelical” supporters who claim to be loyal to the Bible. Of course, most of the movement’s followers still promote the same radical causes as before, but Christians often do not see these people. Instead, they see soft-spoken evangelical teachers, ministers, and writers, who claim to support the Bible and understand it as it was intended. This new approach has made great headway in evangelical churches. New arguments are being presented, which Christians need to examine.

THE OLD APPROACH

Most of us remember the early days of the modern feminist movement in Europe and America. The National Organization of Women (NOW) was large and loud. Protagonists were fiery and shrill. This led to the famous designation of these women by conservative radio commentator Rush Limbaugh as “femi-nazis.” We were deluged with thunderous denunciations of the Bible. The cultures of Abraham and Moses degraded women. The teachings of Paul caused great suffering and injustice to women for all the centuries from then until now. Male dominance in the family, in society, and in the church was based, they said, on the traditional teach-

ings of Judaism and Christianity. The fact that women were even more oppressed in Muslim countries did not make the situation in the Western world any more agreeable.

The feminist movement typified by Gloria Steinem and Betty Friedan joined itself to radical religious and political causes. They worshiped Sophia, goddess of wisdom. They marched in the streets for pro-abortion laws. They favored a socialist economy. They openly flaunted lewdness and immorality. They promoted homosexuality. Whenever a conservative female candidate opposed a liberal male candidate, they supported the liberal and opposed giving any political office to a woman who was conservative, thus showing their agenda to be more important than furthering the influence of women in general. In public gatherings and discussions they would boo and heckle any brave soul who would quote the Bible to oppose them.

On the theological front there were those who defended and promoted the feminist agenda, but initially they were limited to the more radical, leftist adherents of the social gospel. They had long ago given up the idea that the Bible was God’s inspired Word, that always taught the truth. Fundamentalists and evangelicals stood together in opposing this liberal view.

However, during the 1970’s evangelicals who were courting approval from the liberal ecclesiastical and academic establishment discovered a way to bridge their differences on this issue. A

key event was the publication in 1975 of a surprising book by Paul King Jewett, professor of systematic theology at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California. His book was entitled *Man as Male and Female*.¹ Jewett contended that the Old Testament did seem to promote male leadership, but that Jesus and Paul, more by their actions than their words, changed that principle to one of “partnership, not hierarchy.” Paul’s comments in which he limits church leadership to men and places men as the head of the home were simply mistaken—teachings left over from his unenlightened rabbinic past. Here was a link to the liberal establishment, and the back cover of the book bore the endorsement of Cynthia O. Wedel, past president of the liberal National Council of Churches.

Understandably, publication of this book by Jewett caused great controversy within the evangelical world, and great difficulty for Fuller Seminary with its donors. However, the seminary stood by its professor, jettisoned its original position for the inerrancy of Scripture, and has since become a bastion for modern evangelical feminism.²

While Jewett’s arguments were more biblically focused than the secular feminists’ were, yet he agreed with them that Paul’s statements in his epistles that assigned a subordinate place to women in the family and in the church were mistaken. Paul had indeed found the true principle: “there is neither male nor female, . . . for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Gal 3:28). But, according to Jewett, his former rabbinic training had blinded him to the practical outworking of that principle. Discussing Paul’s church practice in 1 Tim 2:12 (“I do not

permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she must be silent.”), Jewett declares:

“Paul . . . is assuming the traditional rabbinic understanding of that narrative [Gen 2:18-19] whereby the order of their creation is made to yield the primacy of the man over the woman. Is this rabbinic understanding of Genesis 2:18f. correct? We do not think that it is.”³

Jewett’s position was transitional. He failed to bridge the gap between inerrancy of the Bible and the feminist position. So he left the doctrine of inerrancy behind. However, this position provided a jumping-off place for later evangelicals who would still claim to uphold inerrancy.

THE NEW APPROACH

Throughout the 1970’s, 80’s, and 90’s, the battle for the inerrancy of the Bible raged throughout the evangelical world, especially in America. Eventually, the supporters of inerrancy gained the upper hand, and it became dangerous for an evangelical to openly oppose the doctrine. So a new method was seized upon to get around Paul’s teachings. Instead of saying that Paul was wrong, now it became fashionable to say that Paul’s teachings are misunderstood by the modern reader. It is now a question of hermeneutics, not of inspiration.

According to the modern evangelical feminist argument, Paul was addressing a particular situation in his culture, and was not giving permanent commands. For example, he wrote that slaves should obey their masters; this did not mean that slavery was a good institution. In fact, he said slaves should seek their

freedom if possible.⁴ In the same way, so the argument goes, Paul's statements about women submitting to male leadership in the home and church reflect the culture of the times, and are not to be taken as absolute and permanent guidelines in a different culture.

This last argument has been greatly expanded and strengthened by much research writing in recent years. A typical statement of this position is that of James Payton, professor of history at Redeemer University College in Ontario, Canada.⁵ He points out that in traditional Greek culture, respectable women did not appear in public alone and never conversed with men other than their families. Normally they stayed at home in comparative isolation from the outside world. The only women accepted in public male company were prostitutes, either the regular, uneducated prostitutes (the *pornai*) or the educated, "high-class" prostitutes (the *hetairai*). Payton notes especially the role of *hetairai* in Greek culture. They were often highly sought out by prominent male citizens for companionship. They were expensively and attractively dressed, and could converse knowledgeably on topics of interest. When a woman was observed conversing with men in public, it was assumed that she was of this type.

With this cultural world in mind, so the argument goes, one can see why Paul urged women in Ephesus not to speak out in public in the church, but to ask questions of their own husbands at home (1 Cor 14:34-35; 1 Tim 2:11-12).⁶ It was "shameful" for a Christian woman to speak out in public, since she would appear to those who did not know her to be a prostitute. Both churches involved

in these passages (Corinth and Ephesus) were in the Eastern or Hellenistic part of the Roman Empire, where the Greek culture was still strong. Of course, the argument continues, since we do not have the same cultural setting today, and women can speak in public without such a stigma, there should be no restriction against women speaking in church. This argument finds evidence in Paul's allowing Christian women to speak to men or mixed groups in other churches, which were in the Roman cultural part of the Empire (as in Rome and Philippi).⁷

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CBE Statement

In a similar way evangelical feminists say that the place of women in the home and family is greatly expanded in our popular culture than it was in Greek culture. Those few people who still desire male headship often provide an excuse for arrogance and even abuse. Therefore, there is no reason for Christian wives today to always have to obey or submit to their husbands. Rather, the principle of equality of Christians before the Lord

should lead to a family in which both spouses share equal authority. For example, the organization Christians for Biblical Equality declared,

“The Bible teaches that husbands and wives are heirs together of the grace of life and that they are bound together in a relationship of mutual submission and responsibility (1 Cor 7:3-5; Eph 5:21; 1 Pet 3:1-7; Gen 21:12). The husband’s function as ‘head’ (*kephale*) is to be understood as self-giving love and service within this relationship of mutual submission.”

If there are differences in opinion, the husband is not to be the one to decide:

“In the Christian home, husband and wife are to defer to each other in seeking to fulfill each other’s preferences, desires and aspirations. Neither spouse is to seek to dominate the other but each it to act as servant of the other, in humility considering the other as better than oneself. In case of decisional deadlock they should seek resolution through biblical methods of conflict resolution rather than by one spouse imposing a decision upon the other.”⁸

SOME COUNTER-ARGUMENTS

Whole books have been written arguing these matters from both the feminist position and the traditional position regarding male headship in the family and the church.⁹ Here it is my intention only to bring up some points that show that the evangelical feminist arguments fall short of making their case.

THE ANALOGY OF SLAVERY

First, the comparison of the status of women to the institution of slavery breaks down. True, the apostles taught slaves to be obedient to their masters.¹⁰ Yet they never say that slavery as an institution is based on the created order. Slavery is a consequence of sin. In fact, Paul encouraged slaves to obtain their freedom.¹¹ In the OT slavery was approved for war captives, for certain criminals, and for those who could not get out of debt. At the same time there were provisions for slaves to obtain freedom, and Jewish slaves were to be freed after six years of service, or at the year of jubilee.¹² If we assume that Christians in the NT dispensation are to treat fellow believers at least as well as the OT Hebrews were supposed to do, then the seeds are sown for the destruction of the institution itself in Christian countries. However, if for any reason a Christian were to find himself as a slave today, he should obey the laws given in the NT just as the early Christians did. These laws do not change with different cultures. Any slaves today should still obey their masters if they are not able to obtain their freedom. Of course, if they are being held illegally, they have the right to resist or seek to escape. The argument used by evangelical feminists is fallacious at this point.

When we compare what the Bible says about slavery to what it says about gender roles in the family and the church, then the differences become clear. When Paul and Peter list the duties of husband and wife in the family, they both teach that the wife is to obey, to submit to her husband. Paul says the relation is as Christ to the church, and Peter notes that this principle still applies even when the husband is a non-believer and is harsh.¹³ The analogy of Christ and the

church is instructive; this relation does not change in whatever culture one finds oneself. These are statements never made about the relation of a slave to a master.

HEADSHIP AND SUBMISSION

It is true that the husband's being called the "head" of the wife in Ephesians 5 is not an entitlement for the husband to be harsh or cruel to his wife. He is to love and cherish her, to protect and provide for her, even as Christ cares for the church. Some evangelical feminists claim that the traditional interpretation of the headship of the husband can lead to terrible abuses.¹⁴ This is possible only when the biblical requirements for husbands are overlooked. Any doctrine must be judged by its proper application, not by its abuse. Surely, a biblical headship of the husband is no cause for fear on the part of the wife or children, which seems to be Peter's very point in 1 Pet 3:6.

Feminists often point out that the word "helper" in Gen 2:18 does not imply that the person who helps is subordinate to the one who is helped. Often in the OT the same Hebrew term (*ezer*) refers to God as our helper.¹⁵ They also maintain that the statement in Gen 3:16 that the husband would rule over his wife is not a creation ordinance, but an undesirable result of sin. These understandings are brought to bear in their interpretation of 1 Tim 2:11-15, where Paul instructs women to submit to male leadership in the church on the basis of the creation order and the events of the Fall.

However, these arguments fail at the crucial point of showing that Paul was basing his argument on his own culture. By referring to Adam and Eve's cre-

ation and fall, Paul takes his argument out of his culture, and makes it refer to the whole of human history. Jewett had gotten away from that dilemma by saying that Paul simply was wrong in this passage. Modern evangelical feminists try to get around Paul's references by saying that "inspiration relates to the divine impulse and control whereby the whole canonical Scripture is the Word of God; interpretation relates to the human activity whereby we seek to apprehend revealed truth in harmony with the totality of Scripture."¹⁶ In other words, Paul's statements in 1 Timothy are not inspired in themselves (the old idea of verbal inspiration), but only the "themes" of the entire Bible are inspired. His statements are simply a theme applied to his culture. This interpretation is unacceptable if we are to hold to the inerrancy of Scripture, as it is classically understood.

CULTURAL DIFFERENCES AND WORSHIP

Evangelical feminists make much of the changes in culture from the first century until now. James Payton contends that the restrictions placed on women in the worship services applied only in the Greek culture of the eastern part of the empire, and that the Roman culture, more practiced in the West, allowed more female leadership in the church.¹⁷ However, many of the examples Payton cites come from a Greek culture several centuries before Christ. In the days of the apostles, there was much travel and intermixing of these cultural empires. The East and the West were not totally distinct areas in the Mediterranean world. Phoebe traveled on business from Corinth to Rome; Aquila and Priscilla moved from Rome to Corinth to Ephesus and back to Rome again. We find Phoebe doing business in the "Greek" part and

the “Roman” part of the empire. We see Aquila and Priscilla active in Christian witnessing and teaching in both parts as well.¹⁸

Certainly women can teach men in other venues, but in the church the spiritual leadership and authority is to reside in men. Priscilla and the other women who taught and ministered in other ways did so under the authority of the male leadership of the church.

As we interpret these passages, there are three major principles that we recognize as true. First, individual commands of the Bible need to be compared with other commands and principles of the Bible in order to be interpreted properly. Second, there are commands given in the Bible for people in a certain situation or culture that may be different in other environment. Third, there are some laws based on the permanent moral law of God and the permanent features of his creation; these are applicable in all circumstances and cultures.

In applying the first principle to Paul’s commands about women in worship, we do see that there are passages

that restrict the activity or leadership of women in the church.¹⁹ On the other hand, other passages mention women as active in various types of ministry, including instruction, prophecy, and prayer.²⁰ By comparing these passages together, we can discover the total biblical teaching. It appears that women are allowed to participate in worship of the Lord in various ways, but that the officers of authority are to be men. Since the preacher is a teaching elder, the preacher is to be a man. Women, however, in the Bible are shown to be teaching other people, including men, in other settings. When women do various forms of ministry in and for the church, they are to be under the authority and direction of the male officers of the church. This position satisfies all the New Testament passages.

Second, the NT does give some instructions that are intended for particular cultural settings. Paul makes a point of this in 1 Cor 9, as he speaks of living in different ways in different cultures, obeying different sets of rules, so that he could win them to Christ. When the apostles and elders determined that Christians in Syria and Cilicia were to refrain from eating blood, they based that decision on the cultural situation in those areas.²¹ When Christian women are instructed to dress modestly and unostentatiously, the particular types of jewelry or hair styles mentioned are only illustrative of that culture.²² This is also true regarding the wearing of head coverings or veils, a practice that showed submission and modesty in the ancient culture (and some modern cultures as well).²³ Paul’s instructions about women asking their husbands at home if they had any religious questions may well belong to this category, especially if speaking out

in public was considered by that culture as indecorous.

Third, some of the NT instructions regarding women in worship are said to be based on the moral law and the permanent conditions of creation, at least during the age before the second coming of Christ. This seems to be the point in 1 Tim 2, where Paul bases his commands on the creation order and on the historical situation since the Fall. It is noticeable that, in this section, Paul especially speaks of the matter of authority: "I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man." The teaching here must be consistent with his working with Priscilla and other women. I believe that the solution is in the word "authority." It is "authoritative teaching" that he is concerned with, and this involves the preaching office. Certainly women can teach men in other venues, but in the church the spiritual leadership and authority is to reside in men. It appears that Priscilla and the other women who taught and ministered in other ways did so under the authority of the male leadership of the church.

SUBORDINATION AND EQUALITY

Underlying many feminist arguments lies a misunderstanding. Many evangelical writers claim that sexual equality for women and men implies an identity of roles, with equal authority. For women to be expected to submit to men in a way that men do not submit to women, is to make them unequal. They note that in the passage in which Paul says that wives are to submit to their husbands, he prefaces that command by the command to all the Christians, "Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ."²⁴ This mutual submission, in the hands of
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these feminists, effectively wipes out the idea of the wife's submission to the husband as a particular role. To so submit, they say, is to deny the spiritual equality of men and women.

In order to reply, it is only necessary to note the submission of Jesus Christ to his Father. This submission did not begin in his time on earth, but has marked his state from all eternity. In addition, the Holy Spirit obeys the Father and the Son, as he does his work in the world today. When the members of the Trinity submit to other members of the Trinity, they do not demonstrate any inequality. In the heavenly economy, to serve is not to be less. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are the same in substance, equal in power and glory, to paraphrase the Westminster Shorter Catechism #6. Yet one serves another and obeys and submits, while the other determines what is to be done. They do this in perfect love and agreement. In the same way the submission of women to the leadership of men in the church and the home in no way diminishes their spiritual standing, but rather enhances it.

¹ Paul K. Jewett, *Man as Male and Female* (Grand Rapids: William B Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1975).

² For a fascinating account of the progress of Fuller Seminary from its original place and purpose to its present position, see George Marsden, *Reforming Fundamentalism: Fuller Seminary and the New Evangelicalism* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1987). Harold Lindsell, an original Fuller faculty member, provides a look at the same process from a conservative perspective in two books: *The Battle for the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan,

1976), and *The Bible in the Balance* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979).

³ Jewett, *Man as Male and Female*, p. 119.

⁴ As in 2 Cor 7:21, and as hinted at in Phlm 16.

⁵ James R. Payton, Jr., “A Tale of Two Cultures: Understanding the Historical and Cultural Context of the NT Epistles,” *Priscilla Papers* 16:1 (Winter 2002) 13-17.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 15.

⁷ Passages normally cited include Acts 16:14-15; 18:26; Rom 16:1-7, 12; Phil 4:2-3.

⁸ These quotations are from “Men, Women and Biblical Equality,” the official statement of Christians for Biblical Equality, 1989. It can be read at their website, <http://www.cbeinternational.org/>. Over the years this statement has been signed by many well-known evangelicals writers and leaders, including Carl E. Armerding, F. F. Bruce, Anthony Campolo, Gordon D. Fee, Vernon Grounds, David Allan Hubbard, William J. Hybels, Kenneth S. Kantzer, Richard N. Longenecker, A. Berkeley Mickelsen, Ronald J. Sider, and Lewis B. Smedes.

⁹ For example, in addition to Jewett, *Man as Male and Female*, see Stanley J. Grenz with Denise Muir Kjesbo, *Women in the Church: A Biblical Theology of Women in Ministry* (Downers Grove, IL.: InterVarsity Press, 1995); the traditional view is defended by John Piper and Wayne Grudem, eds., *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood: A Response to Evangelical Feminism* (Wheaton, IL.: Crossway Books, 1991); a book presenting both views is James R. Beck and Craig L. Blomberg, eds.,

Two Views on Women in Ministry (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001).

¹⁰ As in Eph 6:5-8; Col 3:22-25; 1 Pet 2:18-25.

¹¹ See note 4, above.

¹² Exod 21:1-11; Lev 25:39-55.

¹³ Eph 5:22-24; Col 3:18; 1 Pet 3:1-6.

¹⁴ The CBE statement “Men, Women and Biblical Equality” says that their position will “help the Christian home stand against improper use of power and authority by spouses and will protect the home from wife and child abuse that sometimes tragically follows a hierarchical interpretation of the husband’s ‘headship.’”

¹⁵ As in Ps 121:1-2.

¹⁶ CBE Statement.

¹⁷ See note 5, above.

¹⁸ For Phoebe, Rom 16:1-3; for Aquila and Priscilla, Acts 18:2-3, 18-19, 26; 1 Cor 16:19; Rom 16:3-5.

¹⁹ As 1 Cor 14:34-36; 1 Tim 2:9-15. Note also that the apostles were all men, and that it was assumed that elders and deacons would be men (1 Tim 3:2, 4, 8, 12; Tit 1:6).

²⁰ As Acts 1:14; 2:1-4, 17-18; 18:26; 21:9; Rom 16:1-2 (Phoebe called a “deaconess”), 3-7 (including Junias, “outstanding among the apostles”; this name in the Greek may be accented to be either feminine or masculine; the feminine name was very common in Rome, but the masculine form has not been found; see Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* [2nd ed.; United Bible Societies, 1994] 475-76), 12-13, 15; 1 Cor 11:4-5; Phil 4:2-3; Col 4:15.

²¹ Acts 15:19-21.

²² For example, 1 Pet 3:3.

²³ 1 Cor. 11:3-10.

²⁴ Eph 5:21.

EXEGESIS

TWO WOMEN IN THE BOOK OF PROVERBS by Christopher Lensch

INTRODUCTION

The Book of Proverbs is addressed principally to young men. This is evident from the opening verses of the book and from repeated warnings to “my son.”¹ This book, prized by believers old and young, preserves ancient instruction that was codified to help prepare young men for life and leadership. If the lad could learn to honor and obey his father and his mother in the incubator of the home,² he would be well on his way to navigating successfully in the larger arena of society.

While instructions for young women are conspicuously absent, that does not mean that Hebrew society did not encourage wisdom and literacy among its women. On the contrary, wisdom itself is personified as a feminine virtue and is

depicted with feminine pronouns like “she” and “her.”³

Among the young man’s faithful tutors were women. Mention the author of the biblical Proverbs and Solomon readily comes to mind. We should not forget, however, that wise women also are portrayed as counselors. Young men were to give heed to their mothers. A chief counselor of the obscure King Lemuel was his mother. He repeated her teaching as one of the beneficial guides that brought him to responsible leadership.⁴

This oracle is thereupon followed immediately by Proverbs’ descriptive picture of the Bible’s virtuous woman. Once the young man obtained majority, he would need the right kind of woman in his life to be his faithful counselor and companion. Behind her successful husband stands this successful woman of Proverbs 31. His heart safely trusts her to manage his domestic affairs and to do him only good.

God-fearing women who followed this divine pattern were honored in the spiritual community. We hear nothing in Proverbs about their spiritual or domestic training, yet they are regarded as worthy guides for the next generation and as confidants for the godly men who needed them.

WOMEN THAT MOTHER WARNED AGAINST

Besides virtuous women, there are also evil women in the Book of Proverbs. Solomon warns of immoral seductresses who prey on simpletons and fools.

The virtuous woman of Proverbs 31 is a man’s ideal life companion and confidant. Yet she is more: she is the epitome of wisdom, for her worth also is far above rubies.

This is no small issue in the Proverbs. More than half of the first nine chapters issue danger signals against the prostitute and adulteress. It is a major theme in chapters five, six, seven, and nine. The warnings are extensive because of a man's natural vulnerability to sexual temptation. He should never think that he can take fire into his bosom without being burned.⁵

Besides the scandalous misery that stems from every adultery, Proverbs warns of another danger that lurks especially in the city. Besides adulterous women, there are pagan prostitutes. These are agents of idolatry whose godless mission is to plunge lives into the pit of destruction.

THE TWO WOMEN OF PROVERBS 9

After extensive development of the graces and origins of Lady Wisdom in chapter 8, the theme continues in chapter 9. Lady Wisdom appears all the more attractive when compared to "Dame Folly" at the end of this chapter.

Two women—two ways of life, two ways of viewing oneself in God's world, two ways of living and dying. The right life companion can mean the difference between heaven and hell.

At first reading, the clamorous woman of 9:13 appears to be nothing more than an impudent tart, a promiscuous woman who is looking for trouble. She must be understood in the light of the virtuous woman at the beginning of chapter 9, and that woman is no ordinary woman—she is Lady Wisdom. Because of deliberate parallels between the two women, each must be viewed in the light of the other. Consider these similarities:

1. Both have a house⁶
2. Both have a house on a promontory of the city⁷
3. Both invite seekers to their homes⁸
4. Both offer refreshment in their homes⁹
5. Both offer something more than a meal¹⁰

The dramatic difference is in the offer. Lady Wisdom offers life. After a few fleeting "pleasures of sin for a season," Dame Folly, on the other hand, robs men of their lives as she plunges them into the depths of hell.

The identities of these women become clearer when we learn that ancient temples were always built on the high places of a city.¹¹ The house of each woman was a religious shrine. The meals they prepared were religious, sacral offerings. And the personal association with either woman would have life and death consequences.

Dame Folly represents so much more than brazen foolishness. Personified as a cult prostitute, she does not merely coddle the foolish atheist who "has said in his heart, 'There is no God.'"¹² To the de-

light of the devil she fills the atheist's spiritual vacuum and leads him in the worship of worthless idols.¹³

CONCLUSION

Two women—two ways of life, two ways of viewing oneself in God's world, two ways of living and dying. The right life companion can mean the difference between heaven and hell.

The wisdom that is from above and that leads to God is more precious than rubies.¹⁴ The virtuous woman of Proverbs 31 is a man's ideal life companion and confidant. Yet she is more: she is the epitome of wisdom, for her worth also is far above rubies.¹⁵

In the virtuous woman of Proverbs 31, women of all ages have an ideal to strive for. In this marvelous woman, eligible bachelors have a noble companion to seek out. In so doing they will begin to find life.

"He who finds a wife finds a good thing, and obtains favor from the LORD." (Prov 18:22)

"For whoever finds me (wisdom) finds life, and obtains favor from the LORD." (Prov 8:35) 

¹ "The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel... ⁴To give prudence to the simple, To the young man knowledge and discretion" (Prov 1:1,4). Twenty-three random verses in Proverbs are addressed to "my son."

² "My son, hear the instruction of your father, and do not forsake the law of your mother" (Prov 1:8; also 6:20).

³ Granted, wisdom (חכמה) is a femi-

nine word in Hebrew. This, however, does not fully explain the virtue's personification in Proverbs 8. For a fuller treatment of "lady wisdom," see Roland Murphy's *The Tree of Life: An Exploration of Biblical Wisdom Literature*, pp. 133-140, and Bruce Waltke's article "Lady Wisdom as Mediatrix: An Exposition of Proverbs 1:20-33," *Presbyterian: Covenant Seminary Review* 14 (Spring 1988) 1-15.

⁴ "The sayings of King Lemuel—an oracle his mother taught him..." (Prov 31:1).

⁵ Prov 6:27.

⁶ 9:1, 14.

⁷ 9:3, 14.

⁸ 9:4, 16.

⁹ 9:5, 17

¹⁰ 9:11, 18.

¹¹ A prime example outside of Palestine is the Temple of Diana of the Ephesians (Temple of Artemis) on a high bluff over Ephesus.

¹² Psalm 14:1. The source of all wisdom is found in the pivotal verse of Proverbs 9, "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom..." (Prov 9:10). Proverbs' definition of wisdom here and in 1:7 leads us to conclude that the opposite of wisdom is not ignorance, but sinful rebellion.

¹³ Ironically, modern devotees of Sophia (Greek for "wisdom"), in their search for wisdom with a feminine face, have missed the true message of Lady Wisdom. She leads to the reverent fear of Jehovah (Prov 9:10), but feminists have created the goddess Sophia in their own image.

¹⁴ Prov 3:15.

¹⁵ Prov 31:10.

WOMEN IN WORSHIP

by Tito S. Lyro

INTRODUCTION

About two years ago, a lady started visiting the afternoon service at our church. After two or three visits, she started asking some very pointed questions (our afternoon service is very informal and we allow for interaction between the congregation and the pastor). Eventually, the questions became arguments till one day she decided she was going to “preach” in the middle of the pastor’s sermon. Our pastor very graciously, yet bearing the authority of his office, let her know with no uncertain terms, that he would not allow her to make mockery of the worship of God. Later on we found out that she was a hyper-dispensationalist who felt called to rescue the church from the perils of covenant theology.

This story illustrates how misguided one can be concerning the place of women in the worship of God. In addition, this illustration shows the need for clear teaching on the subject of women in worship.

There are three¹ major New Testament passages that deal directly with the place of women in worship. They are 1 Corinthians 11:2-16; 14:33-35; 1 Timothy 2:8-15. Of these passages, 1 Corinthians 14:33-35 is the most germane to the role of women in worship. Even 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 has to be understood in accordance with 1 Corinthians 14.

INTERPRETATION

1 Corinthians 14:33-35, “For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints. Let

your women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak; but they are to be submissive, as the law also says. And if they want to learn something, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is shameful for women to speak in church.”²

There are three major New Testament passages that deal directly with the place of women in worship. They are 1 Corinthians 11:2-16; 14:33-35; 1 Timothy 2:8-15.

D. A. Carson suggests six unsatisfying, as he calls them, interpretations as summary of the position of the Church throughout the centuries.³

1. The demand for silence is absolute. In this case 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 would refer to informal gatherings or small groups and 1 Cor 14 would refer to the formal, corporate worship of the church.
2. Paul contradicted himself and there is nothing we can do about it.
3. What Paul really meant was that the women are to be silent concerning the order of worship.

This passage says nothing about women's submission to men.

4. Only married women are to be silent in the church. Single women can speak as much as they want.
5. There was a problem with the Corinthian women and Paul was so upset with it that he commanded every woman in every Pauline church to be quiet.
6. Paul is not stating his position. He is merely quoting from the letter the Corinthians have sent him.

A BETTER INTERPRETATION

Carson suggests that "Paul has just been requiring that the church in Corinth carefully weigh the prophecies presented to it... Paul's point here, however, is that they [women] may not participate in the oral weighing of such prophecies."⁴ In chapter 11, Paul already said that women also enjoy the temporary gift of prophecy in the church.⁵ The fact that women did partake in prophesying in the apostolic church is also clear from Peter's preaching. In Acts 2, Peter applies the prophecy of the prophet Joel to what was happening in the apostolic church. In verse 18, Peter says, "Your sons and **daughters** shall prophesy," thus, putting his stamp of approval on the ministry of New Testament prophetesses.⁶

Although they could prophesy, Paul says that women cannot participate in the discussion of the meaning of such prophecies. This prohibition was universal (1 Cor 14:33b). In essence, what Paul is saying here is what he later told Timothy, "And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence" (1 Tim 2:12). Women are not

to exercise authority over men and it is in that way that they are to remain silent. It does not mean that they cannot ask questions during Sunday School or sing during the morning service.

According to Paul, the basis for this prohibition is the law (1 Cor 14:34b). There isn't a place in the law (moral, civil, or ceremonial) that forbids women to speak in worship. Thus, some suggested that this phrase is an addition to the text⁷ because it sounds "unlike" Paul to appeal to a law that doesn't exist. However, Paul often uses the word law as a substitute for the entire Old Testament (cf. 1 Cor 14:21). Yet, the question remains: what part of the Old Testament is Paul referring to? Many have said that he is referring to Genesis 3:16. If this is the passage he is referring to, then women are to remain silent because of the Fall. However, it is more probable that Paul is referring to the creation order in Genesis 2:20-24 since he did that in chapter 11 and in 1 Timothy 2. Therefore, the reason why women are to remain silent, or not exercise authority over men, is their place in creation as helpers to men.

**Therefore, the reason
why women are to
remain silent, or not
exercise authority
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This interpretation, rather than complete silence, fits better with the context of 1 Corinthians 11-14. It also puts New Testament prophesying and teaching in proper perspective. While women were allowed to prophesy with men, they were not allowed to teach men, which elevates the place of teaching in the church over prophesying. Lastly, this interpretation shows that there is a place for women to serve the church. However, this would be a topic for another article! 📖

¹ It is obvious that there are other passages that indirectly deal with the roles of men and women in worship such as passages that talk about the role of men and women in general. However, 1 Cor 11:2-16; 14:33-35; 1 Tim 2:8-15 have been recognized throughout history as the key passages in this subject. See John Piper and Wayne Grudem, eds., *Recovering Manhood and Womanhood: A Response to Evangelical Feminism* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1991).

² All Scriptures are from The Holy Bible, New King James Version, © 1982 by Thomas Nelson.

³ D. A. Carson, “‘Silent in the Churches’: On the Role of Women in 1 Corinthians 14:33b-36,” in *Recovering Manhood and Womanhood: A Response to Evangelical Feminism*, 145-151. See also the discussion on the textual problems found in the article above.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 151.

⁵ Some suggest that this prophesying was to be done in small groups or in private. However, the context of 1 Cor 11-14 is the corporate worship of the church. See John W. Robbins, *Scripture Twisting in the Seminaries. Part I:*

Feminism (Jefferson, MD: The Trinity Foundation, 1985).

⁶ Charles Hodge, in his *Commentary on 1 Corinthians* disagrees with this conclusion. When commenting on 11:5, he says, “He is here speaking of the propriety of women speaking in public unveiled, and therefore he says nothing about the propriety of their speaking in public in itself. When that subject comes up, he expresses his judgment in the clearest terms, 14:34,” 208-209. Calvin agrees with Hodge and even calls women’s prophesying in the church a “vice” (*Commentary on 1 Corinthians*, p. 356). However, it seems unlike Paul to spend so much time giving directions on how women should prophesy in the church in chapter 11 and then completely forbid it in chapter 14.

⁷ Mary Evans, *Woman in the Bible* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1983) 95.

“In both men and women a heartfelt sense of call to ministry should never be used to set aside Biblical criteria for particular ministries. Rather, Biblical teaching should remain the authority for testing our subjective discernment of God’s will.”

The Danvers Statement of the Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood

APPLICATION & PERSPECTIVE

“RE-IMAGINING” REVIEW: RADICAL FEMINISM IN SHEEP’S CLOTHING by Christopher Lensch

INTRODUCTION

The post-modern women who gathered at Minneapolis came to re-imagine God, the church, and the family. Seventeen hundred delegates came to the 1993 conference and about half that many in 1998. Primarily they were national leaders from mainline denominations associated with the World Council of Churches. The first Re-Imagining Conference grew out of The World Council of Churches’ “Decade of Solidarity with Women.”

These feminist conferences created a stir in North American Christianity that sent aftershocks even through the normally complacent mainline denominations that sponsored the events. Major underwriters for the first and second events were the Presbyterian Church USA,¹ the United Methodists, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, and the Episcopalians.

ECUMENISM GONE TO THE DEVIL

Sadly, the Re-Imagining movement is not an innocent, feminist adaptation of the Christian message to modern times. It is an assault on the foundations of Christianity in order to displace it with neo-paganism. Official statements were, not surprisingly, filled with blasphemy and irreverence as these misguided women gloried in their own sexuality and

vain wisdom in their attempt to make a goddess in their own image.

The anti-Christian agenda of the conference “. . . praised every imaginable religion or spirituality except orthodox Christianity, and recognized the power of every deity except Jesus Christ.”²

LET’S RE-IMAGINE

When one begins to re-imagine God, then nothing is sacred—everything is on the table for reconstruction. Truth, reality, social institutions, modes of communication all fall prey to the corrosive analysis of post-modern subjectivism.

The feminist expression of this sweeping religious critique was manifested at the two Re-Imagining Conferences. Here are some of their conclusions on religion, God, Jesus, sexuality, and the family:

Religion—The religious and philosophical presuppositions of the Re-Imagining movement are entirely post-modern. There is not absolute truth nor can we know God, except by subjective experience. With the historic Christian understanding of God and revelation summarily dismissed, the use of imagination in religion is unfettered.

The post-modern theological view of man becomes the same as secular post-modern thinkers. One conference observer remarked that “The gospel of Re-Imagining is palatable to our ‘New Age’

assumptions. There is, for example, no sin, no guilt, no shame, no need for salvation, no call to holiness, no need for obedience, no summons to servanthood.”³

God—The idea of God is much more manageable and less threatening if He is depersonalized. The Re-Imagining feminists did not merely “re-imagine” God—

“I don’t think we need a theory of atonement at all. I think Jesus came for life and to show us something about life. . . . I don’t think we need folks hanging on crosses and blood dripping and weird stuff.”

Delores Williams, Union Theological Seminary, New York City

they deconstructed Him! In His place they have substituted a New Age monism.

Monism really is not new, but is an ancient pagan philosophy with elements of eastern religions. To the priestesses of Minneapolis, their god is a universal divine energy that permeates the material world, including a divine humanity.

Part of their worship involved bowing to each other to recognize their mutual divinity, as well as the regular singing of, “O great spirit, earth and wind and sea, you are inside and all around me.” In the 1998 version of the Re-Imagining Conference, this Gnostic spirit was displayed in printed program statements like, “I found God in myself, and I loved her. I loved her fiercely.”

To the exclusion of Jesus and God the Father (too patriarchal sounding), prayers were made to “Our maker, Sophia.” Sophia, of course, is the Greek word for “wisdom” and represents not only the feminization of their god, but reveals their goddess as the fluid, intangible wisdom within people and in the cosmos itself. Self-worship is involved in praying to the intuitive Sophia.

Jesus—At the first conference, Delores Williams of Union Theological Seminary in New York City, created a storm with her proclamation “I don’t think we need a theory of atonement at all. I think Jesus came for life and to show us something about life. . . . I don’t think we need folks hanging on crosses and blood dripping and weird stuff.”⁴

At the 1998 conference, the attack on Jesus’ identity continued: “What does it take for us to break rank with the slave masters’ religion?” asked another speaker, Carter Heyward. Her answer was to re-imagine Jesus Christ. Heyward said that it is a mistake to emphasize “the singularity of God’s presence in Jesus”:

“It was not Jesus’ identity with God, as if Jesus somehow thought of himself as divine . . . Jesus in reality was

not God ... Jesus was human like us, and also, like us, he was infused with God, with sacred spirit, and in that sense was divine, and he had a clue."⁵

Heyward proclaimed the view that all of life is simply an extrusion of divine reality, meaning that all persons and things are essentially divine and no person can claim to be unique, not even Jesus:

"While nobody, even Jesus, is divine in and of him or herself, everybody, like Jesus, is able to god, and I use this [god] as a verb ... That is what we are to do ... to god, and that is what the Jesus story is all about."

Sexuality—At the 1993 conference the delegates applauded 100 of their own who approached the podium to celebrate their sexual identities as lesbians, bisexuals, or trans-sexuals. The head of CLOUT, Melanie Morrison, told the convocation, "We are keenly aware that the world is not safe for lesbian women, and often the least safe place is the church." CLOUT stands for "Christian Lesbians Out Together."

Family—Part of the sexual agenda of the radical feminists in the church is to break down the traditional family. This is because traditional families have traditional roles of father and mother, husband and wife. Mary Hunt is a Roman Catholic lesbian and co-founder of WATER, the "Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics, and Ritual." She proposed to the Re-imagining conference that a free-love friendship be substituted as a

metaphor for family. She explained her meaning:

"... imagine sex among friends as the norm, young people learning how to make friends rather than to date. Imagine valuing genital sexual interaction in terms of whether and how it fosters friendship and pleasure.... Pleasure is our birthright of which we have been robbed in religious patriarchy. It is time to claim it anew with our friends.... Responsible relational sexuality is a human right. I picture friends, not families, basking in the pleasures we deserve because our bodies are holy and our sexuality is part of creation's available riches."⁶

Delores Williams of Union Theological Seminary, notorious for her 1993 rejection of Christ's atonement, said as much in 1998 as the Roman Catholic Hunt: "Women must create a community where people can be free ... a context of the sacred where no sexuality is unclean. In the heart and soul of the deities we are all loved, and it doesn't matter who we're sleeping with."⁷

FEMINIST THEOLOGY

The feminist theology of the Re-Imagining movement stresses experience and the retelling of life stories, especially stories of abuse, repression, and defilement. Feminist story telling is a claimed contribution to the church. Personal stories challenge traditional theology by encouraging it to abandon moral absolutes and by encouraging the church to make its message more relational. This is the only path to "healing and wholeness."

One would expect to find feminine qualities, a nurturing spirit, for example, in feminist theology. Much like the Africanization of Christianity that adapts the message and forms of the faith to local religious traditions, the feminization of Christianity follows suit. Their bastardization of the Lord's Supper is particularly offensive. At both conferences, the ritual that focused the purpose of the Re-Imagining message was the "milk and honey" service. Listen to the liturgical words from the 1998 session:

"This is the body of God for healing the bitterness of the human heart ..." declared Rev. [Sally] Hill as women passed the milk and honey mixture around their tables. "We have seen the power, rising from the earth ... Together we have given birth to a Re-Imagining Community which extends to every corner of our world!"⁸

SANER VOICES

Not all mainline women agree with the radicals. Diane L. Knippers, president of the Institute on Religion and Democracy, was an observer at the 1998 conference. She laments that Re-Imagining is here to stay:

"It's tempting to dismiss Re-Imagining as a kind of side-show. But the movement remains influential in the mainline denominations as the vanguard of feminist theology, the most prominent trend on seminary campuses today. The majority of Re-Imagining Revival speakers had either taught at seminaries or worked for church agencies, and their ideas are seeping in."⁹

"While nobody, even Jesus, is divine in and of him or herself, everybody, like Jesus, is able to god, and I use this [god] as a verb ... That is what we are to do ... to god, and that is what the Jesus story is all about."

Carter Heyward

Another 1998 observer, Sylvia Dooling of "Voices of Orthodox Women" of the PCUSA, concurred. She concluded that Re-Imagining is not a fringe movement; on the contrary, it is growing within the mainline denominations. Re-Imagining has forsaken the rich heritage of biblical Christianity for post-modern relativism and hedonism. Her summary is insightful:

"The gospel of Re-Imagining appears to contain no good news at all, no hope. Its message is that everything has been so 'mucked up' by patriarchal systems that all we women can do is revolt—engage in revolution. Go out into the world and dismantle the boundaries of the historic faith; trouble the waters; spread the story of victimisation (sic) and oppression. Tell everyone how you've been abused, how angry you are, how lonely you are. This is the truth

that will set you free. Get in touch with your body and use it in whatever way you choose—because there is no such thing as morality, nor a summons to holy living. The philosophy of Epicurius abounded, ‘Eat, drink and be merry.’¹⁰

CONCLUSION

The Re-Imagining movement is not going to go away as long as mainline denominations bankroll its conferences and promote its proponents within denominational agencies. A standing committee for “Re-Imagining the Future” has been meeting in the Twin Cities and has announced a 10th anniversary conference in June 2003; many of the same radical feminist speakers are scheduled.¹¹

To re-imagine is to go back to the drawing board. To re-imagine God and Christianity is to paint oneself as the center-piece on that drawing board. While true believers are rightfully angered by the graphic blasphemies of the Re-Imagining movement, God Himself is not moved. In fact, He may be indignantly amused by their doodlings before He brings them to judgment:

“Why do the heathen rage, and the people *imagine* a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed (i.e., Christ), saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision.”¹²

Meanwhile, believers must “...with gentleness [correct] those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them

repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will.”¹³ We may do so with confidence knowing that “...the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; Casting down *imagination*s, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.”¹⁴ 

¹ The PCUSA contributed more than \$66,000 to the 1993 conference, and imposed a head tax of \$22 per member to help underwrite the 1998 conference.

² Editorial by Harold S. Martin, “Paganism at the Re-imagining Conference in Minneapolis (1993)” in *Brethren Revival Fellowship Witness* 29:3 (May/June 1994).

³ Ibid.

⁴ Cited in *Presbyterian Layman* (Jan/Feb 1994) 10.

⁵ <http://www.layman.org/layman/news/reimagining-revival.htm>.

⁶ Cited in *Presbyterian Layman* (Jan/Feb 1994) 10-11.

⁷ http://www.banneroftruth.co.uk/articles/1998/reimagining_revival.htm.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ http://www.banneroftruth.co.uk/articles/1998/reimagining_revival.htm.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Their website is www.reimagining.org.

¹² Ps 2:1-4 (KJV).

¹³ 2 Tim 2:25-26 (NASB).

¹⁴ 2 Cor 10:4-5 (KJV).

and the Son, as he does his work in the world today. When the members of the Trinity submit to other members of the Trinity, they do not demonstrate any inequality. In the heavenly economy, to serve is not to be less. The Father, the Son,

CHRISTIANA ABROAD

by Judith Collins

There are Christian women who, before they can enter what is called “full time service,” are looking for two things: They want to be Scriptural and at the same time to be relevant to their generation. The freedom for women in current society can inspire them even to do things that Christian women before them perhaps never dared venture. Of course, any woman can live for the Lord and let her Christian testimony shine “full-time,” whether she is married or single, whether in a western culture, or in a cross-cultural setting. This article will go a bit further and focus on full-time service for the Christian woman in a cross-cultural society. Let’s call her for our purpose here, Christiana, a Christian missionary.

Perhaps the alien culture in which she finds herself will forbid Christiana from being very active at all, neither secularly nor spiritually, as in the repressive Muslim societies. Perhaps the culture is not Muslim, but is heavily prejudiced against even their own women’s influence, as a means of keeping them in control. This will carry over to Christian national women, even to foreign women missionaries. Perhaps the culture is open enough to women, but Christiana’s supporting constituency at home is rather more restrictive than the culture in which she ministers.

Christiana must learn to adjust to whichever environment the Lord has drawn her. If I am to try to describe what Christiana can do in a cross-cultural setting, I will have more success if I deal with the kind of society where I work,

and that is an African culture traditionally biased against women, but to a degree influenced by western society’s openness to women’s input. I have found it a place of wide open doors for such as me. I bless God for that. If I describe the kind of opportunities that are here in East Africa, it doesn’t mean I have grasped all of them, but they are there. They are avenues, they are doors, they are areas of influence—careers, if you like.

Depending on her gifts, her skills, her training and her goals, Christiana has a variety of openings to choose from. Say she is a teacher. She can enter the public school system, at any level she is trained for, provided the national immigration services allow openings for those levels. If not, there are so many private schools that want skilled foreign teachers. She can lecture at a college or university in her specialty. Even if the university is secular, she is free to speak of the Lord and to counsel students in their free time. There are so many theological schools, and so long as she does not teach theology, she can be assigned all kinds of subjects. This will depend on the men who lead the seminary, and whether she is aware of it or not, it will depend also on her attitude, on her relationships with men, on her skill to work—not attempting to work over them—but with and for them. She has to like men. A friend of mine told me she “hates men.” I was aghast. No wonder they can’t work with her. No wonder they won’t listen to any of her suggestions. No, Christiana needs as her first qualification for the mission field, a respect for, an ease with, a liking for, a willingness to co-operate with, and a desire to learn from men if she is to succeed in a male-dominated society. Let her make a plethora of suggestions, but let her not look for, nor want,

the credit for them when they are effected. There is no place for a boast from Christiana.

In fact, Christiana might be pleasantly surprised to find that the men who become her authoritative leaders on the field assign to her things to do which the Christian men in her church or organization at home would not give her a chance to do. She can be asked (dare I say it?) to preach at some poor remote church where she happens at the time to be visiting, perhaps for a Sunday School teachers' course, and where the pastor is poorly trained. She is under authority of church leaders, let her enjoy the gifts of service offered her, provided they do not go counter to Scripture which forbids her to be a pastor, or in authority in the church. She can be asked to edit magazines, papers, articles, anything, with credit or without. If Christiana is married, of course she is under her husband's authority before that of the national church leaders. I know of instances where the lady missionary here is severely limited as to speaking or making reports in the churches of her home constituency. She finds that she has more freedom in the third-world than she has at home. So be it; that is her limit.

Specialties which Christiana may have will open special doors for her. Skills in music, in the other arts, in communications, in photography, in finance, in any other specialty, will give her an entrance which her more ordinary skills might not have won for her. And since such specialized skills are much more common at home in western lands, she will find many more doors open to her on the mission field than might be available to her at home. Yes, the current fash-

ion of equal opportunities for women in any field within western culture should grant our Christiana lots of chances to do her thing, but we are talking, not of secular culture, but of opportunities in Christian work for Christiana. I think there are more open doors for her to enter for the Lord in a third-world country than in her western homeland. There are women's conferences, youth camps, children's meetings, Sunday School classes, training seminars for teachers, lecturing, And if I hear Christiana say, well, I can do most of those things in America too! Okay, but here's one you can't do in America: learn linguistics and translate the Bible for an unreached people! There are dozens of tribes who don't yet have a Bible in their mother tongue. A final attraction is that hearts seem to be more open in the third-world developing countries; this openness makes it so much easier and fruitful to witness for Christ.

There are all kinds of needs to minister to—more than in a rich western country where such needs are already catered for. There is medical work crying for help: nursing in secular hospitals, in Christian mission hospitals, pioneering in the bush, the jungle, in the cities, in the desert—remote or centralized, primitive peoples, or urban cosmopolitans. Be she a specialist or a general practitioner, she can probably rise faster here than there, simply because the competition with equally qualified personnel is less here. Such medical experts are usually welcomed by the national immigration services, provided there is proof of qualification. And it is so easy to witness and testify of the Lord! I never heard of anyone being fired or forbidden to testify to Christ in medical work here. Of course, she might be quite horrified to see

and hear what passes for medical care and bedside manners here; Christiana will need much patience and perseverance if she is to succeed in medicine in Africa. She cannot be like the American military nurse who simply could not “take” the unsanitary conditions of an African bush mission hospital, but fled homeward.

Some missionaries come here to minister to a certain nationality in the cosmopolitan east African milieu: Asians, Somalis, other Muslims, mid-easterners; look for them, they are probably here! Some come to minister to refugees, that new international “tribe.”

With the rampant advance of AIDS in Africa, a multitude of new avenues has emerged for Christiana: medical care, yes, counseling of AIDS sufferers, care of orphans from AIDS families, and following upon that, ministries to the street children. Ah! The street children! Thousands upon thousands of them; for the whole continent of Africa alone, they number in the millions. Women have come here and started child rescue centers, orphanages, medical care centers, feeding centers. Well, not foreign women alone—many Africans have themselves taken upon themselves to initiate such endeavors. Some succeed, some don’t. The armies of these homeless children and youths will never be accommodated; the vast majority of them will mature to criminality and early death from drug abuse, ill health and crime. Many are the aid organizations in the country where foreign women work, in refugee camps, in relief aid, flying into the Sudan on missions, all manner of work with which I have little contact, but I know it is there.

Christiana with financial skills might be sent to keep records for such organizations, or to help train nationals in the work. Yes, there are accounting schools here to train nationals; but missions and aid organizations need training for their staff for later management in their particular methods.

Beyond these, I think there is no need to keep listing possibilities forever. Let Christiana know that the Lord has a work place for her and her gifts, if she is led abroad. If she finds herself in a developed work, let her see it as serving the Lord with nationals as colleagues. Let her realize from the beginning she is not working primarily for the nationals, but with them; it is a fraternal relationship she should aim for, rather than a paternal one. If she is in a pioneer setting, still, although she does work for a deprived people, still, that other preposition must not be forgotten: “*with*.” Let her work on in the spirit of the Psalmist: “Lord, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty, nor do I deal in things too high for me. Surely I have behaved and quieted myself as a child that is weaned of his mother, my soul is even as a weaned child.”

And Christiana may find that with all she does, she must in addition, learn to do without, as a weaned child learns. And for a woman in a man’s world, for all the opportunities given to her, still, there is much she will have to do without. Paul says to us Christianas, “I say, through the grace given unto me, to every (woman), not to think of (herself) more highly than (she) ought to think.” Let us take that care, and we and our colleagues will be at peace in the work of the Lord, whether here in Africa or a western culture. 

BOOKS

SOME BOOKS ABOUT FEMINISM

by David Davis

Our Father in Heaven: Christian Faith And Inclusive Language For God, by John W. Cooper (Baker, 1998), 301 pages. Cooper critiques the ideological foundations of the movement seeking to make the Scriptures gender inclusive. Contains an insightful analysis of the maternal and feminine references to God in Scripture.

Feminization of the American Culture, by Ann Douglas (out of print but still readily available in used book stores), approximately 400 pages. Douglas, herself a feminist and admittedly not a Christian, traces the feminization of the American church and society at large to the loss of political power experienced by the American clergy in mid-19th century. Douglas shows that when the church lost its strong Calvinist faith, Arminianism and Unitarianism stepped in to fill the void. Various publications.

The Feminist Gospel: The Movement to unite Feminism with the Church, by Mary Kassian (Crossway Books, 1992), 288 pages. A history of feminism and its modern inroads into the church. Highly recommended.

Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood: A Response to Evangelical Feminism, edited by John Piper and Wayne Grudem (Crossway Books, 1991), 566 pages. A collection of essays relating to the entire issue of male-female re-

lationships. Helpful essay by Piper on singleness, and Grudem contributes a masterful essay on the use of *kephale* (head) in Scripture and the ancient world. The essay is still waiting for a competent refutation.

The Church Impotent: The Feminization of Christianity, by Leon J. Podles (Spence Publishing, 1999), 290 pages. The author is a Roman Catholic, but the book is relevant to the entire discussion of why Islam and Judaism are still male dominated while much of the Western church has been taken over with an anti-intellectual feminine version of Christianity, which in the final analysis is no Christianity at all.

The Gender-Neutral Bible Controversy: Mutating the Masculinity of God's Words, by Vern Poythress, and Wayne Grudem (Broadman and Holman Publishers, 2000), 377 pages. The finest book on the subject. Cooper is more accessible but this is a more complete treatment of the debate.

Our next issue will deal with the gender-neutral movement in Bible translation, as illustrated by the controversy surrounding the recently published New Testament of Today's New International Version (TNIV).

NOTES

NOTES

NOTES

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