



A Biblical Theology for Women in Leadership

WARNING!! WARNING!!

- The issue of women in leadership, and specifically pastoral leadership, continues to create significant divisions within the church, and ultimately it creates a significant divide between the church and the larger world (esp. Western societies).
- It is doubtful that this seminar will change someone's mind on the issue. It nevertheless seeks to address some of the deeper realities that lie behind this issue, which make it such a charged debate; and which make it so important.
- There are godly men and women on both sides of this issue. So don't villainize the other.
- We must learn how to hear each other and disagree respectfully

Some Reasons Given for Why Women Should Not be Leaders/Pastors

1. Scripture prohibits it
2. Man was created first; a woman led man into sin
3. Women were created with different gifts (and leadership or pastoring is not one of these gifts)
4. Women are not authoritative enough to lead men (men won't follow them)
5. Women's beauty may distract men from the Gospel message
6. Women are too emotional (and, therefore, less rational)
7. A woman's place is in the home (and women with children will be distracted and their attention divided)
8. Women can still be involved in church activities without being ordained or without preaching/teaching men
9. "Empowering women makes weak men" (MacArthur)
10. The health of the home and the church, the truth of the Bible, and the advance of the gospel is being hindered by this "bad theology" (CBMW)

Interesting Findings:

- A 2017 global study of 11,000 publicly traded companies around the world found that: “companies led by women CEOs or board chairs performed better than those companies led by men (25% higher returns). . . . the data suggests that *women lead more effectively than men*. . . women are more effective because they tend to lead more Creatively and less Reactively.”

Interesting Findings:

- A study in Great Britain of Anglican clergy found that “implicitly or explicitly the selection procedures seem to value feminine personality characteristics in male clergy and to value masculine personality characteristics in female clergy.”

Interesting Findings:

- 51% of Australians are female
- 60% of regular church attenders in Australia are female (in almost every Christian denomination across every age group, globally, women outnumber men in the pews)
- 20% of senior pastors in Australia are female
- 60% of chaplains are female
- 75% of missionaries are married couples. But of the remaining 25% of single missionaries, 80% are female

Interesting Findings:

- Based on a survey done in 1998 of over 5000 women clergy in the USA, they found that: “In Protestant denominations today, women account for about 10 percent of the clergy. Women clergy have greater difficulty in finding employment, they are more likely to be part-time, and even when their experience and qualifications match those of male clergy in the same denomination and in the same positions, they still average 9 percent less in salary.”
- In 2011, the pay gap was down to 7% . . . but . . .
- In 2020, the pay gap increased dramatically to 24%
- And it is even higher for female pastors with children (28%)

Surface Questions that We often Ask:

- What does Scripture say about male and female roles?
- What does Scripture say about women in leadership?
- Did God create women as equals to men or as compatible to men?
- Should women be allowed to teach/lead men?
- Is preaching, teaching, and prophesying the same thing?

Deeper Questions that We Need to Address:

- What kind of God do we believe the Christian God to be?
- How do we understand the authority of Scripture (as a whole and in its various parts)?
- Are some parts of Scripture more authoritative than others?
- With what lens/es do we read Scripture?
- What are the implications of holding a particular view on this subject?

Starting Deep

- What kind of God do we believe the Christian God to be?
 - God is Love (1 John 4:8, 16)



God
is
Love

1 John 4:8

A Loving God

- ◇ God is love
- ◇ God = love
- ◇ = character & actions
(being and doing)
- ◇ Love defines Power
(Sovereignty)

Examples of Love governing Power

- ◇ God's mercy
 - ◇ Genesis 2:16 vs. Genesis 3
 - ◇ Exodus 32:10 vs. 32:14
- ◇ God's presence
 - ◇ In person (Garden, to Abraham, Moses)
 - ◇ Through the Tabernacle and Temple
 - ◇ Through the Prophets, Priests, Judges, Kings
 - ◇ Through Christ
 - ◇ Through the Holy Spirit
 - ◇ Through the Church
- ◇ God's constant pursuit
 - ◇ Psalm 23:6 – “goodness and faithful love will pursue me all the days of my life” (CEV)



What does this mean?

- ◆ God defines what love is . . . WE DO NOT!
 - ◆ Love is every expansive
- ◆ God defines what relationship is . . . WE DO NOT!
 - ◆ Relationships are sacrificial
- ◆ God defines what power is . . . WE DO NOT!
 - ◆ Power is empowering others



Starting Deep

- How do we understand the authority of Scripture (as a whole and in its various parts)?



A Living Word

- ◇ And the *Logos* became flesh and made his home among us (John 1:14)
- ◇ *Logos* = Word = Christ
- ◇ Love came down and dwelt among us
- ◇ Incarnation of Christ
- ◇ Incarnation through the Holy Spirit
- ◇ Incarnation through the Living Word

We don't worship Scripture!

- ◊ We worship the God that is revealed in Scripture
- ◊ Scripture reveals God to us; but God can also be revealed to us through other means





God

Humanity

Inspiration of Scripture



Inspiration of Scripture

-----God-----

-----Humanity-----

Fully Divine and Fully Human

Inspiration of Scripture

- H. Orton Wiley maintained that “the sacred writers were given extraordinary aid without any interference with their personal characteristics or activities. It preserves the scriptural truth that God speaks through human agencies, but insists that the agent is not reduced to a mere passive instrument.”

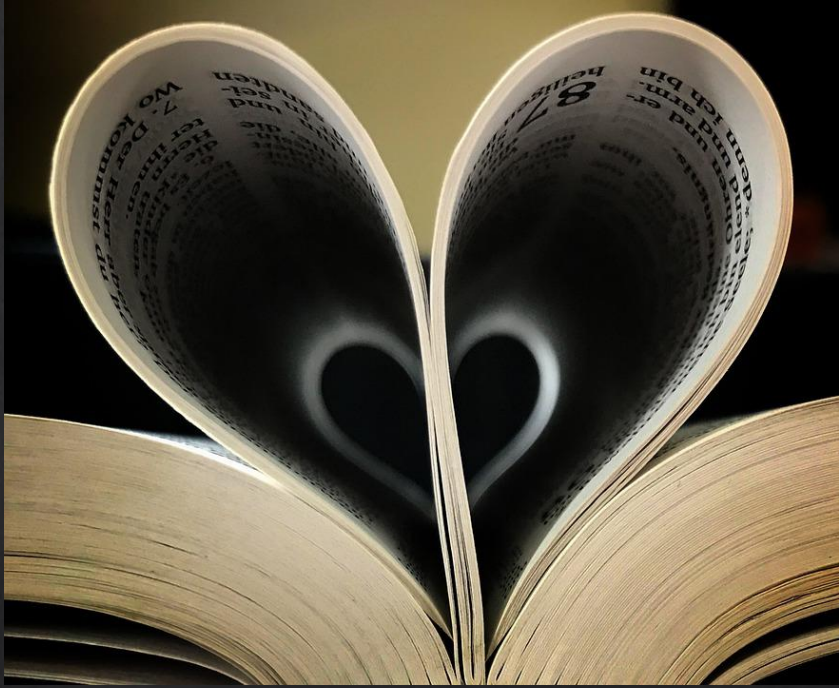
Inspiration of Scripture

- “The Bible is to be interpreted in the light of its witness to God’s work of reconciliation in Christ. The Scriptures, given under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, are nevertheless words of human beings, conditioned by the language, thought forms, and literary fashions of the places and times at which they were written. They reflect views of life, history, and the cosmos which were then current. The church, therefore, has an obligation to approach the Scriptures with literary and historical understanding. As God has spoken the divine word in diverse cultural situations, the church is confident that God will continue to speak through the Scriptures in a changing world and in every form of human culture.” (Presbyterian Church USA)

Starting Deep

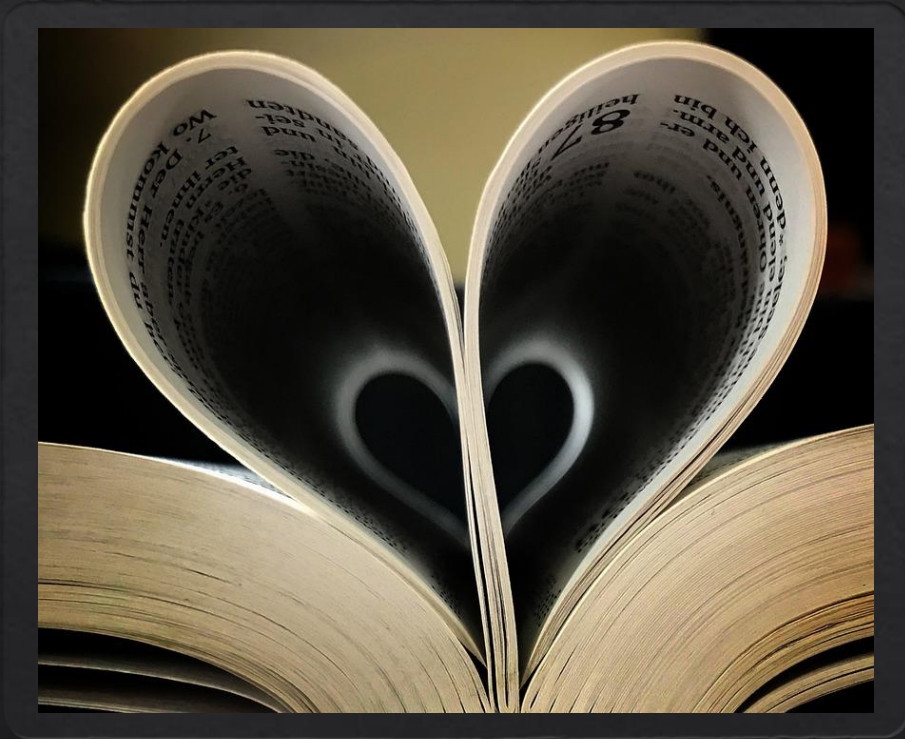
- Are some parts of Scripture more authoritative than others?
- With what lens/es do we read Scripture?

Hermeneutic of Love!



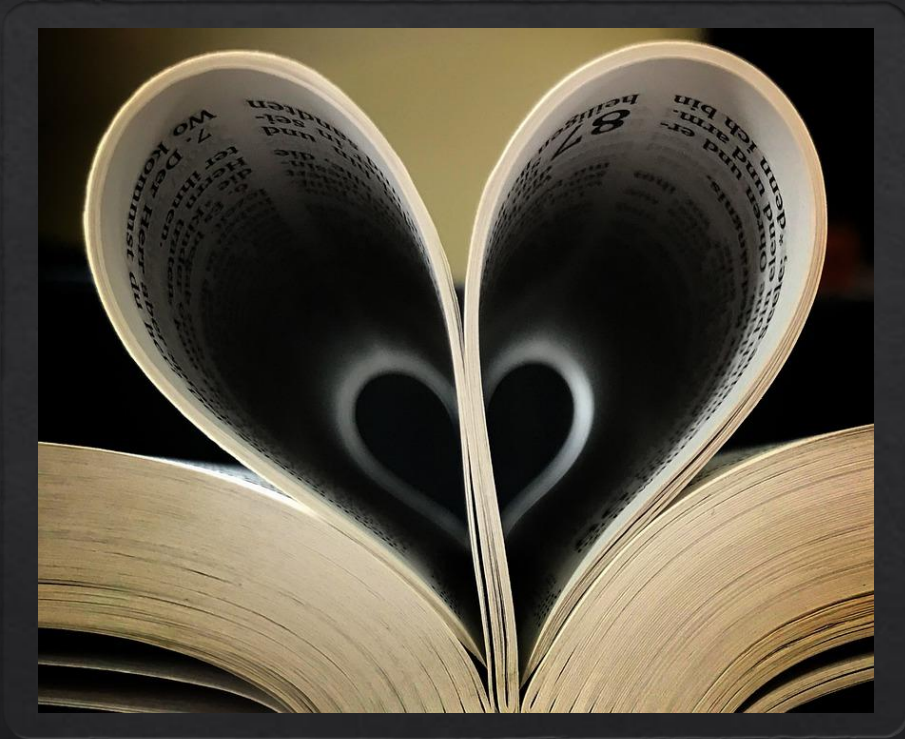
- ◆ The Great Commandment (Matthew 22:37-40)
- ◆ “(Jesus) said to him (the lawyer), *‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’* This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: *‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’* On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”

Hermeneutic of Love!



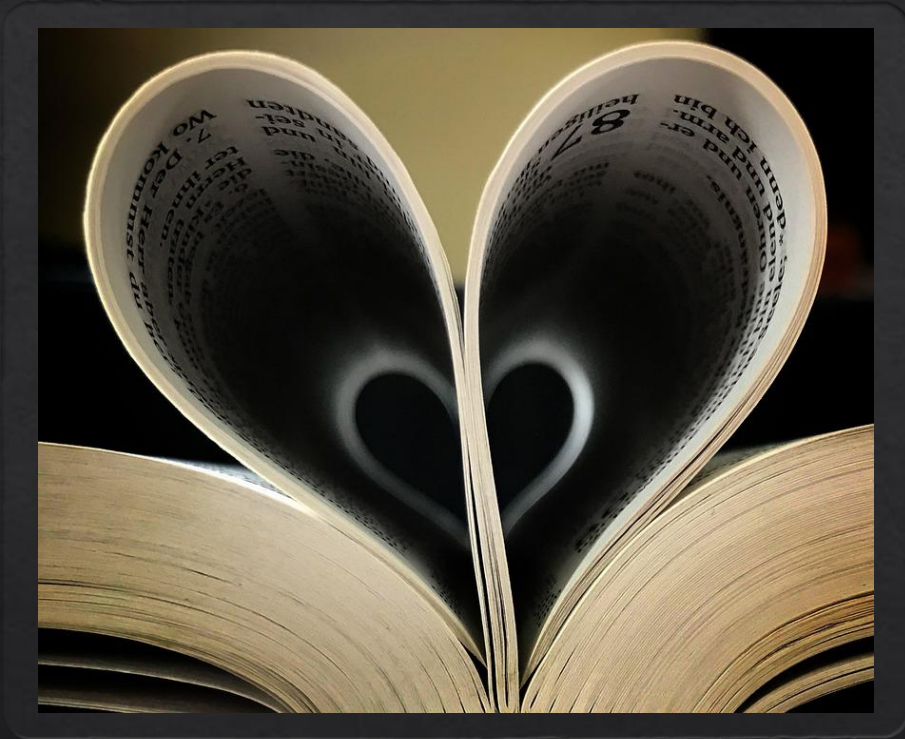
- ◆ Augustine around 400 AD, said:
- ◆ “Whoever, then, thinks that he [or she] understands the Holy Scriptures, or any part of them, but puts such an interpretation upon them as does not tend to build up this twofold love of God and our neighbour, does not yet understand them as he [or she] ought.”

Hermeneutic of Love!



- ◆ Augustine also said:
- ◆ “If, on the other hand, a man [or woman] draws a meaning from [the Scriptures] that may be used for the building up of love, even though he [or she] does not happen upon the precise meaning which the author whom he [or she] reads intended to express in that place ... he [or she] is wholly clear from the charge of deception.”

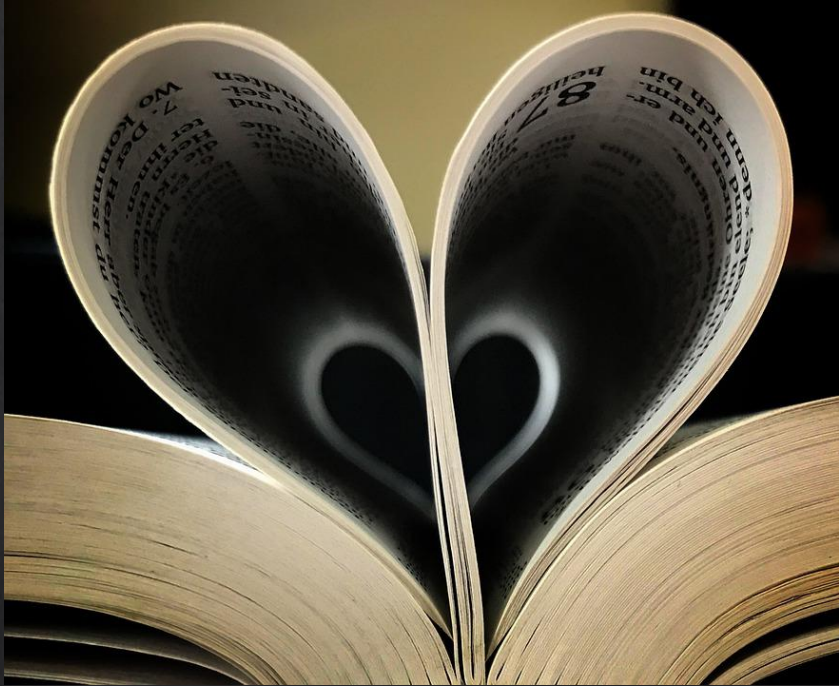
Hermeneutic of Love!



◆ John Wesley wrote:

- ◆ “No Scripture can mean that God is not love, or that his mercy is not over all his works.”
- ◆ In our interpreting of Scripture, we should always fail on the side of love.

Hermeneutic of Love!



- ◆ “A hermeneutic of love necessitates that we read the text to better understand our world and better serve the other. This type of reading requires more of us because it demands that we take the time to listen and understand. We must wrestle with difficult texts and even wrestle with God as we seek to understand how these scriptures reveal God’s loving nature. We must also dialogue with those who read the Bible differently from the way we do in order to understand their perspective and discover what we might learn from them. A hermeneutic of love forces us to read in community, both past and present.” (Fringer & Lane, *Theology of Luck*)

Scripture and Culture

- What role did the historic culture/s play in the audience's understanding of an event, and in the author's writing of Scripture?
- Who gets to decide what things are culturally (or historically) bound (apply only in a certain place and time) and what things are universal commands or timeless principles?
- What role does our own culture/s play in our understanding and interpretation of Scripture?
- How does the Great Commandment (Love God, Love others – Matt 22:37-40) impact our interpretation?

Scripture and Culture

- What happens when we have men interpreting Scripture within a dominate patriarchal culture?
- Is there much chance that they will view women in a different light than what they have been taught by other men and what they believe to be the cultural norm?
- “Simon Peter said to (Jesus), ‘Let Mary leave us, for women are not worthy of life.’ Jesus said, ‘I myself shall lead her in order to make her male, so that she too may become a living spirit resembling you males. For every woman who will make herself male will enter the kingdom of heaven.’” (Gospel of Thomas, Saying 114)

The Spectrum

Taken from Michael Bird, *Bourgeois Babes, Bossy Wives, and Bobby Haircuts: A Case for Gender Equality in Ministry*

Egalitarian Positions		Complementarian Positions	
Christian Feminism	Evangelical Egalitarianism	Moderate Complementarianism	Hierarchical Complementarianism
Women are an oppressed minority who need to experience their own exodus or liberation from bondage and be freed from male domination. Women must be promoted at every opportunity.	Men and women are equals in ministry and women can hold any office in the church. Ministry is based on giftedness and qualification and not gender.	Women are encouraged to engage in any ministry role besides that of elder, teaching elder, or senior pastor. Women can preach under the oversight of a male pastor and can occupy teaching positions in a seminary or parachurch organization.	Women can have important leadership roles in ministries to other women and children, but they are expressly prohibited from any office or function where they would be exercising authority over men, especially teaching and preaching in a church or seminary.

Scripture and Culture

- The God who Accommodates
 - Sacrificial System
 - King
 - Temple
- God works with culture in order to shape it to what it should be. This takes time within a relational model

Interpretation of Scripture

- Canonical Criticism and the intentional ordering of the New Testament
- Many Christians have read the Gospels through a Pauline lens, yet what would happen if we read Paul through a Gospel lens?

Important Scriptures in the Debate – Genesis 1-3

- **Gen 1:26-27** – Then God said, “Let us make *humankind (adam)* in our image, according to our likeness; and *let them have dominion over* the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.” So God created *humankind* in his image, in the image of God *he created them; male and female he created them.*
- **Gen 2:7, 18, 22-23** – then the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being. . . . Then the Lord God said, “*It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner.*” . . . And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, “This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; this one shall be called Woman, for out of Man this one was taken.”

Important Scriptures in the Debate – Genesis 1-3

- **Gen 3:6-7, 12, 16** – So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her and he ate. Then the eyes of both were open . . . The man said (to God), “This woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate.” . . . To the woman he (God) said, “I will greatly increase your pangs in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children, *yet your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you.*”
- (cf. Gen 4:7 – sin is lurking at the door; its *desire* is for you, but you must *rule over* it)

Important Scriptures in the Debate – Genesis 1-3

The real questions that need to be answered of these passages are:

1. Do we have two creation stories or one? If two, then why the differences? If one, then why the differences?
2. Does chapter 1 or chapter 2 take precedent where there are differences? (Dominion/authority is a key issue here)
3. Do either chapters explicitly or implicitly set up a hierarchal structure? Does order automatically mean hierarchy? (Think of the significant biblical theme of the older serving the younger)
4. What does it mean if the hierarchal structure is only present after the fall as part of the curse/consequence of this sin?

Important Scriptures in the Debate – Household Codes

Ephesians 5:21-33 (cf. Colossians 3:18-25; Titus 2:1-10; 1 Peter 2:13—3:7)

²¹ *Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ.* ²² Wives, be subject to your husbands as you are to the Lord. ²³ For the husband is the head of the wife just as Christ is the head of the church, the body of which he is the Savior. ²⁴ Just as the church is subject to Christ, so also wives ought to be, in everything, to their husbands. ²⁵ *Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her,* ²⁶ in order to make her holy by cleansing her with the washing of water by the word, ²⁷ so as to present the church to himself in splendor, without a spot or wrinkle or anything of the kind—yes, so that she may be holy and without blemish. ²⁸ *In the same way, husbands should love their wives as they do their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.* ²⁹ For no one ever hates his own body, but he nourishes and tenderly cares for it, just as Christ does for the church, ³⁰ because we are members of his body. ³¹ “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.” ³² This is a great mystery, and I am applying it to Christ and the church. ³³ *Each of you, however, should love his wife as himself,* and a wife should respect her husband.

Important Scriptures in the Debate – Household Codes

Ephesians 5:21-33 (cf. Colossians 3:18-25; Titus 2:1-10; 1 Peter 2:13—3:7)

- “Household codes reflect the idea that husbands are superior to their wives, parents superior to their children, and masters superior to their slaves. In the Greco-Roman world, maintaining such order was crucial because the house was considered a microcosm of society as a whole and its foundational building block. . . . While these (NT Codes) are working within the givens of Paul’s hierarchical culture, the gospel is transforming what it looks like to fill the role of the ‘superior’ in the relationship. Although these household codes give clear evidence that the gospel story did not blow up the social categories of the ancient world, they do radically transform what it looks like to be ‘first’ in the new creation community: it means to be least, to be servant of all.” (Kirk)
- “My contention is that in the passages we have examined, when rightly understood, patriarchalism is not given a theological grounding as the only possible structure, and that the Gospel itself leads us out of patriarchalism into a different kind of relationship that mirrors more adequately the mutual love and respect that is God’s purpose for his redeemed people.” (Marshall).

Important Scriptures in the Debate – Galatians 3:16-29

- ²⁶ for in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith. ²⁷ As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. ²⁸ *There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.* ²⁹ And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise.
- “Paul isn't arguing for the abolishment of the created order. He isn't arguing for a genderless church where women and men are undifferentiated . . . Instead, what Paul is doing here is countering the Judaizing influences on the Galatian church that sought to privilege Jews and males. . . . All the barriers separating you and keeping you from being one body in love and worship are now done away with in Christ.” (Hill).
- It is interesting to note that the dismantling of inequality between Jew and Gentile and between freeperson and slave, has been almost universally excepted in the church (and world), but the inequality between male and female continues in most churches (and cultures).

Important Scriptures in the Debate – 1 Cor 7

Notice what Paul does affirm in this passage, which would have been very countercultural

- The right of both men and women to marriage (v. 2)
- The obligation of both husband and wife to their “conjugal rights” (v. 3)
- The authority to both husband and wife over the others bodies (v. 4)
- The freedom of both male and female (and widows/widowers) to remain single (vv. 8, 25-28)
- The same instructions to both husbands and wives about divorce, reconciliation, and remarriage (vv. 10-15)
- The recognition that both a believing husband and a believing wife could sanctify their unbelieving spouse and children (v. 14)
- The right for both men and women to focus on “the affairs of the Lord” and to have “unhindered devotion to the Lord” (vv. 32-35)

Important Scriptures in the Debate - 1 Cor 11:2-16

² I commend you because you remember me *in everything and maintain the traditions just as I handed them on to you.* ³ *But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the husband is the head of his wife, and God is the head of Christ.* ⁴ Any man who prays or prophesies with something on his head disgraces his head, ⁵ *but any woman who prays or prophesies with her head unveiled disgraces her head*—it is one and the same thing as having her head shaved. ⁶ For if a woman will not veil herself, then she should cut off her hair; but if it is disgraceful for a woman to have her hair cut off or to be shaved, she should wear a veil. ⁷ *For a man ought not to have his head veiled, since he is the image and reflection (glory) of God; but woman is the reflection (glory) of man.* ⁸ *Indeed, man was not made from woman, but woman from man.* ⁹ *Neither was man created for the sake of woman, but woman for the sake of man.* ¹⁰ For this reason a woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels. ¹¹ Nevertheless, *in the Lord woman is not independent of man or man independent of woman.* ¹² *For just as woman came from man, so man comes through woman; but all things come from God.* ¹³ Judge for yourselves: is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head unveiled? ¹⁴ Does not nature itself teach you that if a man wears long hair, it is degrading to him, ¹⁵ but if a woman has long hair, it is her glory? For her hair is given to her for a covering. ¹⁶ But if anyone is disposed to be contentious—we have no such custom, nor do the churches of God.

Important Scriptures in the Debate - 1 Cor 11:2-16

- Head (*kephalē*) – as “authority over” or as “source” (Payne vs. Cervin)
- What does it mean for God to be the “head” of Christ with these two interpretations of *kephalē*?
- “Despite its obscurities, Paul’s teaching in this passage clearly affirms three things: a balance between (1) respect for a creation mandate to maintain and even celebrate the gender distinctions with which we have been created; (2) a respect for culturally specific approaches to guarding moral and sexual purity; and (3) a commitment to fully integrating women and their gifts into the experience of the worshiping community” (Ciampa and Rosner)
- The debate over prophets and prophecy in general and in 1 Corinthians specifically is important. In 1 Cor 14, prophecy is equated with preaching/teaching and is prized above speaking in tongues because it is for the whole body and not just the individual.
- “If, therefore, the whole church comes together (this is spoken to men and women both) . . . if all prophesy, an unbeliever or outsider who enters is reprovved by all and called to account by all. . . For you can all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all be encouraged” (1 Cor 14:23-24, 31)

Important Scriptures in the Debate – 1 Cor 14:33b-35

- (As in all the churches of the saints, ³⁴ women should be silent in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak, but should be subordinate, as the law also says. ³⁵ If there is anything they desire to know, let them ask their husbands at home. For it is shameful for a woman to speak in church. ³⁶ Or did the word of God originate with you? Or are you the only ones it has reached?)
- What if they don't have a husband? (see instructions in 1 Cor 7)?
- Why not take this more literally?
- Interpolation??? Unlikely based on textual evidence (see MacGregor/contra Payne)
- Contextual evidence may give credence to the idea that it was not Paul's words but the Corinthians – It is a quotation-refutation device that Paul uses regularly in 1 Corinthians (1:13; 6:16; 9:6, 8, 10; 11:22) (Peppiatt)

Important Scriptures in the Debate – 1 Tim 2:8-15

- ⁸I desire, then, that in every place the men should pray, lifting up holy hands without anger or argument; ⁹ also that the women should dress themselves modestly and decently in suitable clothing, not with their hair braided, or with gold, pearls, or expensive clothes, ¹⁰ but with good works, as is proper for women who profess reverence for God. ¹¹ *Let a woman learn in silence with full submission.* ¹² *I permit no woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she is to keep silent.* ¹³ *For Adam was formed first, then Eve;* ¹⁴ *and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor.* ¹⁵ *Yet she will be saved through childbearing, provided they continue in faith and love and holiness, with modesty.*

Important Scriptures in the Debate – 1 Tim 2:8-15

- Notice that instruction is also given to men, who appear to have been angry and argumentative (in worship?)
- The situation in Ephesus and across many of the major Roman cities at this time:
 - Many Roman writers speak about “the new Roman woman” who was educated and starting to be a problem from the men.
 - She was “expressing her newfound freedoms in immodest, sexually provocative, and extravagant dress.”
 - She was “noted for snatching the podium for public addresses and teaching”
 - “especially in Ephesus . . . was the Artemis religious fertility cult. This worship cult not only favored the freedom of women in public religion as did the new Roman woman movement . . . Part of their worship was the elimination of normal sexual relations; these women despised marriage and childbearing and childrearing” (McKnight)

Important Scriptures in the Debate – 1 Tim 2:8-15

- There appears to be some connection with what is going on in the church in Ephesus, especially with young widows – See 1 Tim 5:6-16
 - These young widows appear to have been sexually promiscuous (vv. 11-12)
 - And have become idle and started gossiping (v. 13)
 - And possibly have become a burden on the time and resources of the church that could have been used to help those in more need (v. 16)
- Could it be that Paul's words in 1 Tim 2:8-15 are more specifically targeted at these women? Especially 2:15 with 5:14

Key OT Women - Miriam

- Older sister of Moses and Aaron
- Exod 15:2 – she is called a prophet/prophetess
- Micah 6:4 – “For I brought you up from the land of Egypt, and redeemed you from the house of slavery; and I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam.”
- Talmud (2nd Century AD) - refers to her, along with Moses and Aaron, as the “three good sustainers” who through their agency God gave the gifts of “the well of water” (Miriam), “the pillar of cloud” (Aaron), and “the manna” (Moses)



Key OT Women - Deborah

- Judges 4:4 – a prophet/prophetess and judge (leader)
- Deborah summoned Barak and spoke for God – “The Lord, the God of Israel commands you . . .” (v. 6)
- Deborah went to war with Barak because he would not go without her – “If you will go with me, I will go; but if you will not go with me, I will not go.” (v. 8)
- Correctly prophesizes that Jael (another woman) would defeat Sisera (v. 9)
- Under her leadership, the land had rest for 40 years (Judges 5:31)
- Jewish Midrashic said she sat under the Palm (Judges 4:5) to teach Torah in public. And it compares Deborah’s prophetic ability to Samuel (the great prophet).



Key OT Women - Huldah

- She was a prophet/prophetess (2 Kings 22:14; 2 Chron 34:22)
- King Josiah sought answers from the Lord concerning the “book of the law” from Huldah (2 Kings 22:13) and she spoke confidently for the Lord (vv. 15-20), and her prophecy came to fruition.
- Important to highlight that king Josiah had access to Jeremiah, Zephaniah, Nahum, and Habakkuk, who were all living and prophesying at this time, but he chose Huldah.
- “Huldah is not chosen because no men were available; she is chosen because she is truly exceptional among the prophets” (McKnight).



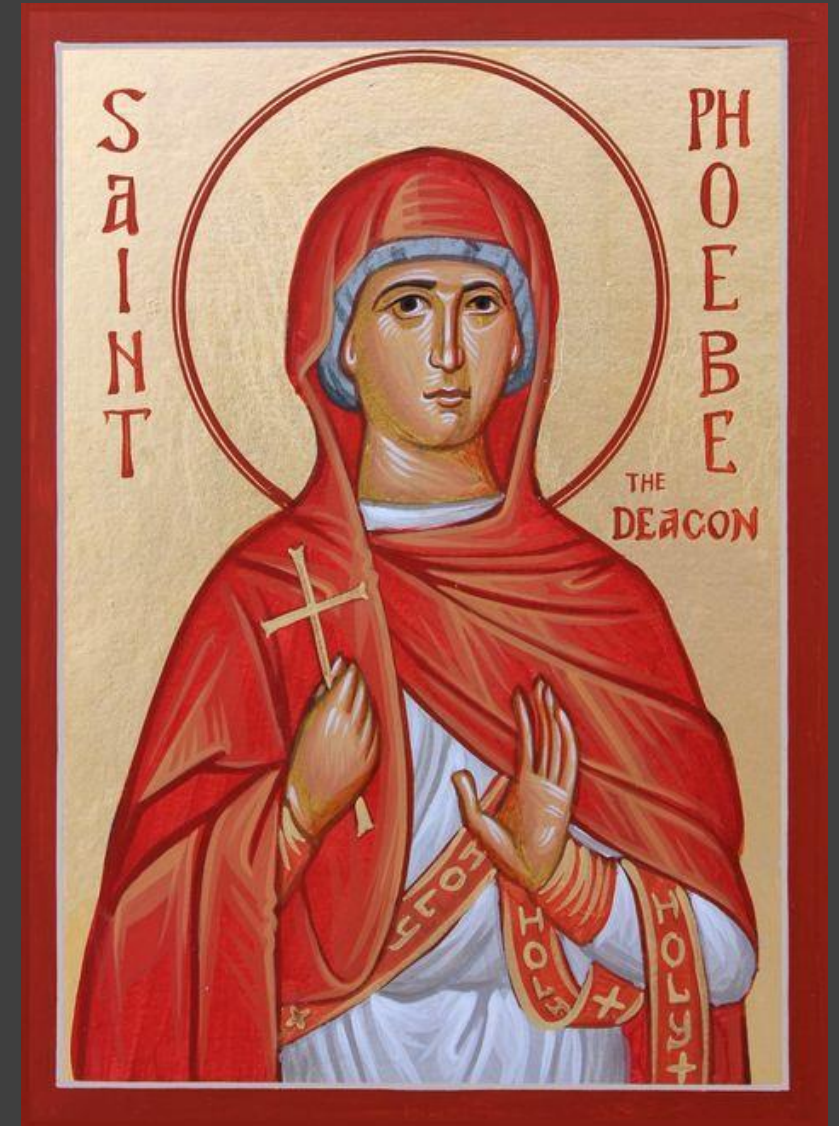
Key NT Women – Samaritan Women at the Well

- John 4:28-30 – She appears to be an evangelist, telling people about Jesus.
- This woman vs. the disciples in the story – Jesus tells the disciples “I sent you to reap that for which you did not labour. Others have laboured, and you have entered into their labour” (v. 38).
- Then immediately the woman returns and we are told that “Many Samaritans from that city believed in him (Jesus) because of the woman’s testimony” (v. 39).



Key NT Women - Phoebe

- Romans 16:1-2 – She was a deacon of the church in Cenchreae; benefactor of Paul
- Deacon (*diakonos* = servant) – may not have been a formal ecclesial role yet. (cf. 1 Tim 3:11 that seems to allow for women deacons; and cf. Phil 1:1, 4:2-3)
- Letter carriers in the Greco-Roman world
- “My conclusion is that Paul’s commendation of Deacon Phoebe, her position as his benefactor, and her role as both a letter carrier and his representative to the Roman churches indicates that women were part of the didactic life of the church, and Paul specifically encouraged it.” (Bird)
- It should be noted that Paul references an additional 9 women in Rom 16.



Key NT Women - Priscilla

- Priscilla (or Prisca) was a *co-worker* of Paul's with her husband Aquila, "who risked their necks for [Paul's] life" (Rom 16:3-4)
- "Co-worker" is used sparingly by Paul and of some very prominent people. E.g., Timothy (1 Thess 3:2); Titus (2 Cor 8:23); *Euodia & Syntyche*, (Phil 4:2-3); (John) Mark (Col 4:10-11); Luke (Phlm 24)
- Priscilla and Aquila had a church in their house (1 Cor 16:19; Rom 16:5; cf. 2 Tim 4:19)
- Priscilla and Aquila, like Paul, were tentmakers (Acts 18:3)
- Met Apollos in Ephesus, who was preaching "the Way of the Lord" in the synagogue and "*they* took him aside and explained the Way of God to him more accurately" (Acts 18:26)



Key NT Women - Junia

- Rom 16:7 – “Greek Andronicus and Junia . . . they are prominent among the apostles”
- Junia not Junias – Some have tried to say this had to be a reference to a male because of being called an apostle.
- Others have tried to argue it should be translated “esteemed by the apostles.” But this also has been disproved by the Greek grammar.
- Important to note that it is “Junia” in the oldest Greek manuscripts of Romans that we have (e.g., P46 – dated 175-225)
- Also, John Chrysostom (4th century) wrote of Junia – “Oh, how great is the devotion of this woman, that she should be counted worthy even to be called an apostle.”
- Paul only uses this title for a limited group, himself (multiple times) and 6 others: James, Peter (Gal 1:18-19), and Barnabas (1 Cor 9:5-6); Epaphroditus (Phil 2:25); and Andronicus and Junia (Rom 16:7).



Why so few women highlighted in Scripture?

- The real question is how these few women ever got positions of power and how (and why) they made it in the biblical stories in such a patriarchal culture?

Going Deeper:

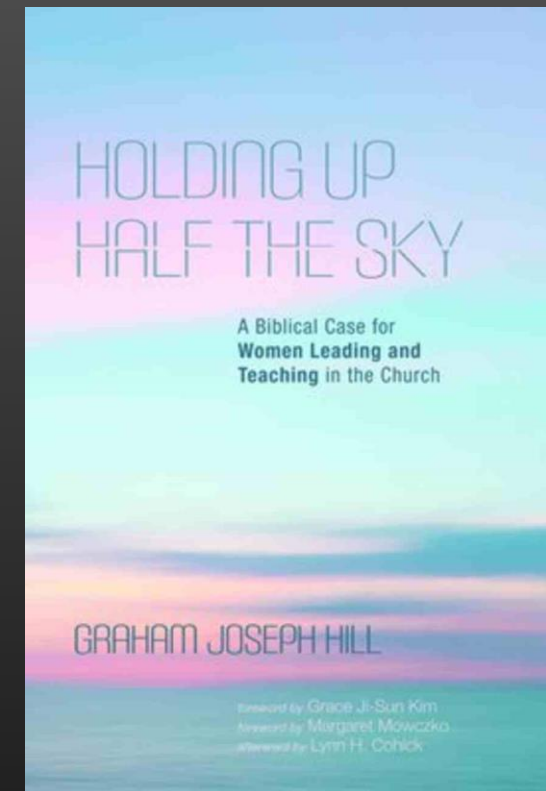
- What are the implications of holding a particular view on this subject?

Catherine Booth

“Now, if the word of God forbids female ministry, we would ask how it happens that so many of the most devoted handmaidens of the Lord have felt themselves constrained by the Holy Ghost to exercise it? Surely there must be some mistake somewhere, for the word and the Spirit cannot contradict each other. Either the word does not condemn women preaching, or these confessedly holy women have been deceived. . . . Paul refers to the *fruits* of his labours as evidence of his Divine commission (1 Cor. ix. 20). . . . If this criterion be allowed to settle the question respecting woman’s call to preach, we have no fear as to the result.”

What can (must) we do?

1. Get real about empowering female leaders
2. Enable women to sit at the table
3. Help women see women at the table
4. Transform male-dominated cultures
5. Model and esteem real professional and personal partnerships
6. Build cultures where women and men can equally succeed
7. Stop talking and start listening
8. Honor all women
9. Examine your beliefs and practices
10. Embrace reciprocal mentoring
11. Get proactive about women speakers
12. Ask what you're willing to give up (and gain)
13. Profile female Christian leaders
14. pray with women
15. make honoring women and girls a lifestyle and an institutional value



A Ministry of Reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5)

◆ **2 Cor 5:**¹⁴ For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died.¹⁵ And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.¹⁶ So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer.¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!¹⁸ All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation:¹⁹ that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.²⁰ We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.²¹ God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

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Questions & Conversation

