

Sermon notes/Follow-up

Rich Lusk

“Men and Women in the Plan of God” (1 Cor. 11:2-16)

The teaching topic from the last few weeks is so massive, even lengthy sermons combined with follow-up notes can hardly scratch the surface. I have taught on marriage and male/female roles before and do not want to duplicate that material here, so consider these notes a further supplement to my previous sermons on marriage as well as the recent sermons on 1 Cor. 11.

According to 1 Cor. 11, the man is [a] the head of his wife and is [b] dependent on his wife. Because of our fallenness, men rebel each of these aspects of manhood.

Some men turn headship into tyranny; others turn dependence into abdication. Cain is an example of a man who becomes a tyrant. Some manifestations of the modern patriarchy movement do the same. This is the classic form of male chauvinism. Men come to view themselves as superior to women. They function as autocrats and dictators, in some cases not only bossing around their wives, but even trying to exercise control over their grown sons. But true manhood is not found in forcing others to serve you, but in serving others sacrificially. The masculine mandate is to take loving responsibility for those under your headship.

But other men abdicate the way Adam did in the Garden of Eden. In Gen. 3:6, we find the man was with his wife when she was deceived by the serpent. He saw what was happening. He saw her under attack. But he stood by and did nothing. Maybe he just shrugged his shoulders with his hands in his pockets (ok, so Adam didn't have pockets or even pants...you get the point). Maybe he kept channel surfing (ok, so Adam didn't have a tv or a remote...you get the point). The truth is, men have been abdicating ever since Adam did so in the garden, passively making excuses and blaming others for everything around them that goes wrong.

My guess is that Adam stood by and watched the woman fall for the lies of the serpent, thinking to himself, “If she eats and dies, I've got more ribs....God can just make me another one.” He was selfish, passive, and wimpy. Anything but a true man. Again, the masculine mandate is to take loving and sacrificial responsibility for others. This includes protection and provision.

After Adam sinned, we see what his sin did to him: It made him an immature, self-centered, foolish brat. He tried to hide from God, like a little child playing a game of hide-and-seek with an adult. When God confronted him, he balked. Instead of taking responsibility for his failure he actually blamed the woman! And he even implicated God when he said “it was the woman YOU gave me”! When Adam sinned, he lost more than his innocence; he lost his true manhood. Only in Christ can true masculinity be restored.

Likewise, according to 1 Cor. 11, the woman is [a] the glory of her husband and is [b] dependent on her husband. Like men, woman rebel against both of these dimensions of femininity. Some women rebel against the glory role. Just like some young men have a “failure to launch” and refuse to grow up and enter into the sacrificial responsibilities of mature manhood, so the same thing happens to some women. Instead of growing into mature femininity, they think glory is found in looking 19 forever. They focus on the wrong kind of glory, thinking outer glory is greater than inner glory. They’re 36, going on 16. Their models of femininity are Barbie dolls and Disney princesses. They’re ditzy, naïve, and shallow. They refuse to embrace the glories of responsible motherhood. Instead of learning to understand and respect men, they learn to manipulate them with their emotions, especially their tears. They end up using men to get what (they think) they want. Instead of being helpful partners to their husbands, developing their gifts and using their abilities to support him and build up their homes, they think their role is just to stand there and look pretty.

Eve was the first woman to go this direction. When the serpent tempted her, she became the first ditz, falling naively for the obvious lies of the serpent. That’s a caricature of true femininity. And it isn’t ultimately attractive. A real man is not going to be threatened by a smart, educated, capable woman; indeed, he’s going to want just such a woman by his side, much more than a ditz or airhead. Real men want real women in their lives, not hollow imitations.

Consider how far we have moved from the biblical view: In past generations, younger women wanted to learn from the older women, per Titus 2. They wanted to soak up wisdom from more experienced women so they could better love their husbands and children, and more fully cultivate their homemaking skills. But now the older women are trying to become like the younger women. And the result is a net loss of glory. The woman is certainly to pay attention to her outward beauty; she can’t just “let herself go.” But inward beauty is more valuable, more lasting, more enduring, more glorious – and thus demands even greater attention. What does it mean for a woman to be the glory of her husband? It means she is his helper and completer, the builder of the home, and the nurturer of their children. She may do a million other things, but these tasks constitute her core role.

But there are also women who rebel against their dependence on men. This is what many strains of feminism and the “girl power” movement have been about. These are women who make the masculine standard of success in the world of business, politics, etc. their standard of meaning and value. They believe a woman must find her worth on “equal terms” with a man. Women who depend on men by staying at home to raise children are considered weaklings and parasites.

Such women are deeply cynical about men – and in many cases, with good reason, given their experiences. Indeed, feminine cynicism about men traces all the back to the Garden of Eden, when Adam let Eve down. Feminists have usually experienced great pain from men who have abused them or abandoned them, and so they have trouble trusting men. But when women try to do the “independence thing” they end up getting hurt. Either their relationships with men become deeply dysfunctional, or they get consumed by bitterness.

What’s to be done? There must be a revolution in the way men view and treat women. When we no longer have shelters for battered women, we will probably not have any more feminists....there will be no more need. Think about that: Why do we need shelters for women who are abused by men? What does that say about the men in our society? Men are supposed to protect women....but when women need protection from men, things have gone haywire.

Genesis 2 contains many helpful insights into masculinity and femininity, many of which stand in the background of 1 Cor. 11:2ff. In Genesis 2, the man is given [a] work and [b] a woman. The man is given a job to do and a woman to care for. But note he is given work first. Work becomes the training ground in which a man proves his worth to the woman. If a man cannot be trusted with a job, why should God entrust him with one of his daughters? Besides that, men need to learn that if their jobs are hard, marriage is even harder!

Men know they were made for work. They identify deeply with their work. The first question one man will ask another (and rightly so!) is, “What do you do?” Men were made to cultivate the creation, to transform and develop it, turning the garden into a city. Without productive work, a (fallen) man will tend to cultivate all the wrong things. He becomes more oriented to destruction than dominion. A lot of men struggle with laziness, which is a denial of their manhood. Especially in our entitlement driven culture, men need to learn a work ethic. Many young men are clueless about how to build a career and want a well-paid job to simply fall into their laps. Here’s a news flash for young men: Work is supposed to be hard! You will probably feel overworked and underpaid for a lot of your working life. Everyone has aspects of their job they don’t like. Work should be fulfilling, but in a fallen world, jobs aren’t always going to make us feel great all the time. Just deal with it...and don’t complain.

It’s always easier for a man to find a woman if he first finds a job. That was the pattern for Adam, and it’s still the best plan today. That does not mean a man needs to have actually entered his field and have a huge savings account; after all, some lines of work require up to a decade of training and it may not be wise to wait until you’re in your thirties to begin pursuing a wife. But a man needs to at least have a viable plan, a clear cut pathway to a career that will provide for his family. A real woman wants a man who can provide for her, a man who has proved his maturity.

She wants a man who will get to know her in the fullest sense, not just use her for pleasure or be a second mother to him. Real sex (to use Lauren Winner's term) requires a real man, a real woman, and a real marriage covenant. Real sex is as spiritual as it is physical; the man and his wife offer their bodies as living sacrifices to one another, forming a one flesh bond.

Men must realize that seeking out and serving a woman requires patience. Adam had to wait; you may have to wait. Glory takes time. Glory comes at the end. Many men don't wait; instead they sleep around as much as can and put off "settling down" as long as they can. But there's no glory there. Premarital sex is an attempt to seize glory ahead of time but results in shame rather than glory. Or, some men give into *Maxim* magazine and porn use. But again, there's no glory there, just soul-crippling shame. The problem with porn is that it feeds the flesh, not the soul. Indeed, it shrivels the soul and makes a man more and more infantile and weak. It's toxic, filling a man with shame and sapping his vitality. It's humiliating and emasculating. It's crippling, just like addictive drug use. Waiting on a real woman – and developing yourself so that you are ready to provide for her and know her when you finally find her – takes patience, self-control, and maturity. But the end is indeed glorious: A man and his wife know each other and there is no shame – only glory! Our culture cannot imagine sex without shame. The "F-word" is just a word for shameful sex (which is all sex outside a marriage bond). But when we do things God's way, we find glory.

To say the woman is the man's helper is not at all degrading. It does not mean she is inferior in any way. After all, God is called our "Helper" in Scripture. If I help my son with his math homework, it does not mean I am inferior to him. Just the opposite, in fact. I can only help from a position of strength and knowledge. The helper aids the helpee because the helper has something the helpee lacks. If Adam didn't need help, he would have been just fine alone. But he lacked something that only a wife could provide.

Men, if women in our culture are confused about the glory of femininity, whose fault is that? This is a problem that begins with us, men, because we are the leaders, for better or worse. If women do not grasp the glories of their roles, it is our fault. We have failed to practice true masculinity and have mistreated our women. We must refuse to pressure them in negative ways; we must protect them from pressures that arise from other sources that would make them feel insignificant if they simply stayed home to raise children. Instead, we must praise them for taking on and fulfilling the most glorious roles in all of creation.

Should women pursue education? If a woman is pursuing education just as a way of hedging her bets, so she'll have a fall-back plan if and when her husband abandons her, there's a problem. The bedrock of trust on which a healthy marriage is built has already cracked; divorce is treated as a viable and maybe inevitable, even if undesirable, outcome. If a woman pursues education so she won't have to depend on her husband, or so she can pursue a career and put her kids in daycare, or so her family can have the biggest and best of everything even if it means neglecting the kids, there's a problem. She is treating education and career as an alternative to mothering rather than an enhancement of her mothering. But if a woman pursues education so that she can [a] provide for herself should she remain single; and [b] better serve her household as a homemaker if she gets married (with perhaps a career on the side, provided it does not interfere with giving her husband support and her children nurture), then a woman should most certainly pursue education. Scripture does not expect women to bury their talents in the ground; that is never God's way. A woman should develop and use her talents to the fullest in the roles God calls her to. And her core role is wife/mother/homemaker. Other roles are peripheral.

It's been pointed out that if we keep our daughters from getting a full education, we are dooming our grandsons to ignorance. I truly believe young women need to be encouraged to develop their intellectual gifts and capacities. Their knowledge will come in handy in all kinds of ways and make them better helpers to their husbands and mothers to their children. Insofar as they get vocational training, they should opt for more mother-friendly professions and avoid racking up major debt that will take years and years in the workforce to pay off. A woman's educational and vocational pursuits should serve motherhood, not the other way around.

Sometimes feminism creeps into conservative circles without even being noticed. One anecdote from Sally Gallagher's *Evangelical Identity and Gendered Family Life* is very telling. Gallagher interviewed various conservative, evangelical women to get their thoughts on husband/wife roles. A 35-year old homeschooling mom described her husband as the spiritual leader of their home and the primary provider. She said she was in favor of the headship/submission pattern and believes women should devote themselves to raising children at home. And yet, when asked about Promise Keepers, this is how she responded: "Yeah. I had Mike go this year. I kind of sent him...I said, 'I'm not sending you to get fixed in any area. I just want you to be encouraged...'" Catch that? She says she *sent* her husband to PK! Like she was sending a little boy off to summer camp. She doesn't even realize it, but she's talking like a feminist. Now, who knows what her husband is like. Maybe he's failing in his roles and she's just trying to help him get back on track. But evangelical women in previous generations would be shocked to hear one of their own speak about her husband this way.

The woman as glory of the man needs more attention. Men who are harsh with their wives are like kings who stomp on their crowns. Fathers must also insist that their sons learn to treat their mom as the glory of the home – with respect and honor.

A huge part of this is verbal praise (Prov. 31:30). Women feed off of spoken praise by their husbands. Many women seek meaning and significance outside the home precisely because their husbands do not express appreciation for what they do in the home.

Christina Hoff Sommers, from her article, "Take Back Feminism" (http://www.cblpi.org/ftp/Policy%20Express/10-1_Sommers_TakeBackFeminism.pdf) has an interesting take on the present state of the feminist movement, and how it isn't meeting the needs of most women:

But mainstream American women never fully embraced the egalitarian program of Friedan and Steinem and other leaders of the Second Wave. Rather, they adopted a compromise between the egalitarian and social traditions.

This compromise was once eloquently (and presciently) described by Clare Boothe Luce who in her heyday in the 1940s was a popular playwright and a member of the United States Congress. She wrote these words about women at a time when feminism's Second Wave was still more than twenty years away. Her views are not celebrated during women's history month, but they capture the style of feminism that seems to resonate with women everywhere:

"It is time to leave the question of the role of women in society up to Mother Nature—a difficult lady to fool. You have only to give women the same opportunities as men, and you will soon find out what is or is not in their nature. What is in women's nature to do they will do, and you won't be able to stop them. But you will also find, and so will they, that what is not in their nature, even if they are given every opportunity, they will not do, and you won't be able to make them do it."

Camille Paglia, the brilliant literary critic and dissident feminist, once told me she found Luce's words awe-inspiring. So do I. Luce takes the best of both egalitarian and social feminism. She is careful to say that women's nature can only be made known in conditions of freedom and opportunity. But, she does not expect that, with equal opportunity, women will turn out to be interchangeable with men.

The Luce quote is exactly right. Given freedom of opportunity, most women will still opt for a home-centered life, even if a career is part of the mix. Women are just more naturally inclined to nurture and find more fulfillment in nurturing roles in the home than anywhere. Sure, some women are not that way. They remain single and pursue a career. Other women have been programmed by their parents, educators, etc., to seek significance outside the home even if they do get married and have children. But as Luce said, mother nature is hard to fool. And nature keeps pressing women back to home. That's why no society has ever been truly egalitarian, nor can any society be. Egalitarianism is unnatural.

The famous sociologist, Margret Meade, once said, "Women are happiest, not when given position and power, but when the creative contributions of the maternal role are upheld...when being a wife and mother are viewed as important and respectable." Let's give mothers the praise they deserve!

What we have witnessed over the last generation is that feminism/egalitarianism is so unnatural (in the sense of being contrary to God's creation design and contrary to what men and women, deep down, really want) that it can only be sustained for any length of time with artificial supports. And of course, those supports come through the agency of the welfare/socialist state. Our family problems and economic problems are all tied together and mixed up with each other. The reason our politicians cannot balance the budget is because they are trying to fund a state that is taking the place of both mom (as nurturer of children) and dad (as breadwinner/provider) – and that's a pretty expensive proposition. The house of cards will eventually have to come down. The moral capital is being depleted as fast as the financial capital....in fact, I guess you could say we've already got quite a moral deficit going.

Studies show egalitarian (or roleless) marriages are less happy and more likely to end in divorce. Women almost always end up the raw end of the deal, still carrying heavier burdens than the man at home, but also expected to produce outside the home. I firmly believe that without the statist apparatus propping up the egalitarian ideal (e.g., subsidized daycare), the egalitarian model would quickly collapse.

Some book recommendations:

Rocking the Roles by Robert Lewis and William Hendriks. While I don't quite think the sharp antithesis these writers draw between the "traditional" marriage and biblical marriage is helpful, I do see their point. And the case they build for the biblical model of marriage as a win/win situation for husband and wife is very compelling. The authors demonstrate that roleless marriages lead to chaos and dissatisfaction; every institution must have organization or it cannot succeed. We need to know who is supposed to do what and why. Of course, some people rebel against the very idea of "roles" at least for women since they are regarded as

confining. But as Lewis and Hendriks point out, roles have to do with responsibility, not rank. And the Scripture gives us broad roles, leaving the details for each couple to figure out on their own, using sanctified common sense. Properly understood, the marital roles are symbiotic and complementary.

One of the best features of *Rocking the Roles* is its discussion of working women, especially its critique of those women who choose career as an *alternative* to mothering (see, e.g. the helpful list of questions on p. 202f and strategies for couples on p. 203f). Without being legalistic, and while recognizing the complexities of life (e.g., single moms, financial disasters, etc.), the book makes a good case that a woman's rightful "core role" is anchored to the home if she is married with children. The issue is not whether or not a woman works outside the home; the issue is always whether or not she is fulfilling her primary role inside the home. Women need to understand how invaluable they are to their husbands when they focus on homemaking; each wife is a "custom-made" helper to her husband. Too many overstressed and overworked wives have become "half-mates" rather than "help-mates." The couples' sex life, and virtually every other area of their relationship suffers as a result. The truly excellent wife/mother (Prov. 31; Titus 2) is the woman who pursues the high and holy calling of homemaking; she is the woman who interrupts her career for the sake of mothering rather than the reverse. She devotes herself to loving her husband and raising their children. Of course, such a woman will also have to learn to trust her husband to be the provider God calls him to be (e.g., p. 243f).

The authors do a good job explaining to men and women what their spouse needs from them to feel affirmed and significant. They do not do much exploring of the actual differences, but they do a good job with practical application of the biblical texts. One thing I had not thought of before that the authors point out is that submission is not the wife's role, per se; rather, submission is her (Christ-like) response to the husband's role as leader. Her role is actually very positive: She is to be her husband's helper. But the authors also point out the dangers of a wife usurping her husband's leadership role: "Where wives seek to lead, husbands leave." Wives who try to control their husbands end up destroying their sense of manhood; it is unlikely that any woman who ever tried to lead her marriage really liked what she got in the end.

The book also does a good job explaining how parents can pass along a marital legacy to their children, through their example and teaching. One of the best things parents can do for their children is prepare them for their own marriages. The authors delve into the problems of divorce in the "me generation" (208ff) and calls on parents to give their kids a robust marital ethic, by teaching them about God's plan for sex, husband/wife roles, how to understand the opposite sex, etc. The authors conclude, "we need to wake up and see that the growing sickness of our society can in large measure be traced to homes where children are entertained, not loved; educated, but not gifted; kept busy, but not carefully mentored" (216). It is

vital that we gift our children with the tools they will need to succeed in biblically formed and informed marriages.

Finally, the book includes some good advice about marital counseling and how to seek for and give help to troubled marriages. However, the authors' probably have a deficient ecclesiology, as they never mentioned the importance of church discipline. Still, I highly recommend this book, especially for newly weds.

I'd also recommend the books *For Men Only* and *For Women Only* by Jeff and Shaunti Feldhahn. Frankly, I looked at these books years ago and was not impressed. The books are written from a Christian perspective, but are not exegetical or theological. Instead, the authors collate and analyze survey data. When I skimmed the books after their initial release, I concluded there were better resources for marital couples. There didn't seem to be anything new here. While I still feel that way, re-examining the books has given me a much, much greater appreciation for their value. They are simple, winsome books that can help couples come to a better understanding of one another. I would hope couples would also read deeper, more exegetically and theologically grounded books on marriage, but the Feldhahn books can certainly be useful.

The books helpfully diagnose many basic marital issues that can be resolved with better insight into the needs and roles of the other spouse. For example, the books point out that many men try to solve their wives' problems, when really all she wants is to be heard and understood. She doesn't need a problem solver, but a man who will hug her. The authors point out that wives are generally far more concerned with emotional and relational security than financial security; thus, workaholic men who bust their tails to "provide" may not be providing what their wives *most* want from them. At the same time, women need to understand and respect how deeply ingrained a man's providing instinct really is. A wife needs to understand how deeply a man defines himself in terms of his work and she needs to give him the gift of confidence so he can succeed. The Feldhahns explain to wives how sex works for men, e.g., men don't *think* about sex all the time, rather they *visualize/imagine* it. Sex is *not* just a physical urge for a man; thus, a wife's responsiveness is a way she can affirm her husband in his manhood. The books also explain tactfully to wives why husbands are so concerned with the way their wives look, and why women should not find this threatening in itself. But they also show that men must learn why they need to pursue their wives outside the bedroom if they want to make the most of their marital intimacy. Men must also learn why seeking thrills elsewhere, even with their eyes, is so deeply painful to their wives. Men need to know the feelings of inadequacy their lusts create in their wives. These books probably cover stuff that most faithfully Christian married couples have already figured out over the years, but the books can certainly shorten the learning curve for newly weds.

In short, these books provide helpful maps of the mind, heart, and body of the opposite sex. They help us get beyond superficial, surface level understandings of the other gender so that we can really minister to and communicate with one another more effectively. The books will tell our spouses what we probably wish we could tell them, but would be afraid to do so for fear of hurt feelings.

I highly recommend G.K. Chesterton's compilation of writings on the family entitled *Brave New Family*. Some samples of Chesterton's wisdom:

Those who believe in the dignity of the domestic tradition, who happen to be the overwhelming majority of mankind, regard the home as a sphere of vast social importance and supreme spiritual significance; and to talk of being confined to it is like talking of being chained to a throne, or set in the seat of judgment as if it were the stocks. There may be women who are uncomfortable in family life, as there have been certainly men who were uncomfortable on thrones. There are wives who do not want to be mothers; and there are lawyers who do not want to be judges. But, taking normal human nature and historic tradition as a whole, we cannot be expected to start the discussion by assuming that these human dignities are not the object of human desires. We cannot simply take it for granted that kings are humiliated by being crowned. We cannot accept it as first principal that a man is made judge because he is a fool. And we cannot assume, as both sides in this curious controversy so often do assume, that bringing forth and rearing and ruling the living beings of the future is a servile task suited to a silly person...

Modern women defend their office [jobs] with all the fierceness of domesticity. They fight for desk and typewriter as for hearth and home, and develop a sort of wolfish wifeness on behalf of the invisible head of the firm. That is why they do office work so well; and that is why they ought not to do it . . . It is a mere matter of simple subtraction that the mother must have less time for the family if she has more time for the factory . . . [Proponents of 'women's liberation'] seem to express a sympathy with those who prefer 'the right to earn outside the home' or (in other words) the right to be a wage-slave and work under the orders of a total stranger because he happens to be a richer man. By what conceivable contortions of twisted thought this ever came to be considered a freer condition than that of companionship with the man she has herself freely accepted, I never could for the life of me make out. The only sense I can make of it is that the proletarian work, though obviously more servile and subordinate than the parental is so far safer and more irresponsible because it is not parental. I can easily believe that there are some people who do prefer working in a factory to working in a family; for there are always some people who prefer slavery to freedom, and who especially prefer being governed to governing someone else. But I think their

quarrel with motherhood is not like mine, a quarrel with inhuman conditions, but simply a quarrel with life. Given an attempt to escape from the nature of things, and I can well believe that it might lead at last to something like 'the nursery school for our children staffed by other mothers and single women of expert training.' I will add nothing to that ghastly picture, beyond speculating pleasantly about the world in which women cannot manage their own children but can manage each other's. But I think it indicates an abyss between natural and unnatural arrangements which would have to be bridged before we approached what is supposed to be the subject of discussion.

The challenges and excitement of home life are rarely matched in the working world. And very few tasks are of such momentous importance:

Nothing is so important as training the rising generation. Nothing is really important except the rising generation. They tell us this over and over again, with slight variations of the same formula, and never seem to see what it involves. For if there be any word of truth in all this talk about the education of the child, then there is certainly nothing but nonsense in nine-tenths of the talk about the emancipation for the woman. If education is the highest function in the State, why should anybody want to be emancipated from the highest function in the State? It is as if we talked of commuting the sentence that condemned a man to be President of the United States; or a reprieve coming in time to save him from being Pope. If education is the largest thing in the world, what is the sense of talking about a woman being liberated from the largest thing in the world? It is as if we were to rescue her from the cruel doom of being a poet like Shakespeare; or to pity the limitations of an all-round artist like Leonardo da Vinci. Nor can there be any doubt that there is truth in this claim for education. Only precisely the sort of which it is particularly true is the sort called domestic education. Private education really is universal, Public education can be comparatively narrow. It would really be an exaggeration to say that the schoolmaster who takes his pupils in freehand drawing is training them in all the uses of freedom. It would really be fantastic to say that the harmless foreigner who instructs a class in French or German is talking with all the tongues of men and angels. But the mother dealing with her own daughters in her own home does literally have to deal with all forms of freedom, because she has to deal with all sides of a single human soul. She is obliged, if not to talk with the tongues of men and angels, at least to decide how much she shall talk about angels and how much about men.

If children and education are important (and who doubts that?) it makes no sense to devalue motherhood, or privilege working moms over stay-at-home moms:

We cannot insist that the first years of infancy are of supreme importance, and that mothers are not of supreme importance, or that motherhood is a

topic of sufficient interest for men, but not of sufficient interest for mothers. Every word that is said about the tremendous importance of trivial nursery habits goes to prove that being a nurse is not trivial. All tends to the return of the simple truth that the private work is the great one and the public work the small. The human house is a paradox, for it is larger inside than out . . .

Parents have more at stake in how their little ones are raised than teachers do:

In another small way there is something of illusion, or of irresponsibility, about the purely public function, especially in the case of public education. The educationist generally deals with only one section of the pupil's mind. But he always deals with one section of the pupil's life. The parent has to deal with, not only with the whole of the child's character, but also with the whole of the child's career. The teacher sows the seed, but the parent reaps as well as sows. The schoolmaster sees more children, but it is not clear that he sees more childhood; certainly he sees less youth and no maturity. The number of little girls who take prussic acid is necessarily small. The boys who hang themselves on bedposts, after a life of crime, are generally the minority. But the parent has to envisage the whole life of the individual, and not merely the school life of the scholar. It is not probable that the parent will exactly anticipate crime and prussic acid as the crown of the infant's career. But he will anticipate hearing of the crime if it is committed: he will probably be told of the suicide if it takes place. It is quite doubtful whether the schoolmaster or schoolmistress will ever hear of it at all. Everybody knows that teachers have a harassing and often heroic task, but it is not unfair to them to remember that in this sense they have an exceptionally happy task. The cynic would say that the teacher is happy in never seeing the result of his own teaching. I prefer to confine myself to saying that he has not the extra worry of having to estimate it from the other end. The teacher is seldom in at the death. To take a milder theatrical metaphor, he is seldom there on the night. But this is only one of the many instances of the same truth; that what is called public life is not larger than private life, but smaller. What we call public life is a fragmentary affair of sections and seasons and impressions; it is only in private life that dwells the fullness of our life bodily.

Home life is wonderful because one gets to work with people – indeed, the very people one loves the most! Motherhood must be regarded as among the most rewarding of professions.

Chesterton called the called family life the “wildness of domesticity.” He pointed out how a complementarian pattern of role relationships turned the family into a smoothly functioning organism, as husband and wife live off of one another. It is our wealth and materialism that have made family life seem boring and unattractive:

For instance there is a plutocratic assumption behind the phrase ‘Why should woman be economically dependent upon man?’ The answer is that among

poor and practical people she isn't; except in the sense in which he is dependent upon her. A hunter has to tear his clothes; there must be somebody to mend them. A fisher has to catch his fish; there must be somebody to cook them. It is surely quite clear that this modern notion that woman is mere 'pretty clinging parasite,' 'a plaything,' etc., arose through the sombre contemplation of some rich banking family, in which the banker at least went to the city and pretended to do something, while the banker's wife went to the Park and did not pretend to do anything at all. A poor man and his wife are a business partnership. If one partner in a firm of publishers interviews the authors while the other interviews the clerks, is one of them economically dependent? Was Hodder a pretty parasite clinging to Stoughton? Was Marshall a mere plaything for Snelgrove? But of all the modern notions generated by mere wealth the worst is this: the notion that domesticity is dull and tame. Inside the home (they say) is dead decorum and routine; outside is venture and variety. This indeed is a rich man's opinion. The rich man knows that his own house moves on vast and soundless wheels of wealth: is run by regiments of servants, by a swift and silent ritual. On the other hand, every sort of vagabondage or romance is open up to him in the streets outside. He has plenty of money and can afford to be a tramp. His wildest adventures will end in a restaurant, while the yokel's tamest adventure may end in a police-court. If he smashes a window he can pay for it: if he smashes a man he can pension him. He can (like the millionaire in the story) buy a hotel to get a glass of gin. And because he, the luxurious man, dictates the tone of nearly all 'advanced' and 'progressive' thought, we have almost forgotten what a home really means to the overwhelming millions of mankind. For the truth is, that to the moderately poor the home is the only place of liberty. Nay it is the only place of anarchy.

Wealthy families, perhaps, have to work harder to maintain the wildness of domesticity. For the poor, it's there all along, provided they commit to making the family work.

Feminism generates myths which run counter to reality:

Some of us (who cannot be called conservative in the sense of content with social conditions, and who have even been called revolutionary for our attempts to improve those conditions) have nevertheless come to have a profound suspicion of what is called progress. And the reason is this: that there does not seem to be a principle, but only principles, of Progress. There is not a stream, but a sort of eddy or whirlpool. There could not be a stronger case than this particular ideal of Independence. It is not made the principle of social reform. Even the social reformers would be the first to say that they depend on dependence; on the mutual dependence of comrades and fellow citizens, as distinct from the individualistic independence they would denounce as mere isolation. It is not made the ideal of the proletarian or wage earner, either by the Communist or the Capitalist system. Both the

Communitic and Capitalist are alike in not thinking of the individual worker as independent. They will discuss whether he is well paid, whether he is well treated, whether he works in good or bad conditions, whether he is dependent on a good or bad business or a good or bad government; but not whether he is independent. Independence is not made the ideal of the normal man. It is only suddenly and abruptly introduced in one particular relation, in the case of the exceptional woman. She is only independent of her husband, not independent in any other real relation of life. She is only independent of the home-and not of the workshop of the world. And it is supremely characteristic of this confusion that one well-meaning individual should make a yet finer distinction, and resolve to be independent in the dressing room, but not in the dining room . . . She is independent of the breadwinner, but not of the bank or the employer - not to mention the moneylender . . . It is mixed up with a muddled idea that women are free when they serve their employers but slaves when they serve their husbands. . . They [these 'liberated' women] would rather provide the liveries of a hundred footmen than be bothered with the love-affairs of one. They would rather take the salutes of a hundred soldiers than try to save the soul of one. They would rather serve out income-tax papers or telegraph forms to a hundred men than meals, conversation, and moral support to one. They would rather arrange the educational course in history or geography, or correct the examination papers in algebra or trigonometry, for a hundred children, than struggle with the whole human character of one. For anyone who makes himself responsible for one small baby, as a whole, will soon find that he is wrestling with gigantic angels and demons...But when people begin to talk about this domestic duty as not merely difficult but trivial and dreary, I simply give up the question. For I cannot with the utmost energy of imagination conceive what they mean . . . To be Queen Elizabeth within a definite area, deciding sales, banquets, labors and holidays: to be Whitley within a certain area, providing toys, boots, sheets, cakes, and books; to be Aristotle within a certain area, teaching morals, manners, theology and hygiene; I can understand how this might exhaust the mind, but I cannot imagine how it could narrow it. How can it be a large career to tell other people's children about the Rule of Three, and a small career to tell one's own children about the universe? How can it be broad to be the same thing to everyone, and narrow to be everything to someone? No; a woman's function is laborious, but because it is gigantic, not because it is minute. I will pity Mrs. Jones for the hugeness of her task; I will not pity her for its smallness . . .

I recommend Frederica Mathewes-Green's collected writing, Volume 1, on gender.

She writes to men:

I appreciate that you think you should protect me. That even if you're a total stranger, if someone menaced me chances are you'd automatically come to my aid. Even if it risked your life to do so. I wouldn't do that for you. If you think about it, that's an extraordinary gift for one gender to give another. Just saying "Thanks" doesn't seem enough.

I appreciate that most of the names on the war memorials are male. Even if the armies of the future are as gender-balanced as Noah's ark, that remains a significant facet of history. For centuries, men presumed it was their job to die for women; they presumed, in other words, that women's lives were more precious than their own. Take another look at "Saving Private Ryan": All those extraordinary feats of courage, but not to save Private Ryan's life; he was as expendable as any other private. The real purpose of the mission was his mother. To men of that time it was obvious that no effort would be too great to spare a mother such terrible grief. For such gallantry I thank you, my grandmother thanks you, and my great-great-great grandmother thanks you. I appreciate all the little courtesies that put ladies first. I know that 25 years ago, I said I'd punch any guy who tried to open a door for me. I was wrong. You meant it in kindness, and I was rude not to take it that way.

I think of what life is like in cultures where women are treated as chattel, denied property rights and freedom, where wife beating is condoned and even expected. Little chivalries and courtesies train men young to treat women gently, and when women mock them we set fire to an insurance policy written strongly in our interest.

I'm sorry for all the harsh jokes about men. A contest in my local paper invited war-of-the-sexes witticisms, and as I read them over I realized that the ones aimed at women were all along the lines of "She sure likes chocolate!" while the ones about men could be summarized, "He's a big boorish idiot!" You might notice a difference there, and once you start noticing it, you see it everywhere. In general, anti-male humor has a bitter, hostile edge lacking in even the dumbest dumb-blonde jokes. Yet guys repeat this banter as much as anyone else; in general, they can roll with self-deprecation a lot better than women can. I think they're very good sports. Along the same lines, do you notice how many TV ads and sitcoms have this plotline: stupid guy gets his comeuppance from a tough woman? Does anyone ever see any plot that's the reverse? Not on my TV. Again, guys are good sports, good at laughing at themselves, but I think there's a more serious cost to all this hilarity. When all we see are dumb daddies, bad daddies, and absent daddies, there isn't much for a little boy to aspire to. Movie heroes still follow the James Bond convention of carefree, commitment-free womanizing; brave, steadfast family men are few. Yet despite the lack of appreciation, many, many men get up and go to work, then come home to their families, every day. We would be wise to celebrate it. This invisible heroism is the backbone of healthy community.

Mathewes-Green understands what male-female equality means: It means women have the right to go to hell every bit as much as men do.

Women are just as much in need of salvation as men are. While women and men have many delightful differences, there is one item we indisputably share: "All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God" . . .

Certain patterns of sin may appeal more to one gender than another, but for every sin the wages is death. Women bear the same moral responsibility men do, face the temptations, and, if they die outside the grace of Jesus Christ, go to the same hell. Real feminists hate all-male clubs.

Feminism is sinful because it promotes an us-versus-the mentality. Women either blame men and feel sorry for themselves ("Victim Feminism") or they renounce men and retaliate against them ("Power Feminism"). Mathewes-Green describes her own experience with feminism, as she started to see its bankruptcy:

Back in my college days, I fiercely held a self-refuting double conviction: first, that men and women are exactly the same; second, that men are jerks and women are perfect . . .

[Later] I began to see that feminism was bad for me. It inculcated feelings of self-righteousness and judgmentalism. It filled me with self-perpetuating anger. It blinded me to the good that men do and the bad that women do. It made me think that men and women were enemies, when we actually have a mutual Enemy, who delights in any human discord.

Mathewes-Green traces out three bad interlocking ideas that have been embraced by women in the name of liberation, only to enslave them to the cruelest of masters. These three bad ideas – abortion, female promiscuity, and careerism – have wreaked havoc on American culture and the church. Mathewes-Green throws several dashes of good, old-fashioned common sense against these problems to show where we went wrong and what we must do to set things right. She should know: having tried feminism before moving into the highly patriarchal Orthodox church, she found it to be seriously lacking in wisdom and practicality. Feminism is bad for everyone, most of all women. It refuses to allow women to be women, that is, to be what they were created to be.

The first disastrous idea set forth by the modern feminist movement was abortion, finally legalized by the Roe vs. Wade court decision of 1973.

Some ideas were bad, and the greatest producer of grief, of course, was abortion. I lose track of how many millions have died; when it passes forty million the mind begins to swim. We can cope with such figures only by ignoring them. Once I heard someone observe that a memorial similar to the Vietnam Veterans' memorial, listing the names of all these babies, would have to stretch for fifty miles. That was many years ago, and it would be many miles longer today. But such a wall cannot exist because those babies never had a name.

But abortion was not at the top of the feminist agenda when feminism was just getting started. Rather, it was put at the top as part of a political agenda. It provided a tangible way to measure if “respect” for women was improving. But abortion was related to the other two bad ideas that Mathews-Green identifies. These two made abortion necessary:

There are two other bad ideas from seventies feminism, which combine to create a current situation that makes abortion seem indispensable. Think about it this way: Abortion is the solution, so to speak, to the problem of pregnancy. But when, and why, did pregnancy become a problem?

Throughout most of human history, pregnancy has been a blessing. New children were welcomed, because they built the strength of a family and became the support of a couple’s old age. New children mean new life; they mean both personal delight and growth of the tribe.

But for some reason in the twentieth century pregnancy came to seem an unbearable burden. It became so unbearable that one-fourth of the times it occurred, women sought abortion to escape it.

Was this because pregnancy had become dangerous to women’s health? Was the nation wracked by war or famine? No, America during this period was the wealthiest, healthiest, most secure and comfortable nation in history. Pregnancy became unbearable due to a twofold change in expectations about women’s behavior – two bad ideas. One was the idea that women should be promiscuous. The other was that women should place career above childrearing.

Both ideas were promoted by the feminist movement, yet there is a profound irony: Both ideas are stubbornly contrary to the average woman’s deepest inclinations.

In other words, feminism has hardly promoted the feminine. If anything, it has attacked and undermined it. It has left women confused about what they really want. It adopted the ideas and values set forth by those it claimed to despise. As Mathews-Green points out, there was a suspicious convergence between what the most sexist, chauvinistic men wanted women to be and what feminists wanted them to be.

To put it another way, feminism made a certain masculine lifestyle the norm, and insisted that women comply. If anything, feminism could be better labeled masculinism. It has not fostered an appreciation for all that is beautiful and unique about women; rather, just the opposite. Feminism “accepted unquestioningly that a man’s life was the ideal life . . . [A]nything that looked ‘feminine’ made feminists uncomfortable, because in the opinion of men it was weak.” Nobility and honor on the part of men – the very virtues that fostered their sense of responsibility towards women – were mocked. Modesty – once regarded as a symbol of virtue and self-restraint on the part of women – became a sign of sexual repression.

But Mathewes-Green points out the irony in this twist: These same women who made the man's life the norm "acted as if men were made only a little higher than pond scum" most of the time. In other words, feminism was built not only on lies about the nature of femininity, but upon a giant contradiction. Feminists were not enhancing and exalting womanhood; they were craving a man's life. Feminism is really masculinism! It does nothing to achieve equality with men for women *as women*.

Everything about men seemed more serious, more important. We felt embarrassed at our soft arms, and betrayed by our soft emotions. Motherhood was a dangerous sidetrack, a self-indulgent hobby that could slow you down. That's the way men saw it, and who were we to argue? Whatever men treated with contempt was contemptible; whatever men valued was valuable. And men valued success . . . So feminism concluded that men, despite being idiots, were on-target about how we should live our lives. If men thought that housewives were dumb, that staying at home and raising kids was mindless drudgery, it was so. It didn't matter that our foremothers for generations had found homemaking noble and fulfilling. What did they know – they were stupid housewives! We were embarrassed by our female ancestors and envied the males. They had power and we wanted power. We couldn't imagine any success except success in man's terms.

So men idolized success, defined in terms of the business world, and nor women would follow suit. This is the false god of careerism, the second bad idea:

Though I use the term *careerism* to identify this value, I don't mean that women shouldn't have careers. I mean by *careerism* rather a half-conscious ideology which holds that the most important thing in life is the rank conferred by a place of employment. It's as bad for men as it is for women . . . Careerism is the misguided notion that work trumps everything else.

Abortion was a necessary concomitant of careerism for women, because "competing in a man's world required that women be as child-free as men are." Nature discriminated against women by saddling them with the biological responsibility of bearing and nursing babies. But if babies interfered with climbing the corporate ladder, then they had to be destroyed, even sucked out of the womb, in order keep the woman on a level playing field. Babies were once sacrificed to Molech; now they'd be sacrificed to the almighty American dollar.

But the idol of careerism has not served its devotees well. Women, at best, exchanged one form of drudgery for another. While many women have excelled in the work place, many feel they are serving two masters, divided between work life and home life. Many women have lived to regret their neglect of their children, admitting their balancing act didn't work as well as hoped.

Mathewes-Green then explains the third bad idea, “free sex”: “It occurred to people that it would be fun if everybody had as much sex as possible with as many people as they could. This is a theory that has not proved true in practice, but it maintains a tenacious hold.” In other words, free prostitution. She sums up nicely the psychology of the sexual revolution: “As the old cliché has it, girls give sex in order to get love; boys love in order to get sex. When the sexual revolution flooded the market with ‘free sex’ its trading equivalency in square units of love was radically depreciated.” In other words, “free sex” was anything but free. The cost has been exponential in terms of the exploitation and abuse of women.

The sexual revolution has left women more vulnerable than the older, more chivalric patterns of relating between the genders, in which a man’s honor and a woman’s modesty served as hedges and protectors. In the quest for liberation, we have lost our freedom to love. A woman on a quest to show she can do everything a man can do – and better – is a woman who will be unable to love anyone other than herself, and even her self-love will be tenuous at best. Widespread public acceptance of casual sex and pornography have served to coarsen relations between men and women in every realm of life. Women have learned to expect – and receive – virtually nothing from men. At the heart of the sexual revolution stands hard core misogyny.

The sexual revolution . . . was a disaster for women. For women sex is connected with love, love with commitment, commitment with marriage, and all this with the stability necessary for raising a child. Anything that lessens the pressures on men to be faithful to women, to support them and fulfill their family obligations, hurts women in the long run. In areas like these, women have far to go before they achieve the kind of social changes they need.

Women are getting less and less durable love in return for sex . . . As sexuality is snipped from the fabric of personhood and isolated as sheer mechanical act, severed from context and emotional ties, women are lonelier than ever . . .

The sexual revolution made the promise that we were entitled to fun without consequences, but that was nonsense along the lines of “You can eat banana splits all day without gaining weight.” In real life, actions have consequences, and they can’t be warded off by crying “Hey, no fait!” If it hurts enough, we can stop now.

Mathewes-Green gives her advice to the would-be feminists of the next generation: “In advising young women about feminism, I would say, listen carefully to what women’s real needs are. If you imagine a composite of all women, of all ages, from all over the world and through all time, the central fact shared existence would be childrearing. So women need, more than anything else, faithful men.”

So feminism as a movement has not served women’s best interests. Somewhere along the way, the whole notion of feminine sexuality got reversed:

In the early seventies, *Playboy* was a clearly identified enemy of feminism, due to its 'exploitative images.' That changed; Playboy is now an ally of feminism because *Playboy* is such an enthusiastic defender of abortion . . . There isn't a venerable history of women celebrating promiscuity; if anything, women's wisdom over the ages taught that emotional security was the precondition for sex being fun, and a wedding ring was the best aphrodisiac. But, again, what did stupid old housewives know? Men called them prudish, so that's what they were. Thirty years later women are still going morosely out into the night in dutiful pursuit of fun. And if it's not fun, she presumes, it must be because something is wrong with her. This is another way that women adopted unhealthy male values: they began thinking of sex as a contest or power play rather than an act of vulnerability and intimacy. Young women were encouraged to be sexual aggressors, and to think of themselves as free agents who could take up and discard men at will. They quickly noticed that men were amusingly helpless when lust was provoked, much more than women are, and their ability to elicit this helplessness made them feel powerful. An extreme example of this is the topless dancer, who commands the attention of a roomful of men, all of who seem to be at her mercy. But as an ex-dancer once told me, "I had to ask myself, if I have all the power, how come I'm the only one in the room who's naked?"

When sex is linked to a sense of thrilling power, man and woman are enemies, not allies. They use each other to prove their prowess, to make a conquest, to score. These locker-room terms reveal how tense and combative this view of sex is. But women's traditional view of sexuality—indeed, the healthier view—is that it is inherently an act of risk, a willingness to be naked, vulnerable, perhaps even foolish, to expose what is unlovely as well as what is treasured and dear. This risk is only possible when both man and woman are pledged to love and honor each other. Then sex is indeed a coming-together, a union of whole persons and not just isolated parts. But the idea of sex as love-making has been replaced by sex as contest, and even young girls are invited to dress provocatively and test how powerful they can be. Power-based sex may be exciting, but its essential foundation is mistrust; its theme song is "My Heart Belongs to Me." No wonder the sexual revolution has been accompanied by so much divorce.

In the past women used chastity as a way of controlling and restraining men. In the sexual revolution, men used sex to get power over men as well, but by giving themselves away, the power was fleeting.

Careerism and the sexual revolution combined to make abortion necessary. Abortion became part of the "liberated" woman's lifestyle, a necessary cog in the machinery of the new society we created:

Earlier we asked, how did pregnancy become unbearable? These two bad ideas, careerism and promiscuity, come together like two sides of a vise. If the modern woman is dutifully promiscuous, a high proportion of her sexual experiences are going to be in a context where the male partner feels no responsibility for a resulting child. Indeed, a pregnancy is likely to seem to him a failure on her part, if not an injustice. Contraception has fostered the ignorant expectation that sex has nothing to do with reproduction, but sometimes raw biology still wins out. This woman may have far fewer pregnancies than her great-grandmother, but any one of them is more likely to be disastrous.

Likewise, if she has adopted the idea that professional work is more important than child-rearing, pregnancy can dynamite her life plans. The trick of juggling motherhood and career is so difficult that it's still material for magazine cover stories thirty years later. We're no closer to solving the problem, and I doubt thirty years more will help. For her great-grandmother, however, it's likely that one more baby would not create a significant burden in a life already arranged to accommodate home and children.

Thus these two bad ideas come together, pressing in inexorably, and making a woman feel she has no escape but abortion. Feminism sought, first, increased access to public life and, second, increased sexual freedom. But that participation in public life is greatly complicated by responsibility for children, and uncommitted sexual activity is the most effective means of producing unwanted pregnancies. This dilemma--simultaneous pursuit of behaviors that cause children and that are hampered by children--finds its inevitable resolution on an abortion table.

Feminists defend abortion with desperate passion because the whole shaky structure of their lives depends upon it. Indeed, Justice Blackmun in the Webster decision wrote that women had "ordered their lives around" abortion, and the Casey decision was based on the assumption that abortion had become a necessary part of the social machine. There's a sad accuracy in that. When something like abortion becomes available, surrounding expectations regarding reproduction and child care subtly shift to accommodate it, and eventually it appears to be indispensable.

Thus, since the 70s, abortion has been the tip of the sword in the secular struggle for "equality." But it's time to admit the androgynous project has failed. We have not been able to redesign nature in accord with our ideology. Men are still men and women are still women. Men and women still experience life, including courtship, marriage, sex, parenting, and work, in profoundly different ways. In our society's quest for "sameness" between the genders, we have obscured the real beauty of God's design, which is one of mutual interdependence. Older feminists insisted that the "housewife" was a dependent parasite, living off the skill and labor of her husband, and never achieving anything of real worth or significance. But in truth, God created men and women to need each other. It's a two-way street. Women need men to lovingly protect and provide for them, to be sure. But men also need women to help them and support them. A woman's femininity is only realized in

relation to a man. But a man can only be secure in his masculinity as he is confirmed by a woman. A woman pretending to be a man isn't needed as much by a man as a woman who is happy with the way God has made her and seeks to contribute in a uniquely feminine way.

What then is to be done? We face a daunting task. Mathewes-Green is exactly right when she says the fight against abortion cannot stand alone. It must be part of larger fight against a whole way of looking at life. And political machinery is not enough to accomplish that kind of transformation. Churches that are openly pro-life when it comes to abortion are often strangely inactive when it comes to dealing with these other issues that made abortion so attractive and so necessary. Our opposition to abortion must be conjoined with evangelism and discipleship, and perhaps most of all, mercy ministry.

If we could padlock all the abortion clinics tomorrow, we'd see the next morning a line 3200 women long pounding on the doors. We wouldn't have solved the problems that make their pregnancies seem unbearable. We wouldn't have changed the context that normalizes promiscuity and undermines a woman's authority to say no. We wouldn't have restored respect for the profession of mothering, or respect for fathering for that matter, so that men would be proud to love the moms and support the children whose lives they begin.

Thus, Mathewes-Green counters the three bad ideas with three good ideas:

Here, then, are three good ideas, and these ideas also have consequences. The first is to support the pregnant woman. Pregnancy care centers offer pregnancy tests, maternity clothes, medical referrals, practical advice, spiritual counsel, and many other kinds of aid; recently, many centers have become freestanding medical clinics and provide full prenatal care.

Yet the most important thing pregnancy centers provide will always remain the individual friendship support that a pregnant woman needs. When I began research for my book, "Real Choices: Listening to Women, Looking for Alternatives to Abortion," I had the goal of discovering the main reasons women had abortions. I thought that if we could rank-order the problems women faced, material, practical, and financial, we'd be able to address them more effectively.

To my great surprise, I found that these practical forms of support were only secondarily important. Over and over, women told me that the reason she'd had an abortion was that someone she cared about told her she should. The people she needed to lean on for support in a crisis pregnancy, like her boyfriend or mother, didn't supply that support, but instead encouraged her—and sometimes, sadly, coerced her—to have an abortion instead. While pro-choice advocates present abortion as an act of autonomy, pregnant women experience it rather as a response to abandonment. Pregnancy is the

icon of human connectedness, binding a woman to her child and the father of the child. Abortion shatters those connections and leaves her desolate. Thus, when I asked women, "What would you have needed in order to finish the pregnancy?" over and over they told me, "I needed just one person to stand by me." While there are many useful ways centers can support pregnant women, the most important thing they can give is friendship, simple moral support. Across the nation pro-lifers are doing many important things to protect unborn life: making TV commercials, proposing bills in Congress, writing books. But the one thing that can prevent an abortion tomorrow is what women told me they needed: a friend. Individual, personal care for pregnant women is a very, very good idea.

A second good idea is that of offering grief counseling for post-abortion women. You might think that once a woman has had an abortion it is too late for a pregnancy center to be of any help. The opposite is true. Nearly half of the abortions done each year are done on women who have already had an abortion. In a single year in California, almost 1700 women had two or three abortions.

Psychologists say the mechanism works like this: a woman has an abortion, but in her heart grieves for her baby, and unconsciously feels obligated to have another to "make up for" the one that was lost. This is called an "atonement baby." But when she "slips up" and becomes pregnant again, she finds she's still in the same bad situation. Circumstances are no more welcoming to a new life than they were before. She has a second abortion, and then has *two* atonement pregnancies to make up. It is vital that trained counselors help women work through their grief and come to a healthy resolution, so this cycle can come to an end.

A third good idea is preventative: to reach young people before they have become sexually active and give them resources and incentive to remain chaste. The best programs address young men as well as young women, and go beyond "just say no" to present the positive aspects of marriage. Some secular programs target girls alone, and counsel abstinence only till high school graduation; they may even drill girls to be suspicious of boys and believe they can't be trusted. This, I think, is exactly the wrong approach. If we want strong marriages and healthy two-parent families, we shouldn't be intentionally teaching mistrust. We need rather to raise young men who are trustworthy, and inspire them with a vision of the nobility of fatherhood. We need to enable boys and girls to behave in admirable ways, deserving of trust, rather than plant further suspicion between the sexes.

The best character education programs build boys into young men who will see in marriage the opportunity to take on a challenging and time-honored role. In our culture men are almost continually insulted, and conservatives and pro-lifers are not immune to this infection. Pregnancy care workers can find it easier to send a woman to the welfare office than to explore whether the father of the child might be called on instead. We expect these men to be "bums," and they live down to our expectations.

Pro-lifers easily speak of God creating new life, ordaining that the woman and unborn child be knit together, and they should recognize that God has appointed a third person in that situation as well. I wince when I hear pro-lifers say "she found herself pregnant;" it sounds like Victorian euphemism. It's as if the woman just discovered the baby in a parking lot. No, she had help with that project. For every "unwanted" pregnancy there is a dad who needs to be challenged to do the right thing, for his own sake as much as his new family's.

Restoring young men to the role of husband and provider is the most important long-term strategy for reducing the need for abortion. If he is there, problems look much less dire. If he is there, she can do it. If she is alone, the struggle is much more steep.

In place of the false feminist movement that has gripped our culture for several decades now, the church must offer a *true feminism* – an appreciation for the primary calling God has given to women as homemakers and mothers, an appreciation for feminine virtue and beauty. Part and parcel of such a counter-movement will involve showing tangible mercy to women whose lives are broken because of crisis pregnancies and unhealthy relationships. But of course, all of this also means restoring dignity to the man's role as a "one woman man," a provider and protector of his wife and children.

Politics cannot accomplish these changes. Or to put it another way, it will take an alternative politics. "Politics" in the classical sense concerns the way in which we order our community, the structure of our common life together. The church must embody an alternative politics, an alternative way of life, which values the family as a divinely-given, divinely-regulated institution. The church must manifest a holistic way of life that fulfills God's original creation design for the family. The church must be a model society, showing forth life the way God intended it to be lived. We must do these things, of course, without becoming self-righteous. Instead, in humility, we must be ready and willing to show mercy and help others fulfill God's intentions as well.

Here is Mathewes-Green's article "Men Behaving Justly":

It's a man's world, at least around my house. With my daughter off at college it's just my husband, two teenaged sons, and me; even the dog and cat are of the masculine persuasion. I've seen some majority-male households that have slipped toward caveman conditions, where underwear is washed by wearing it in the shower and dishes are washed by giving them to the dog. I'm determined that that won't happen here. Rather than draw up a long list of rules covering minute aspects of behavior, I've found that one general principle covers all circumstances. It's one my boys actually came up with on their own. The rule is (and this must be hissed in an urgent whisper): "Not in front of the chick!" Yes, in my house, as far as I know, no one drinks from the milk jug. No one burps. Dignity and decorum rule the day. When I phone

home from a business trip I can almost hear the dishes being whisked out of the living room and the orange juice being wiped off the kitchen floor. The dog, I am given to understand, has been creating these unauthorized situations, grievous and clearly unworthy of chick review. Good thing my boys are there to maintain order. "Bad Sparky!" I hear over the phone line, and picture the bewildered dog ducking his head. The most obvious charge one could lay against this standard is that it's sexist, and indeed it is. The "Not in front of the chick" rule (or NIFOTC) colludes in a tacit assumption that how men behave when they are alone together can be different from how they behave in feminine company. It presumes that men and women are different, men naturally devolving to a rougher state if given the chance. Women demand something finer of them: respect, protection, the kind of cherishing (St. Paul suggests) with which men regard their own bodies. I would have rejected this idea vehemently a couple of decades ago, but I gradually realized that when men *don't* feel an obligation to protect and cherish women, women get hurt. Men come to look out on a leveled world, and treat everyone the way they treat each other—pretty roughly. The interaction of guys in my house runs heavily to broad insults, punches, and grins. They thrive on it, but girls whose exchanges regularly ran to, "Well, your nose is bigger!" would not be friends long. Recognizing the relative roughness of men blends well with the theory put forth by George Gilder in "Men and Marriage," that men must be tamed and civilized by women. Their natural impulse is to stray and play, he says, and it is due to women's influence that they settle down in families and contribute to a coherent society. This view of the sexes is flattering to both—the pure angel of the hearth and the wild, lusty fellow who must be captured and tamed. I lean more toward thinking there's something in men that inclines them to want to settle down, if only because most do it so readily. But I've heard upstanding, faithful Christian dads dispute this, forcefully insisting that all men are incorrigible cads and sexual predators, brought into faithful marriage only by the power of a good woman's love. The evidence of their own lives and that of most of the men they work and worship with suggests otherwise, but it is a harmless and endearing fantasy, entertained by "sheep in wolves' clothing." NIFOTC acknowledges the ways women must tame men. But I'd assert that women need to be tamed by men as well, particularly in moral issues. A classic image is that male justice is too harsh, too prone to blind legalism. Women are thought to temper this with compassion, by considering human variables and calling for mercy. In a typical masculine example, Inspector Javert tracks Jean Valjean relentlessly, in order to jail him for stealing bread for starving children. The feminine temptation is the opposite, amending principle to fit any present situation. Where cold legalism binds men, women slip in the quicksand of rationalization. Carol Gilligan found, in "In a Different Voice," that women consider human factors rather than principles of right and wrong in making ethical decisions. At the most advanced level (in Gilligan's opinion), women balance their own needs with other's, and the ideal of being good is supplanted by the that of being true to yourself.

Women at that level were able to justify abortion under all kinds of circumstances, because it was what she needed to do. This is the way women's moral trajectory bends, unless corrected by masculine rigor. Woman's classic moral failing is the opposite of masculine legalism: manipulative duplicity in the name of self-interest. Think of Scarlett O'Hara, or Emma Bovary; think of the woman who told Solomon, "Neither you nor I shall have him. Cut him in two!" Women need men to call us up toward the highest moral principles; they need us to call them down to the warmth of human love, and respect for gentler sensibilities (which includes keeping dirty socks out of the den). It's clear that we need each other. You'd almost think someone planned it that way.

From Carolyn Graglia's *Brief Against Feminism*:

Since the late 1960s, feminists have very successfully waged war against the traditional family, in which husbands are the principal breadwinners and wives are primarily homemakers. This war's immediate purpose has been to undermine the homemaker's position within both her family and society in order to drive her into the work force. Its long-term goal is to create a society in which women behave as much like men as possible, devoting as much time and energy to the pursuit of a career as men do, so that women will eventually hold equal political and economic power with men . . .

Feminists have used a variety of methods to achieve their goal. They have promoted a sexual revolution that encouraged women to mimic male sexual promiscuity. They have supported the enactment of no-fault divorce laws¹ that have undermined housewives' social and economic security. And they obtained the application of affirmative action requirements to women as a class, gaining educational and job preferences for women and undermining the ability of men who are victimized by this discrimination to function as family breadwinners. A crucial weapon in feminism's arsenal has been the status degradation of the housewife's role . . . All branches of feminism are united in the conviction that a woman can find identity and fulfillment only in a career. The housewife, feminists agree, was properly characterized by de Beauvoir and Friedan as a 'parasite,' being something less than human, living her life without adult capabilities or intelligence, and lacking any real purpose in devoting herself to children, husband, and home . . . Feminists view traditional nuclear families as inconsistent with feminism's commitment to woman's independence and sexual freedom . . . Operating on the twin assumptions that equality means sameness (that is, men and women cannot be equals unless they do the same things) and that most differences between the sexes are culturally imposed, contemporary feminism has undertaken its own cultural impositions. Revealing their totalitarian belief

that they know best how others should live and their totalitarian willingness to force others to conform to their dogma, feminists have sought to modify our social institutions in order to create an androgynous society in which male and female roles are as identical as possible. The results of the feminist juggernaut now engulf us.

This book by Graglia is one the absolute finest pieces on feminism I have ever read. Beautifully and winsomely argued, with compelling logic and a sensitivity to the real needs/desires of women, Graglia decimates the anti-child, anti-family, anti-marriage feminism that has become so dominate in popular culture. Doug Wilson once said that feminism really should be called “masculinism” because it makes the male the norm. Graglia shows just how true this is – which means, of course, that feminism is actually degrading and demeaning to women.

Doug Wilson has a helpful little book called *Why Ministers Must Be Men*. This is a fine complement to Doug and Nancy’s numerous books on marriage and family. Wilson makes a fine case for a male-only pastorate.

Speaking of the Wilsons, their daughter Rachel Jankovich has written an encouraging book for moms called *Loving the Little Years*.

Werner Neuer, in his book *Men and Women in Christian Perspective*, correctly diagnoses our ills and prescribes the right solution:

There has been no period in history in which it was more urgent to put into practice the biblical view of male and female than today. For at present God’s standards, and particularly the divine ordering of the sexes, are being questioned and set aside on a scale never experienced before. Our era is marked by the attempt to level out gender distinctions, or at least reduce them to the undeniable physiological minima. This attempt has found its most radical expression in feminism . . . [I]t has led to a . . . deep uncertainty about what are the roles of men and women. Today whoever dares to use such terms as manliness and womanliness runs the risk of being laughed out of court as hopelessly backward . . . Our age is suffering a serious loss of manliness. The term manliness may be briefly defined in its biblical sense by the willingness to undertake leadership in a responsible and devoted fashion in marriage, family, and society in accordance with God’s standards. Judged by this picture of responsible manliness the present situation appears pretty dismal.

Neuer points to the flight of men from marital and parental responsibilities, and the disastrous effects of this on Western society:

When the man is no longer prepared in sacrificial love to assume his responsibility in marriage, in family, and in society, the woman is no longer ready to entrust herself to male leadership. The loss of masculinity therefore carries with it a loss of femininity. Male irresponsibility necessarily causes female irresponsibility: when man no longer accepts his male tasks, the woman also rebels against her tasks. It is just this development we can observe so clearly today . . . At bottom feminism is the consistent unloving answer to men's lack of love!...Whereas previously too many men fell into the trap of justifying their authoritarian domination of wife and family because they were head, today there is the opposite danger: Christian husbands, either for a quiet life or by wrongly adapting to the spirit of the age, are not ready to assume their position as head. Many Christian fathers, for example, deny their headship by leaving the spiritual upbringing of their children entirely to their wives and by so doing renege on their great responsibility to be spiritual head of the family . . . As head of the family, the father should be the first to arrange for the correct religious instruction and further upbringing of his family; he should be the first to pray and sacrifice with and for his family; he should be the first to exercise the right and duty to bless them; he should be the first involved in various decisions and measures to develop the spiritual life of the child...In a special way he and his own example should kindle the religious life of the family. He is a teacher, priest, and pastor of the family, or as Augustine put it, he is bishop of the family. When Christian husbands put their headship into practice this way they fulfill their maleness in the way that God intended. Fulfilling the headship that the NT envisaged involves the man in a school of selflessness and love, in which he daily has opportunity to crucify his male egoism.

If men had lived as Neuer describes, the feminist movement would have never arisen. Christian men must learn to praise their wives along the lines of Prov. 31:10ff. They must be to their wives what Dabney called an "affectionate authority." Men were made to give just this sort of love, and women were built to receive it. Alas, our twisted, fallen hearts all too often look to give and receive something altogether different.

Moms are the backbone of community inside and outside the home. One reason why so many in the rising generation suffer from various disorders, anxieties, relationship problems, etc. is that they never really bonded with their mothers in their early years. They got ignored or dropped off at daycare centers by moms who figured they had better things to do. (I don't want to be insensitive. Moms who had no choice about staying home with their children should not be made to feel guilty....God can always compensate for what we as parents would like to provide, but cannot. Nevertheless, we must be wise.) Specialists today are dismayed by how many young people evidence various "insecure attachment" disorders, anxiety disorders, attention deficit disorders, etc., which in many cases can be traced back to

a lack of maternal care. These children didn't really bond with their moms, and so now they have trouble bonding with anyone. No one ever gave them big chunks of undivided attention, and so now they have trouble giving focused attention to anyone or anything. Some of these children grow up but struggle to enter into mature, healthy relationships. Others turn violent. It's been rightfully said, "Infants who do not receive a warm welcome into the world will seek revenge" (*Rocking the Roles* by Hendriks and Lewis, p. 196). Moms need to understand how valuable their mere presence is in their little ones' lives. Just being there makes a huge difference. I hate it when I hear a woman described as "just a mom." *Just* a mom? Just someone who gives birth to an eternal image bearer of God? Just someone who is shaping the values, beliefs, and morals of that eternal being? "Just a mom," is like saying "Just a king" or "Just the President." It makes no sense. There is no more glorious calling than motherhood.

At-home mothers are also vital to neighborhoods. While all kinds of demographic and sociological studies have tried to pinpoint the reasons for the breakdown of American neighborhoods, the presence or absence of mothers is one of the biggest determining factors in the quality of neighborhood interaction. I know when I was growing up, as kids we were allowed to roam the neighborhood freely because everywhere we went, moms were sure to be there. Virtually every mom stayed at home during the day. But today, most neighborhoods are abandoned during the day because everyone, wives/moms included, are at work. If we're going to rebuild neighborhood life in America, an increasing number of at-home moms will be a vital ingredient. Moms make community happen by their mere presence, by just "being there."

In light of 1 Cor. 11:5, some have concluded Paul approved of women publicly leading the assembly in prayer (in tongues?) and prophesy (preaching?). But this does not follow. In a later sermon, we will examine the flow of argument in this section. Paul will finally speak definitively to the issue of female public leadership in the liturgical assembly in 1 Cor. 14:34ff. This spiraling pattern is not unusual for Paul in this letter. For example in chapter 8, he speaks of the Corinthians eating meat offered to idols in pagan temples; only when we get to chapter 10 do we find an explicit condemnation of this practice. Remember the Corinthian correspondence is something of a dialogue; Paul will sometimes take their position for granted, for the sake of the argument, even if he ultimately disagrees with it.

Frankly, when women take charge of the liturgy and governance of the church, it is a shame for the men more than anything. It simply indicates that the men have become cowardly and effeminate.

An absolutely excellent of the male-only pastorate/priesthood is by AMIA Rev. John Rodgers
(http://www.virtueonline.org/portal/modules/news/article.php?com_mode=nest&com_order=0&storyid=14469). Some excerpts:

God, being a God of order and being all-wise, good, and gracious, has ordered all things in creation for our good. This order in the creation he has retained and renewed in redemption. As part of this good order God has appointed the man to be the head of the family and to be the elder (presbyter) or priest in the wider family of the Church. God's good order does not envision nor permit women to exercise the ministry of "headship" in the family, nor the ministry of oversight involved in the offices of the priesthood and episcopate as they are understood and practiced by Anglicans. This is in no way detrimental to women for God has an equally significant, different, and complementary ministry for women in the family and in the Church. This godly order is to be enjoyed and respected. When men and women are thus united in partnership we walk in the path of freedom and fulfillment. Other paths may seem attractive and promise much but in the end they prove deceptive and full of contention...

The primary and chief factual point that we wish to make is this: nowhere in Scripture do we read of a woman being either a priest in the Old Testament or an elder in the New Testament. In the New Testament no woman was chosen by Jesus to be one of the twelve apostles. Jesus could have chosen one of the women who accompanied him, prepared her along with the other apostles-in-training, and after the resurrection appointed her an apostle had he felt that to be appropriate. He did not do so. The same is true of the apostles. Not once did they appoint a woman to be a presbyter or bishop. It was the unvarying practice of God's people from beginning of Israel to the close of Scripture to call men to these official, stated positions in the people of God. Israel did this in sustained and self-conscious contrast to the practice of the surrounding nations and religions...

This uniform practice in all of the Scriptures is the fundamental point. The case for an exclusively male priesthood and episcopate does not rest on a few texts, several of which contain some phrases difficult to interpret. Rather, it rests on the overwhelming majority of the biblical texts related to governance and leadership in the family and Church; it rests upon a perspective that is pervasive and uniform in all of Scripture.

We can ask, "Why did God order things so?" Such a universal, sustained practice requires a profound and divine reason. The Bible tells us what this reason is. Male headship in the priesthood and eldership of God's chosen people roots in the male headship in the family, which is part of God's good ordering of the creation. And God's ordering of the relations of male and female in the family ultimately reflects and rests upon God's own Triune

nature. Human life, made in the image and likeness of God, mirrors the mystery of God's own Triune life.

This involves our understanding of God as Triune. God is One; God is Threefold. He is the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit: three interpenetrating persons of equal dignity and divinity united in a single life of love and mutual indwelling. He is one God in one nature eternally existing in three Persons. Since we are made in the image and likeness of God, we can expect to find (and do find) analogies of God's Triune nature in creation and above all in our human nature.

In the Triune life of God, as Scripture teaches and the Eastern Orthodox tradition often reminds us, there is a hierarchy among equals. An eternal headship and an eternal submission are lived out in the divine life of love. God the Father is by nature Father in His Triune life. He is the eternal loving fountainhead of the Trinity. He is eternally the Father of the Son and the primary source of the being of the Son and the Holy Spirit. The Son is ever delighted to do the Father's will. In a biblical view, submitting to one's father is what a good son does, whether it be human sons of human fathers or the divine Son of the divine Father. The Spirit is always the Spirit of the Father and the Son and submissive to both.

The main point we want to note is that loving headship and submission are eternal in the life of God. They are therefore of the eternal order of things. This has consequences for God's act of creation. God's own nature and his attributes provide the pattern for his act of creation and particularly for the order and life of those made in his image and likeness—men and women. We can expect to find headship and submission in the way we have been created in relation to one another. At the same time, the Father's act of creation is an authoritative act, a command. He speaks and it is done (through the Son, by the Spirit). He reigns over the creation that he has made. Here we have the significance of God's revealing himself to us in male terms as "the Father," "the Son," and "the Spirit". The male name of "the Father" points to his being distinct from the creation that he has made, ordered, and sustained, and it points also to his Lordship over it. Creation is not birthed from God's own being as the religions of the world tend to teach.

Does God not have a more feminine aspect? Yes. God has attributes that are more fully exhibited by women than by men, but they are always "his" attributes. He is never called "her." Even the more feminine attributes are his attributes, attributes of the one who with loving, divine initiative and authority called the world into being, not from his own nature but from nothing, *ex nihilo*, from beyond the world.

In the light of God's Triune nature and his act of creation, we can consider more specifically his creation of us human beings, who are made in his image.

When he created us he created us male and female and thereby set us in families in a specific order. In the family the man is to serve as husband of the wife in a unity of love between equals and as the head of the family as well as the representative of the family. The woman is given the complementary ministry of support and nurture. The headship of the man reflects God's Fatherhood in the life of the Trinity and in the act of creation and serves as an instrument of God's reign in human society. We read in Scripture that it is from God's Fatherhood that all earthly fatherhood is named.

Male headship also finds expression in the larger family of his people, the Church. The designation of men to be priests or elders in the people of God is a wider expression of the headship the man is given first in the family. The family is the "little church in the Church" and the Church is the Family of the families of God.

The woman's position is as important as the man's, though different. She is the treasured, supportive partner in the family and Church. Her submission and ministry of support, nurture, and quite varied service reflects and expresses the indwelling, nurturing qualities of God's being and attributes as he has revealed himself to us in creation and through the Son and the Spirit in the history of salvation.

It is important that we do not misunderstand the complementary ministries of headship and submission. In Scripture submission is a good thing, and it is by no means limited to women. Jesus as the Son is ever submissive to the Father. All people made in God's image are to be submissive to God. The Church as the bride of Christ is by grace to be submissive to Christ who is Lord over all, the head of his body. Men and women are to be submissive to one another in a variety of structures. In the Church, the members are urged to submit to those whom the Lord has placed in authority over them. In the family, the wife is freely to submit or orient her ministry under the oversight of, and in support of, her husband. The children are to submit to their parents. In society, we all are to submit gladly to the magistrates in all things agreeable to the revealed will of God, for God has placed them over us. In addition we are to pray for them.

The terms "the ministries of headship and of submission" are more accurate than speaking of "male and female roles." This is true for several reasons. First, "roles" is a word that, in our culture, tends to suggest particular tasks, ways and means, such as who will do the cooking, keep the books, etc.. In contrast to that, we are thinking of more general responsibilities of the man giving spiritual oversight to, and providing for, the family and the woman supporting the man and nurturing the family. Particular roles or tasks are related to the particular gifts and interests of the partners and to the opportunities they have in their specific cultural settings. We do not want to be understood to be restricting women or men to particular tasks, no matter

how traditional they have become. For a biblical example of what we have in mind, we think of the responsibility and the variety of tasks being carried out by the "godly woman" in Proverbs 31, or the work of Lydia who was a "seller of purple".

Second, in our culture when referred to as roles, these ministries of men and women are likely to be viewed in the terms of superior and inferior, of a dictatorial boss and of cowed subordinates. That is not how the scriptural ministries of headship and support are to be understood. These are complementary ministries of equal importance, carried out by equals united in love, exercised in mutual consultation and care in a common mission. And they are based on the created nature of the two partners. The partners together, united as one, reflect the attributes of God and the mystery of the Trinity. As we read in Scripture the man is to love the wife as Christ loves the Church. It is a sacrificial love that is intended in male headship, both in the family and in the Church.

That men and women have been "given" ministries does not mean that men or women are never to step outside the ministries to which, by creation, they are best suited. There are times in this fallen creation, when due to circumstances or the failure of men or women to do their part that the partner will need to do what must be done. This is evident in Scripture. Also it is true that while men and women differ considerably, they do not differ totally and that we do embody the traits of one another in varying degrees. Because of this it is possible, in emergency situations, for one partner to assume the responsibility that would normally belong to the other.

Since God by design has made us male and female, we are to understand and rejoice in our created nature as male and female. In the Bible the central and defining aspects of masculinity and femininity are found in the order and ministries of male headship and female support. Whenever this order of creation and these ministries are ignored or denied, equality is defined as interchangeability.

Competition replaces complementarity. This is evidenced dramatically by the society in which we live. Our culture generally and erroneously asserts a unisex interchangeability of men and women. It tends to deny the difference between men and women with the exception of the erotic sexual aspect and it depersonalizes, commercializes, and exaggerates that. This departure in principle and practice from traditional and biblical norms has proven to be a devastating error, as we can see in the state of things today....

The point is that Galatians 3:28 does not refer to headship and submission at all. It does not address the ministries of men and women in family or Church. It is therefore not a master text defining all New Testament teaching on the relations of men and women. It does not even define all of Paul's teaching on

the subject. It certainly does not cancel the order of creation to which the apostle Paul and other New Testament writers repeatedly turn to affirm male headship and female submission in family and Church. (See 1 Cor 11:3-4; Eph 5:22-33; 1 Pet 3:1-7).

Finally, in First Timothy and Titus, we find explicit and significant treatments of the place, the duties, and the character of those who are to be overseers or elders. These texts provide the primary basis in the New Testament for our developed offices of priest and bishop. In both sets of texts, the persons referenced are men. There is no hint of women serving as elders in the texts that discuss these ministries. Just the opposite is the case; it is clear that it is men who are to serve in these ministries. The conclusion regarding the teaching of Scripture is that the scriptures do not envision, or permit women to exercise the headship that is contemplated for those ordained to be priests or consecrated as bishops. It is contrary to the mystery of the Trinity, to the character of God's act in creation, and to the created nature of men and women that mirrors the life of the Trinity in marriage, the family, and in the Church. The Scripture having said "No," the Church has no right or authority to ordain women to these offices for, as the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion put it, the Church "ought not to decree anything against the same" (Article 20). There is significant corroborative evidence for Scripture's position found in the observation of nature, and, the experience of life in society and in Church history. One such is that the symbolic character of the offices of priest and bishop make them unsuitable for women. The ordination of women symbolically distorts the scriptural revelation of God due to the intimate connection between the nature of God and the symbolic character of the ministry of priests and bishops. Symbolism is powerful in effect and defies easy explanation.

The Christian worldview is theistic. The one and only God transcends the world that he has created while at the same time sustaining the world and acting within it. God has no female consort. His action is likened a few times in Scripture to the action of a mother, for he acts in motherly ways showing that he also has the attributes in himself that are mirrored more fully by women. However it is always clear in Scripture that his attributes adhere in him and are exercised by him who is beyond the world and not to be identified with it.

In contrast, some of the religions of the world are pantheistic not theistic. Feminine symbols and images of the divine-goddesses, female consorts, and the like giving birth to the universe-are widespread. So too are priestesses. When the feminine is given the same prominence and ministry as the masculine, pantheism is the result. At almost every point, pantheism is a worldview and a religion in direct contradiction to God's word in Scripture. Even when the ordained woman is orthodox in faith and not a theological feminist, by being a woman serving as a priest or bishop she has imported a

contrary symbolism into the representative nature of the ordained ministry. Such symbolism will inevitably push matters in the wrong direction in the Church. We can already see it to be doing so.

Men and women differ biologically, psychologically, and relationally. Ministries are meant to reflect the differences. Biologically the male is physically more outwardly directed and the woman more inwardly. This is evidenced in a number of ways. The male bone structure is generally heavier and better shaped for addressing obstacles in the environment whereas the woman's bone structure is weaker and shaped for the bearing of children.

The male hand is stronger and the male striated musculature is more capable of strong and sudden contraction. The arm and chest muscles are generally larger and more developed in the male. The bodily form of the male is more rugged than the female, with wider shoulders and narrower hips that are suitable for outward action. Whereas, the female form is more rounded and smoother with smaller, narrower shoulders and wider hips, suitable for the bearing of children. Recent studies have stressed the benefits of breast-feeding of the newly born and the measurable, beneficial impact upon the IQ of babies of being reared in the early years by the mother. Women are biologically oriented toward the family, and men are oriented toward the world.

Descriptive psychology studies the consciousness of human beings. Building upon the physical differences, different mental and emotional traits are found between men and women. Our sexuality or gender pervades our person. Men usually have more distance from their emotions and evidence a tendency to detach themselves from immediate reactions whereas women tend to be more immediate and spontaneous in their responses. In patterns of thought, men tend to analyze, objectify, disassociate, classify, and synthesize whereas women are more prone to be intuitive, personally related, and to exercise empathy. Men tend to be more visual/spatial and women more verbal. Men are less aware of their bodies than women tend to be. Men are more goal-oriented, and women are more care-and-need-oriented. Women are more holistic in viewing a situation, and men tend to focus on some given aspect that will lead to a particular course of action. Women are more capable mentally of multi-tasking and nurture. Men are more inclined toward sequential planning, goal setting, and achieving. Women are more welcoming in orientation whereas men are more aggressive and competitive.

Societies differ in many respects; sociologists have discerned a number of trans-cultural or common traits that characterize every healthy society. These common traits reflect and build upon the biological and psychological factors listed above. They are as follows: 1. Sexual division of labor are found, 2. Complementary roles in the communal and domestic spheres are present. Men bear primary responsibility for the larger community. Women

bear primary responsibility for domestic management and the rearing of young children. 3. Some form of female subordination to men exists. Men govern the larger communities while women exercise their responsibility for domestic management and the rearing of children under the oversight of the husband. 4. Cultural expressions of gender differences between men and women are evident.

Sociologists have observed that in societies such as ours where these traits are significantly weak or obscured, the following consequences appear: 1. family life is weakened, 2. sexual relations become troubled, 3. women often lose a sense of value, 4. womanly roles are neglected, 5. manly roles are neglected, and 6. men and women develop psychological instabilities.

The above data drawn from the observation of God's creation, simply confirms what is clearly taught in Scripture. This should come as no surprise for the creator and the redeemer who authored both the book of nature and the book of Scripture is one and the same. He does not contradict himself. To place women in authority over the congregations is to violate the natural order of things as taught throughout the scriptures and observed in the sciences.

Thus, when considering a change as radical as the ordination of women to the priesthood and episcopate and in the Church's practice with regard to the ordained ministry, the burden of proof lies with those who make such a proposal. And when this proposal arises from a secular society and amid a compromised Church, and when it is a request from but a tiny minority of the Church universal, the burden of proof required to legitimize the change becomes even more demanding. Such proof has not been forthcoming-quite the contrary. The teaching of Scripture and evidence cited above from God's book of creation are both contrary to the innovation of the ordination of women to these offices. In summary, there are compelling reasons to affirm a male priesthood and episcopate. First and last, Scripture does not allow for the ordination of women to these offices as these offices function within Anglicanism. Serious exegesis only serves to substantiate that statement....

In addition, we have indicated some of the important theological, ecclesiastical, social, and scientific reasons that corroborate the teaching of Scripture. We are very desirous that women exercise their full ministry in the gospel, in the Church, in the family and in society. We want the full flowering of womanhood and manhood in complimentary partnership to be modeled in our families and in the Church. To ordain women to the priesthood and episcopate can only hurt the family, the Church, and society. It will hurt, not help, women and it will do damage to all.

Outlines:

Outline of 1 Corinthians:

- 1 Corinthians 1-4: Their relationship with God
- 1 Corinthians 5-7: Their relationships with each other
- 1 Corinthians 8-10: Their relationship with the city / world
- 1 Corinthians 11-14: Their relationships in worship
- 1 Corinthians 15: Their relationship to the future
- 1 Corinthians 16: Their relationship to Paul and his mission

Outline of 1 Corinthians 11:2-16:

- A (2): Traditions
 - B (3-5): Man prays with his head uncovered, Woman with her head covered
 - C (6): A woman without a covering is shameful
 - D (7-9): Woman created from and for man
 - E (10): Woman should have authority on her head**
- because of the angels**
 - D'(11-12): Interdependence of men and women
 - C'(13): A woman without a covering is improper
 - B'(14-15): Man wears his hair short, woman wears her hair long
 - A' (16): Traditions

Chiasm of 1 Corinthians 11.2-16 [adapted from John Breck, *The Shape of Biblical Language*]

11.2-7

Verse 2 is an introduction

A (3): But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a woman is her husband, and the head of Christ is God.

B (4): Any man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonors his head [Christ],

C (5a): but any woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head [man/husband]—

D (5b): it is the same as if her head were shaven.

E (6a): For if a woman will not cover herself [with long hair], then she should cut off her hair [be shaved];

D' (6b): but if it is disgraceful for a woman to be shorn or shaven,

C' (6c): let her cover her head [in long hair].

B' (7a): for a man ought not to cover his head [in long hair],

A' (7b): since he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man.

11.8-12

A (8): For man was not made from woman, but woman from man.

B (9): Neither was man created for woman, but woman for man.

C (10): That is why a woman ought to have authority [a covering] on her head, because of the angels.

B'(11): Nevertheless, in the Lord woman is not independent of man nor man of woman;

A'(12): for as woman was made from man, so man is now born of woman. And all things are from God.

11.13-16

A (13): Judge for yourselves: is it proper for a woman to pray to God uncovered?

B (14): Does not nature itself teach you that for man to wear long hair it is shameful to him,

C (15a): but if a woman has long hair, it is her glory?

B' (15b): For her hair is given to her for a covering.

A'(16): If any one is disposed to be contentious, we recognize no other practice, nor do the churches of God.

Paul's argument in 1 Cor. 11:2-16 depends very much on the historical details of the creation account in Gen. 1-2. This is also the case in 1 Tim. 2:9-15, where Paul again builds his argument off the historical factuality of the biblical creation narrative. Male headship is rooted in the historical fact that the man was made first; the woman was made last, from the man and for the man. Patriarchy is established by primogeniture; God names the whole race "Adam" because he is created first. Obviously, that pattern cannot be squared with any evolutionary theory, which is why denominations that cave in on the traditional reading of Gen. 1-2 sooner or later (usually sooner!) end up caving in also on the role of women.

Headship of the man is also seen in Gen. 3, where God comes to Adam and asks him what has gone wrong. Adam is held accountable not only for his own sin, but also for his wife's.

But headship should not be confused with worth or value. We've already explored that truth in light of 1 Cor. 11:3. When Paul says the man is head of the wife, he is talking about organization, not valuation. He is not saying, "The man is a quarter, the wife is a dime." It's more like saying the man is paper dollar bill, while the woman is a silver dollar. Same value, but different.

We need to understand that liberals actually love a passage like 1 Cor. 11:2ff because they think they can use it to discredit everything else the Bible teaches on creation and gender roles. They think the text teaches something so crazy, something so tied to an oppressive first century cultural situation, that it can be easily dismissed.

While women in the Bible are praised for their femininity, there is certainly a sense in which they are not overly frilly. Look at Jael, who used drove a tent peg into Sisera's head. Or the unnamed woman in Judges who dropped a millstone on Abimelech's head. Or look at Mary's militant Magnificat. We need to make sure we don't confuse biblical femininity with being afraid of spiders or being a "drama queen." The truth is that biblical woman are strong and courageous.

In the church, male/female roles are quite tightly prescribed. Men are the officers and leaders. Woman can use their gifts teaching outside of the assembly and serving in all kinds of ways. But they cannot teach men in the liturgical assembly and they cannot be governors/rulers of men. In the family, men are heads/leaders as well, but the specifics of the how husbands and wives divide the labor in the home is left to culture, custom, and common sense. The Bible does not say he must mow the lawn and she must cook. There is flexibility for a couple to work out a household pattern that best suits them. In society, there is even more flexibility. While a society that lacks predominant male leadership is probably sick unto death, women are certainly free to pursue a wide variety of vocations. Typically, women are too valuable to be in put in especially dangerous lines of work, like combat, fire fighting, etc. Men are more expendable, so they should be the ones filling those roles. But provided a woman is either single or has fulfilled her familial/domestic obligations, she is free to pursue a career in business, politics, etc. that suits her gifts and interests. Nothing in the Bible suggest that women in general need to defer or submit to men in general in society. While our culture's unisex/androgynous model is wrong, many traditional straight-jacket role stereotypes are also wrong.

Rich Bledsoe has posted an interesting series of marriage articles. Here are links and excerpts:

<http://biblicalhorizons.wordpress.com/2011/01/22/two-views-of-marriage/>

The woman is filled with anxiety because she has deep memories about how Adam betrayed Eve in the original transaction with Satan. She is suppose to trust him, but doesn't for that reason. In the mean time, he has lost his capacity for leadership, and has precious little clue as to how to do it, but his whole manhood is on the line to be able to. She should trust but can't, he should lead but can't, and that is a pickle. Hence, she is double minded (the definition of anxiety)not trusting, but wanting to, and being mad about it, and he has anxiety about her anxiety, knowing that she doesn't trust him, but feels she should be able to and is mad about it. The more anxious she is, the more it fuels his anxiety. And she knows that he is anxious, which makes him even less trustworthy in her eyes (no one trusts an anxious leader), and that makes her more anxious which in turn makes him more anxious, which in turn makes her more anxious... Then, they try to fix it by "talking." Talking means to expressing oneself, "getting it all out in the open" (self expression is suppose to 'fix' everything) He tells her how bad she makes him feel all the time by when he is around her, and she retorts that she has damn good reasons for feeling the way she does around him, and she expresses those feelings with a clarity and sharpness that is consonate with superior female verbal and psychic abilities. Being unable to match her sharpness, he yells louder. She comes back with forty three charges, remembering everything he has ever done from the time they met. He would love to hit her, smack her real good, because she has just annihilated him verbally. But, he is not in Saudi Arabia, so he can't beat her. So he withdraws and pouts. Later, he leaves and slams the door real hard when he goes out, and goes and drives his car 25 miles, and hopes that when he gets back, she will feel real bad. She does. They both feel real bad. They have a "hearts and flowers time" and have some great sex. A few days go by, and she is anxious when he is around. He hardly ever says anything. They watch TV alot. He is aware that she is anxious, and this makes him more anxious. The whole cycle starts all over again. "Hearts and flowers" happen less often. There is more silence and more distance.

Sex is such a hassle, talking is even worse.

So, second, what is one suppose to do about such a sorry state of affairs?

Well, anxiety is the enemy. When anxiety begins to be conquered, all else is possible. One must tackle anxiety.

There are certain things that cannot be attacked directly. Everyone knows that a baseball player cannot combat a batting slump by trying harder. Tiger Woods is not playing bad golf because there is something wrong with his "work ethic.". If one struggles against the quick sand, one sinks faster. And

while there can be a certain kind of truth to saying that people must “work on their marriage,” it can at best be only a very incomplete truth. Marriage, and for that matter, all relationships, are not like digging a ditch or doing push-ups. Some things are only found indirectly, and “ensue” to us and that is the only way the blessings come. If we “pursue”, they ALWAYS outrun us. The harder you run, the faster they will elude. It is an iron law.

Victor Frankl invented a technique that he used with certain kinds of compulsive anxiety neurosis. He found using this technique often cured people for whom years of counselling had been useless. To a man who was terrified that he would die of a heart attack, he instructed him to lie down on the couch in his office and told him to now concentrate and focus all of his attention, and cause himself to have a heart attack. To a man who was afraid to go into public because he was afraid that he would perspire and the sight of sweat pouring off of him, and the consequent bad odor, would make him an outcast, he gave a similiar direction. “Try right now to start sweating, and sweat quarts and quarts, and smell as bad as it is possible for a human to smell. Make an outcast of yourself right here.” To a man who was afraid to sign into a motel because as clerk was watching, his handwriting would become a childish scrawl, and utterly illegible (he grew up in a culture where having a “fine hand” meant a lot), he told to write his name and make it such a terrible scrawl that he would become an outcast immediately.

In all of these cases, the effect on the patients was that they all burst into laughter. That was just the ticket.

The usual mark of all dysfunctional families is that they are serious. Very serious. Now, our problems are serious, very serious. God took them seriously and showed His grief in the Crucifixion. But the Resurrection is God’s laughter and God’s joy. And if our religion cannot make us joyful, and very light, and make us float with laughter, then it is not worth much. The Tea Party scene in Mary Poppins is a very Christian scene. That was a very Christian tea party. If we are not laughing often, then we do not have enough Resurrection in us.

Anxious, sexless, uncommunicative marriages need more Resurrection. Lots more Resurrection.

What I would suggest to someone in a bad marriage who wants it to be better, is that he or she must begin to seriously give thanks to God for all of the problems that are in that marriage. No sex? Praise God. All talk leads to misunderstanding? Praise God.

Am I daft? “Count it all joy, my brethern, when you meet various trials...” (James 1:2) Do you need spiritual weapons to fight spiritual enemies in your marriage? Then listen to the Psalmist.

Let the faithful exult in glory;
let them sing for joy on their couches,
Let the high praises of God be in their throats
and two-edged swords in their hands...

Psalm 149:5-6

Spiritual warfare must be done in marriages, but it must be done not by grim warriors, but very cheerful warriors.

Remember, Chesterton's very great quip: "The devil fell through the force of gravity."

An Age of Anxiety is a grim age. Far from being "gay" and far from being marked by pleasure and happiness, late modernity is full of grimness (think Heidegger and "being onto death," and "anxiety is the essence of our being," etc. etc. etc), and we attempt to fix the problems of grimness through more grimness.

Learning to begin to be thankful for all of the problems in one's marriage has a double effect. 1) It is a form of "paradoxical intention." It takes one's mind off of the problem and brings relaxation. It can even bring joy and laughter. The very relaxation itself will make all kinds of other things possible (like sex and communication—both of which require large amounts of playfulness—exactly what the "serious" are incapable of) and 2) God comes in new ways when one offers praise, thanksgiving, and rejoices (note, "rejoice" is a command, it is something that is amenable to will).

If one does not "rejoice in the wife of your youth" there will never be much sex.

New cycles need to replace vicious cycles. Vicious circles (such as I described in my first post) go down and down and down. Rejoicing and thanking circles are what reverse vicious circles. They gradually go up and up and up.

Rejoicing leads to relaxation which leads to sex which then creates even more rejoicing, which then leads to more relaxation and more sex, etc. etc., the exact opposite of the vicious circle.

"But you don't know what my wife/husband is like...you are whistling in the dark." Hmmmm... Sorry, I have been around a long time. I doubt I will hear any horror I have not heard. I have been down lots of dark alleys and into lots of terrible box canyons. And it does not require that both do this. The "motivated party" is the one who can in the end, change everything.

<http://biblicalhorizons.wordpress.com/2009/02/20/marriage-by-faith/>

Marriage is the new emblem and type of the new configuration of the human race: the city. The two are combined in Revelation 21-22. But marriage is impossible. Just ask almost anyone under thirty, and if they won't say it, they feel it. It is impossible. That is why such a high percentage of them are shacking up. They have watched their parents and seen too much for too long. The experience is too deep and they are too knowledgeable. The thing is impossible. Just as well not even try. Just hook up and have a room mate for a while. And even more fearful is the thought of having a family. Lots of girls want a baby, but the only thing that is more fearful to young men than marriage is the thought of being a father. That is the horror of horrors. And on top of that, we are now facing the fears of world wide depression. Who in their right mind would take on the most extended financial obligation of all in a world like ours? Marriage is impossible.

There is only one way to be married. One must be married by faith. It is as impossible in our time as believing in forgiveness was in Luther's time. And the only alternative to the image of marriage as we find it in Revelation 21 and 22, as we metropolize all over the world, is the image of a whoredom in Revelation 18. This tells the whole story of the hell that humanity is doomed to in the city if we do not marry successfully. The Whore of Babylon who drinks blood and is herself destroyed by her pimps, is the other possible picture as the alternative to the picture of the New Jerusalem. This is also a picture of economic devastation. The whore and her pimps not only devour blood, but every form of wealth. It is all just squandered in the most horrible of orgies. Sex and death are very expensive, and generations of capital can be devoured in one night of revelry. Whoever is right about the technical source of our vast malinvestment, at heart it is whoredom that undoes everything. Marriage is impossible. The city is also impossible. The university is impossible. But, these are NOT impossible, either on the micro or the macro level. But it happens in only one way: by faith. And marriage is the type that is at the heart of each of these realities. And the first and primary reality of all of these types is the church, the Bride of Christ. Marriage by faith is where the new world is going to come from. It is impossible in every other way.

<http://biblicalhorizons.wordpress.com/2009/01/14/marriage-and-betrayal/>

Perhaps the most fearful of all possibilities in the world is the possibility of betrayal on the part of someone who is in a "position of trust." This, unfortunately, is the first block in what ought to be the foundation of every marriage in the world. Every woman has a far distant memory, and now anxiety, about what Adam did to Eve. And, just as anyone who has ever failed when trusted, every man likewise, has a far distant memory of what it is that Adam did in that first infamous act. Whatever Adam's motive (curiosity at what would happen if Eve did what was forbidden, or fear at opposing what she wanted) it does not change the fact that Adam betrayed his wife. The consequence is that now, every marriage has built into it, at the deepest level, the great difficulty of the woman trusting the man. And every man lives with the anxiety of knowing that he is, at least often, not trusted. He lives with anxiety about her anxiety. The constant danger in every marriage is of the marriage existing in a state of a vicious circle of anxiety about anxiety. Every anxious response to previous anxiety gives rise to more anxiety, which in turn spawns even more anxious response, and so on down and down to final destruction. Everything is the opposite of trust. Cartesianism, and the whole of the Enlightenment Project, could be understood as an attempt to flee the anxiety of a fallen world that has betrayal of trust at its heart. Or conversely, it could be understood as a headlong rush into destruction and death that result from the first, ancient, and basil incapacity for trust. Doubt and impersonal "objectivity" (the very opposite of trust) are at the heart of the Enlightenment Project.

Karl Stern, the Roman Catholic psychoanalyst, has demonstrated how so many of the Enlightenment figures, and notably Descartes himself, had dreadful relationships with almost all of the most important women in their lives. Their entire lives appear to have been controlled by anxiety over anxiety, and are either straightforward or paradoxical reworkings of the Original Betrayal and its consequences.

“Descartes’ celebrated friendships with women were lofty, intellectual, and platonic. But he kept a life-long affection, and attachment of the heart, for his wet-nurse, to whom he paid a yearly allowance and for whom he secured in his will continued support after his death. And the only woman with whom we know he had an affair, Helena Jans, seems to have been a domestic servant. From her he had a daughter, Francine, who died at the age of five. Thus we see in his life something which we shall encounter again in Goethe, something not infrequent in the lives of great men— the apparently total cleavage between the carnal and the spiritual image of woman.

Psychoanalysts speak of the ‘prostitute-madonna’ conflict when they refer to such inability to combine sexual relation and ‘higher friendship’ in the same person. In Descartes we encounter the seemingly paradoxical: it was not in sexual adventure that danger lurked, but in the platonic woman friend, the cool goddess with whom he discussed matters of metaphysics and geometry. All these women—the Dutchess of Aiguillon, Anne-Marie de Schurmann, Princess Elizabeth, Queen Christina of Sweden—were highly ambivalent in their relationship with him. (This comes out most clearly in Mlle. de Schurmann and in Queen Christina). To this kind of woman he was lured magically, as though to his perdition, and paradoxically enough she, while not the sexual object of his love, was his femme fatale. As a matter of fact, Christina became his fatal woman in the literal sense of the word...Schicksalsneurose, neurosis of destiny [first spoken of by Nietzsche, as *das typische Erlebnis*, (the typical experience) and later by Freud]. What appears as a clinical label becomes the expression of a haunting reality. That this motherless, roaming spirit would finally succeed in manoeuvring himself inextricably into the hands of the Anti-Mother! Christina literally deprived him of the maternal triad, warmth and sleep and the proper food, and thus, with the uncanny sureness of her own unconscious, caused him to die. What made him seek this end? Why did he not, like Goethe, find a compromise in staying with that maidservant? He might, like Goethe, have settled down and reached a ripe old age. However, it is wrong to approach past lives with ‘ifs’ and ‘mights.’ Finished lives are like the physiognomies of the dead: one feels the end is not an arbitrary break but a fulfillment.” (Flight From Woman, Noonday Press, New York. 1965, pp.92-93, 98-99)

The entire Enlightenment period could be termed by Stern’s book title, *The Flight From Woman*, the era controlled by the anxiety of men of that age fleeing from the accusation of “betrayal” and the destruction of the possibility of trust. The aim was a world that could be built without faith, or hope or trust as a foundation, and a neutral objectivity that could be accessed by of all things, the opposite of trust: doubt. It was an age that either marginalized, or

used women, or enthroned the femme fatale, as in the case of Queen Christina.

Part of Luther's great achievement has been lost in the avalanche of the Enlightenment. Perhaps the two most notable things that Luther did were one, to restore trust as the most central fact of all of human intention, and secondly, he married Katie. Luther's marriage to Katie is one of the most important relationships in the history of the world and is the complete opposite of all that Stern relates above. Luther and Katie, for all of their human weaknesses, recreated the central reality of trust on both a vertical and horizontal level. It was a recreation of the world. Now, after almost 500 years of Descartes' clash with Luther, other figures, like Van Til, Polanyi, and the Thomist renewal figures, are all reasserting that the most fundamental epistemological act is not doubt, but belief and faith and personal risk. The most foundational acts in the scientific realm are not to be found in some objective and impersonal realm, but in acts of personal trust. Trust and belief are more basic than doubt. One must believe something more basic than anything one can finally doubt. And, the final background to all belief is in God Himself, who offers Himself to us not impersonally, but as our Father in His Son, Jesus Christ.

Luther and Calvin both gave a place of honor to Mary, the Mother of Jesus. She is not a goddess to be worshiped, but a central figure in the recovery of trust. She believed God in the message through the angel Gabriel, and trusted God and surrendered to him. Joseph later did not surrender to his anxiety about her "strange condition", but likewise in trust, believed God both for her, and with her. In a situation where every possible condition for anxiety was present, it all was overcome in recreating acts of faith and trust.

1 cor. 11.2-16 helps reinforce what we have seen earlier in the letter of 1 Cor. about the Unnaturalness of homosexual practice. John Piper has a couple recent articles that articulate the matter well in light of our current cultural situation:

<http://www.desiringgod.org/blog/posts/my-eyes-shed-streams-of-tears-thoughts-on-the-new-calamity>

Excerpts:

Jesus died so that heterosexual and homosexual sinners might be saved. Jesus created sexuality, and has a clear will for how it is to be experienced in holiness and joy.

His will is that a man might leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife, and that the two become one flesh (Mark 10:6-9). In this union, sexuality finds its God-appointed meaning, whether in personal-physical

unification, symbolic representation, sensual jubilation, or fruitful procreation.

For those who have forsaken God's path of sexual fulfillment, and walked into homosexual intercourse or heterosexual extramarital fornication or adultery, Jesus offers astonishing mercy.

Such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God (1 Corinthians 6:11).

But last weekend this salvation from sinful sexual acts was not embraced. Instead there was massive celebration of sin.

[One estimate](#) said that 400,000 people celebrated gay pride in Minneapolis. That's more than the population of the city. The number is probably inflated, but for the first time in history, it did include the governor of the state, Mark Dayton.

The Bible is not silent about such parades. Alongside its clearest *explanation* of the sin of homosexual intercourse (Romans 1:24-27) stands the indictment of the *celebration* of it. Though people know intuitively that homosexual acts (along with gossip, slander, insolence, haughtiness, boasting, faithlessness, heartlessness, ruthlessness) are sin, "they not only do them but *give approval to those who practice them*" (Romans 1:29-32). "I tell you even with tears, that many glory in their shame" (Philippians 3:18-19). This is what our governor was doing on Sunday along with millions of others across the country—knowing these deeds are wrong, "yet approving those who practice them."

Not only that, we are moving from celebration to *institutionalization*. On June 24 the New York legislature approved a Marriage Equality Act. This makes New York the sixth state where so-called homosexual marriages will be institutionalized: Connecticut, Iowa, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont, (and the District of Columbia).

My sense is that we do not realize what a calamity is happening around us. The new thing—new for America, and new for history—is not homosexuality. That brokenness has been here since we were all broken in the fall of man. (And there is a great distinction between the orientation and the act—just like there is a great difference between my orientation to pride and the act of boasting.)

What's new is not even the *celebration* of homosexual sin. Homosexual behavior has been exploited, and reveled in, and celebrated in art, for millennia. What's new is normalization and institutionalization. This is the new calamity.

My main reason for writing is not to mount a political counter-assault. I don't think that is the calling of the church as such. My reason for writing is to help the church feel the sorrow of these days. And the magnitude of the assault on God and his image in man.

Christians, more clearly than others, can see the tidal wave of pain that is on the way. Sin carries in it its own misery: "Men committing shameless acts

with men and *receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error*" (Romans 1:27).

And on top of sin's self-destructive power comes, eventually, the wrath of God: "sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of these the wrath of God is coming" (Colossians 3:5-6).

Christians know what is coming, not only because we see it in the Bible, but because we have tasted the sorrowful fruit of our own sins. We do not escape the truth that we reap what we sow. Our marriages, our children, our churches, our institutions—they are all troubled because of our sins.

The difference is: We weep over our sins. We don't celebrate them. We turn to Jesus for forgiveness and help. We cry to Jesus, "who delivers us from the wrath to come" (1 Thessalonians 1:10).

And in our best moments, we weep for the world. In the days of Ezekiel God put a mark of hope "on the foreheads of the men *who sigh and groan over all the abominations* that are committed in Jerusalem" (Ezekiel 9:4).

This is what I am writing for. Not political action, but love for the name of God and compassion for the city of destruction.

"My eyes shed streams of tears, because people do not keep your law."
(Psalm 119:136)

For those caught in the [calamity](#) of the normalization, celebration, and institutionalization of homosexual behavior, there are resources for help. Today let me just mention one cluster.

Probably the most authoritative scholarly work on homosexuality and the Bible is Robert Gagnon, [The Bible and Homosexual Practice](#) (Abingdon, 2001). Educated at Dartmouth and Harvard Divinity School, Gagnon teaches at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary.

He has a web site, www.robgagnon.net, with [numerous links](#) which may be helpful, especially at the level of what the Bible actually teaches and why it is still relevant today. But also at the level of personally coming out of homosexual and lesbian lifestyles.

To give you a taste of Gagnon's heart and mind I quote this important section from his book:

Perhaps worst of all is the knowledge that a rigorous critique of same-sex intercourse can have the unintended effect of bringing personal pain to homosexuals, some of whom are already prone to self-loathing. This is why it needs to be emphatically stated that to feel homosexual impulses does not make one a bad person.

I deplore attempts to demean the humanity of homosexuals. Whatever one thinks about the immorality of homosexual behavior, or about the obnoxiousness of elements within the homosexual lobby, homosexual impulses share with all other sinful impulses the feature of being an attack on the "I" or inner self experiencing the impulses (Romans 7:14-25). The person

beset with homosexual temptation should evoke our concern, sympathy, help, and understanding, not our scorn or enmity.

Even more, such a person should kindle a feeling of solidarity in the hearts of all Christians, since we all struggle to properly manage our erotic passions. A homosexual impulse, while sinful, cannot take shape as accountable sin in a person's life unless one acquiesces to it.

Thus a reasoned denunciation of homosexual behavior and all other attempts at nurturing and justifying homosexual passions is *not*, and should not be construed as, a denunciation of those victimized by homosexual urges, since the aim is to rescue the true self created in God's image for a full life (*The Bible and Homosexual Practice*, 31).

Doug Wilson, on "Keeping the Hetero in Heterosexuality":

Biblical marriage thrives on godly differences, which is implied in the word hetero—the Greek word for other. In a godly marriage, there is someone else there, someone who thinks, responds, emotes, and anticipates differently than I do. This is a design feature; it is not an indication that something has gone terribly wrong.

Marriage is therefore an assigned task of singing harmony. Two different people have to hit two different notes, and they they have to do it in a way that sounds good together. After a few failed attempts at this, a husband and wife may begin wishing that it could be possible to bring about a false unity by simply "singing in unison." It is not nearly as challenging in one sense, and it appears far less risky. The problem is that in order to do this the man has to sing falsetto, or the woman has to sing bass. Or perhaps they could settle for singing an octave apart.

This kind of thing happens when the man demands unity in the home through his wife conforming her perspectives, gifts, insights, intuitions, etc. to his perspective. In other words, this occurs when the man browbeats the woman into submerging her gifts and identity. She has to pretend to be something other than what God created her to be in order to have peace in the home.

But the problem can go the other way also. There are many marriage counselors in the Christian world who simply assume that the feminine perspective on the marriage is the accurate one, and that the job of the man is to find out what that perspective is, and then go conform himself to it. And unfortunately, there are many wives who accept this false doctrine and browbeat their husbands into accepting an identity that is alien to them. Both such responses are ungodly and selfish (obviously), but there is a reason for this. They are not wrong because they are found on a list of prohibited attitudes; they are wrong because they contradict the way God is. They are contrary to what the Bible reveals about the nature of God. Our Triune God glories in both unity and multiplicity. This is not a hassle for Him;

He does it in and through sheer, inexhaustible love. In love, the Father begets the Son. In love, the Son honors and obeys the Father. The Holy Spirit is the mutual love of both the Father and the Son. In other words, the infinite love of Father and Son for one another is so substantial that this love also is an infinite Person, the Holy Spirit. Following Augustine, this is what we mean when we say that the Spirit proceeds from both the Father and the Son. Now the Bible tells us that mankind was created in the image of God, "male and female created he them" (Gen.

1:27). We learn here that man and woman together constitute the image of God, and we learn that they do so in a way that emphasizes both their similarity and dissimilarity. "There is a woman over there, who was not there before, and yet she was taken from here, from my side." The woman was therefore bone of Adam's bone, and flesh of Adam's flesh. Unity was the foundation of the division into two, but then the two were fashioned in a way that enabled them to come back together again into one. We see that in Trinitarian categories, which is surely what the *imago Dei* must be in, there is no war between one sex and the other sex. This hetero thing is a necessary outworking of what God is like.

Sin resents what God is like and tries to suppress what He has done in this creational glory. Extreme cases of this resentment are seen in homosexuality, discussed at length elsewhere in this issue. But my concern is with what may be called a quasi-homosexuality, a problem that exists in many Christian marriages. When a man browbeats his wife, demanding that she be something other than his other, he is demanding that she act as though she really thinks like a man. When a woman gets her husband to crawl around her feet emotionally, she is demanding that he think like a woman. When either sex falls into this type of sin, they are resisting living and sleeping with someone who is genuinely different.

This is why the Scriptures forbid a perversion at the opposite pole from homosexuality—which is bestiality. The scriptural word for this is profound: "it is confusion." But we should think of this as Christians who believe in the Trinity. Homosexuality is resentment of the other, insistence upon sameness. Bestiality is a rejection of sameness, and insistence upon complete otherness. There is no way to marry same and other except in the creation account of Genesis. Woman is the same for she was taken from man. Woman is different for she was taken from man. Man and woman may come together for they are the same. Man and woman may come together for they are not the same. Our God confounds the wisdom of the wise.

Sexual security is not threatened by otherness, for we are the same. It is not threatened by sameness, for we are other. A man and woman may come together in harmony for they both know that the other is not threatened either.

The way God made the world is simply to be accepted and enjoyed.

Doug Farrow wrote an excellent article on “Blurring Sexual Boundaries” in *First Things* (<http://www.firstthings.com/article/2011/02/blurring-sexual-boundaries>):

First, observe that “gender identity” and “gender expression” are not, as proponents claim, like most other terms in these lists. That is, they do not represent objective conditions determined either by biology (like sex or race) or by sociopolitical institutions (like nationality, marital status, or religion). Rather, they represent subjectively determined conditions—mere attitudes toward oneself, or attitudes combined with behaviors (cross-dressing, say) intended to express or alleviate those attitudes. Gender identity, as one rights-commission statement puts it approvingly, “is linked to an individual’s intrinsic sense of self.”

Now this subjective realm of the self is humanly of vast importance, but it is not one into which the law should readily venture. Once venturing, it finds itself in a juridical Lebanon or Iraq—a territory from which it is very difficult to withdraw. Additions to the list of prohibited grounds or protected categories in this sphere can only grow longer and longer, until the whole idea of such laws becomes meaningless. Good law and sound public policy cannot be built on the shifting sands of the subjective.

We started down this road, of course, when we added sexual orientation, an identity marker that is not anchored in the biological or the institutional. But until now we have stopped shy of markers that explicitly combine the subjective with the behavioral. We have not asked, for legal purposes, whether a Canadian behaves like a Canadian or a Catholic like a Catholic or a man like a man. Those are extra-legal questions belonging to civil society, and it is important that they remain such, lest law (as Solzhenitsyn worried) absorb us altogether. Observe, further, that these categories—gender identity and gender expression—are not actually positive or constructive additions to the prohibited grounds of discrimination. Rather, they constitute a deliberate attack on one of the existing grounds: sex. Let me explain.

The word “sex” in our codes specifies the natural division of the species into male and female, with a view to protecting the latter especially. The addition of “sexual orientation,” however, has effected a transformation in our thinking about human sexuality. Male and female have begun to give way to heterosexual and homosexual in the basic binary logic of sex. Hence the idea of same-sex marriage, with its air of legal inevitability.

The proposed addition of “gender identity and expression” carries that transformation even further by suppressing the binary logic itself. Backers of these bills often make no attempt to disguise this. “One of the great myths of our culture,” insists the Canadian Labor Congress, “is that at

birth each infant can be identified as distinctly 'male' or 'female' (biological sex), will grow up to have correspondingly 'masculine' or 'feminine' behavior (public gender), live as a 'man' or a 'woman' (social gender role), and marry a woman or a man (heterosexual affective orientation). This is not so." The standard notion of sex, then, must be replaced by the more malleable concepts of sexual orientation and gender identity. And I do mean must. Here in Quebec a recent government white paper promises to wipe society clean of both homophobia and heterosexism—that is, of any "affirmation of heterosexuality as a social norm or the highest form of sexual orientation [and of any] social practice that conceals the diversity of sexual orientations and identities."

What this will mean in the long run for the legal protection of women remains to be seen, of course, but we can't have it both ways. Sex cannot serve as an effective legal marker for discrimination if its binary nature dissolves into fluid sexual subjectivities. In that sense, these bills constitute unfriendly amendments to the civil and criminal codes they purport to refine or perfect...

Some years ago in these pages, Dr. Paul McHugh ("Surgical Sex," November 2004) described the process by which his psychiatric team at Johns Hopkins eventually put a stop to sex-reassignment therapy, having come to the conclusion that SRT was based on a faulty premise and did more harm than good; indeed, that it was "to collaborate with a mental disorder rather than to treat it." Proponents of the present bills, setting aside the medical evidence, choke and fume at such a claim. Ironically, however, they would agree with McHugh that "without any fixed position on what is given in human nature, *any* manipulation of it can be defended as legitimate." And that is exactly what they want to achieve with this legislation. Gender fluidity is what they are after—meaning no fixed borders for sexual identity and no fixed rules for sexual self-expression.

Naturally this means all sorts of new rules for the general public, for businesses and schools, and for government. That is why interpretive institutions are springing up everywhere, like the GenderKompetenzCentrum at the University of Berlin. But when all is said and done, the proponents of these bills are not interested in the difficulties of implementation. Nor are they troubled by the logical or juridical or social contradictions the bills generate. For these bills are Trojan horses, which on closer inspection are designed not to protect a threatened minority but to entrench in law the notion that gender is essentially a social construct, based not in the natural order but in more or less arbitrary acts of human self-interpretation.

To endorse such bills one must think as the neo-gnostic Hegelians taught us to think—that nature is there only to be sublated or overcome—and to go, boldly or obediently, where the Gender Mainstreaming (GM)

strategists want us to go. “To adopt a gender perspective,” says one obedient United Nations publication, “is to distinguish between what is natural and biological and what is socially and culturally constructed, and in the process to renegotiate the boundaries between the natural—and hence relatively inflexible—and the social—and hence relatively transformable.”

The fate of these ambitious bills will tell us quite a lot about how these negotiations are going, and reveal just how transformable our society actually is.

The humor of G. K. Chesterton:

“If Americans can be divorced for incompatibility of temper I cannot conceive why they are not all divorced...I have known many happy marriages, but never a compatible one.”

Gender differences are part of the deep structure of reality. The differences are not shallow or only skin deep. They go all the way down. They are not “accidental” but “essential” to who we are. Gender differences are real and complementary. Sure, in a fallen world, the differences also cause friction since man and woman never fit together as perfectly as God originally designed. The “end game” of marriage is “onlt flesh” – the union of life with life, body with body, mind with mind, heart with heart. The roles God ascribes to each serve this purpose of oneness.

The roles God assigns to men and women are not arbitrary. They fit with our natures, who he has made us to be, as men and women. That’s why understanding these differences brings us wisdom. Again, sin has warped, twisted, and distorted who we are as men and women. Sin warps our desires. Sin curves us in on ourselves. Sin gives us a flawed sense of who we are. In a gender confused culture like our own, sin in this particular are is greatly exacerbated. But there is hope: As always, hope is found in the blood of Christ, who died to restore us to our rightful places as men and women. In Christ, men and can men and women can be women once again.

Robin Phillips on gender bending:

<http://norvalmorrissette.blogspot.com/2009/04/encounter-with-unisexism-by-robin.html>

A helpful and realistic look at feminine glory/beauty
(<http://www.boundless.org/2005/answers/a0001400.cfm>):

DEAR BOUNDLESS ANSWERS

I consider myself to be a very plain-looking young woman. I've never been one to wear makeup, style my hair, wear fashionable clothes, etc. In addition, I'm overweight. I was never popular, and I never wanted to stand out in a crowd. I emerged from junior high and high school relatively "unscathed" by the typical cattiness of the other girls mostly by remaining unnoticed.

I've heard countless messages about how a girl shouldn't put too much emphasis on physical beauty. But is it possible that this message can be taken too far? Shouldn't we temper what we say depending on our audience? I feel like no one has tempered his or her words regarding beauty for someone like me — someone who's already disinclined to try to be beautiful.

I find myself at 24 just as I was at 17 — still overweight, still plain-looking and still detesting the time, effort and money required to "beautify" myself in the world's eyes. I still have never been on a date, and I still stubbornly insist that a man should get to know me and love me for what's on the inside, rather than what's on the outside. The only thing that's changed is that now I find myself wanting to someday be married and have children as God has designed (a result of having come across the *Boundless* webzine this summer). And I wonder: Have I done something wrong? Have I mismanaged the body God has given me?

All these "anti-beauty" messages I've heard make it sound like it's a sin to constantly strive to be beautiful in the world's eyes. But is it equally a sin to NEVER try to be beautiful in the world's eyes? Have I unconsciously been fighting the whole "beauty" thing too hard all these years?

What tempered message can you give to me and others like me? (I can't be the only one, right?)

REPLY

Thank you for writing. A couple of weeks ago I answered a [beauty question](#) from someone whose friend had no interest in her outward appearance and thought anyone who broached the subject was unworthy of her friendship. This week's reply reads like a part 2 to that exchange. And given all the questions about beauty in my inbox, I could easily do parts 3, 4 and 5. This is clearly a topic that's on the mind of lots of our female readers.

You asked if the beauty message should be tempered depending on the audience. I believe the message should remain the same regardless of who you're talking to, whether women who emphasize their looks too much or too little. The principles of stewardship and modesty are universal and apply to both crowds. It's just that the former needs to pay more attention to their modesty, while women like you need encouragement to be good stewards. Beauty is not sinful. God made it. Many of the women in the Old Testament were singled out for their physical appearance. Sarah and Rebekah were so beautiful that their husbands feared they might be killed by other powerful, lustful men. Esther's beauty had everything to do with why King Xerxes chose her among all the virgins and Abigail's beauty surely played a role in staying David's murderous hand.

As my government professor from graduate school used to say, the Old Testament shows how beauty plays a key role in diplomacy.

But as I've written before, Scripture is equally clear that when we make the creature our focus — rather than the Creator — we're guilty of idolatry. And the consequences that follow are ugly. (See [Ezekiel 16](#) and [Isaiah 3:16-26](#).) Yes, there are lots of Christian women who struggle with the problem of overemphasis on beauty. But you're right that others fall into the category of "mismanagement" or neglect. And as you're discovering, this has a profound effect on some of your other goals, most notably your growing desire for marriage and family.

You wrote, "I still stubbornly insist that a man should get to know me and love me for what's on the inside, rather than what's on the outside." You then ask, "have I unconsciously been fighting the whole 'beauty' thing too hard all these years?"

I think your two questions are related.

First, about men. They *are* visual.

Think about that. More than most women, most men are stimulated, animated and activated by what they *see*. It's hard for women to fully grasp what this means because it's not our nature to be equally aroused by the images around us. We're more relational.

Granted, some would insist there is no difference between men and women. And our hyper-sexualized culture has altered the way some, even many, women react to what their eyes see. But generally speaking, men get their primary input through their eyes, while we get it through our hearts and minds. A woman who feels loved and accepted by her husband is much more willing and ready to respond to him sexually than is a woman who feels threatened, unappreciated or ridiculed. It has everything to do with her feelings. Even if he looks like Brad Pitt, Tom Cruise or (put the name of your favorite actor, sports hero or musician here), if she feels unloved, she will be less likely to respond.

There's been a host of books and studies that confirm this. Both anecdotal and scientific evidence abounds: Men and women *are* different. Everything from their brain chemistry to their emotional responses confirms it.

This is not to say it's OK for men to be sexually aroused by any and all women. Jesus was clear that lust is a sin saying that "everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart" ([Matthew 5:28](#)). But it follows that Jesus knew He needed to address the issue of looking at a woman with lust because He knows of a man's propensity for it.

That said, knowing that men have to fight their sin nature ([Job 31:1](#)) is not justification for women to neglect their outward appearance. As you've discovered, being overweight and unattractive does little to attract a man's attention and ultimately, affection. Yes, there are men for whom externals mean nothing. But most men do want to marry a woman they find attractive. And it's not just that they want someone pleasant to look at. How you care for

your externals sends powerful messages to men about your stewardship of what God's given you.

As you suspect, you can go overboard in both directions. A woman with abundant natural beauty who piles on the makeup and dresses seductively is just as poor a steward as a plain woman who "detests" all efforts to make the most of her appearance.

The kind of man a Godly woman should want to marry would esteem a woman who strives to be lovely, both inside and out.

This is not, however, about the world's standard of beauty. It's about making the most of what God has given you. I think it's safe to say most men would be equally turned off by a woman who obviously neglects her appearance. But as to what each defines as lovely, men are as varied in their taste as women are. Some like a more natural, clean-scrubbed look while others appreciate the enhancements of makeup. Some go for athletic and lean, others prefer a rounder, more huggable woman. You should not fear that if you embrace whatever loveliness God has given you, you will fail to appeal to a man.

I used to think that and found it easier to simply do what I wanted (which included too much junk food and not enough exercise) and then blame the men around me for being shallow and more concerned about my looks than my heart when any failed to ask me out.

Yes, my heart and character is a key part of what attracted Steve, but I'd be omitting half the story if I didn't also say that as I grew my severe, short and sassy haircut out to a more feminine length, he began to find me more attractive. And increasing my commitment to a healthy diet and daily exercise didn't hurt either.

What you need is help knowing what's appropriate attention to your looks as opposed to our culture's current obsession. That includes daily exercise for health and well-being, not hours of compulsive training at the gym. It also means giving your body good fuel, so it has the best shot at running well for a long time. If you fill it with junk, it won't. Consume the food and drink your body was designed for (whole grains, fresh fruits and vegetables, lean protein, plenty of water) and steer clear of those things that leave it sluggish and diseased (refined sugars, hydrogenated oils, white flour — basically pre-packaged junk food). The human body is like a high-performance vehicle; You're a Ferrari, not a Yugo. You need to treat yourself accordingly.

When you do, you not only model stewardship, you also show that what matters to men matters to you. And often, that communicates a respect that's the most attractive thing of all.

Peter Leithart on "feminism and identity":

Feminism is a case study in the need to define identity through relationship, rather than by cutting the bonds of relationship. In [a brief review](#) of [Dr.](#)

[Laura's new book](#) for the [Weekly Standard](#) (March 22), [Tammy Bruce](#) suggests that Dr L has grasped something that feminists, with all their sophistication, have missed: "The freeing of women from the bonds of the family has delivered many of them into a kind of sexual slavery. If women are released from the deep structures of being mothers and daughters and wives and sisters, there isn't any reason for men to think of them anymore as mothers and daughters and wives and sisters. And men, being men, have not surprisingly responded by considering women primarily as sex objects. The only male-female relationship left over." What look like the suffocating demands of organic social and familial relations, it turns out, is the main bullwark against tyranny. It is only the stripped-down individual, the autonomous man and the liberated woman, who can be enslaved. Had feminists been listening, they could have learned as much from Edmund Burke and Tocqueville, though of course listening to such men is a form of fraternizing (damned gender-laden language) with the enemy.

A sad account of our present day gender confusion in action
(<http://stillsearching.wordpress.com/2011/06/04/babies-born-this-way/>):

I was recently quite disturbed by [this story](#) of a couple in Toronto who have refused to divulge the gender of their recently born child, who they named Storm (how perfectly gender ambiguous!). Though Storm does indeed have a gender, Storm's parents—Kathy Witterick and David Stocker—are not telling anyone, not even family and close friends, what it is.

"We've decided not to share Storm's sex for now—a tribute to freedom and choice in place of limitation," wrote Witterick in an email. "In fact, in not telling the gender of my precious baby, I am saying to the world, 'Please can you just let Storm discover for him/herself what s (he) wants to be?!'"

"What we noticed is that parents make so many choices for their children. It's obnoxious," [said](#) Stocker.

There are many troubling aspects to this story, not least of which is the fact that a newborn has been turned into a political statement by his/her "progressive and proud of it!" parents. If we're talking about giving children more choices and more freedom, did anyone ask little Storm if he/she wanted to be turned into a political statement about gender ambiguity? No one asked Storm, but nevertheless it appears the baby is fated to live a life forever tainted by his/her parents refusal to raise a child with gender as a given attribute of identity.

More troubling is the notion that a baby's gender is a choice that parents can make for it, or even a choice that the baby can make for itself at some point. I realize that this is contested territory in our society today (look no further than the new documentary [Becoming Chaz](#) to see how normalized the notion of gender malleability is in our culture), but I just have a hard time accepting this extreme insistence on freedom of choice in the realm of something as

fundamental as gender. Are we really free to become anything we want to be, if science/surgery can make it possible? Where does it end? I suppose it's a natural outgrowth of our society's values of autonomy and liberty (no one but me controls my fate!) that now even the bodies we are born with are subject to our consumer preferences.

But perhaps most troubling in this story is the idea that making choices for children is a bad thing—that, even from birth, humans are entitled to decide everything for themselves, and that parents who get too pushy about dos and don'ts are merely cogs in the machine of an oppressive hegemony, hellbent on suffocating the freedom and fancy of autonomous individuals.

Personally, I'm thankful for rules. I'm thankful my parents lived in a world of moral norms, dos-and-don'ts, crime and punishment. I'm glad they didn't let me decide everything for myself. I'm glad there were structures, guidelines, expectations. How awful to grow up in a formless void of anything-goes, "every feeling you have is true!" vapidly. We are fallen creatures, and every feeling we have is *not* true, good, or right. We need to learn that. We need people to tell us that we aren't always right, even when we feel like we are. In [The Tree of Life](#), the boys have a hard time with their disciplinarian father (Brad Pitt) and seem to favor their more gracious mother (Jessica Chastain). But notice what happens when their father goes away for a trip. Under mom's lenient watch, they get into all sorts of mischief. They discover their dark side. Freedom, unbound by the accountability of dad's watchful eye, leads them to sin. It's fun to be free, but it leads them down a dark path. Ultimately, they need their father. They need someone to tell them no, and they respect him all the more for it. *This* is loving: Being able to guide the unwieldy whims and freedom of someone you love into a pattern of virtue and restraint. Left to our own devices, free of all constraints and having no choices made for us, we're bound for all sorts of trouble.

The whole thing reminds me of Lady Gaga's *Born This Way* (which I [blogged about](#) back in February), an album which sets forth an increasingly heralded ethos of embracing whoever and whatever you want to be. "There's nothing wrong with loving who you are," sings Gaga. "Cause he made you perfect, Babe... God makes no mistakes."

But if God makes no mistakes, why not celebrate the gender of a baby who is born one way and not the other?

What Gaga is really trying to say is "YOU are God, and you make no mistakes... Forget how God, or evolution, or biology made you... None of that matters because you can change it any time you want. You are bound by no one and nothing."

And that's an ethos that can only lead little Storm, and the world in which he/she will grow up, into utter chaos.

Some day I hope to publish a book on masculinity and femininity entitled *Different Souls, Different Roles*. A very rough section of the book deals with deaconesses and

prophetesses; included in this section is a somewhat rambling discussion of some of the thornier issues raised in 1 Corinthians 11:2-16. It is not necessarily indicative of my most recent thoughts on the passage, as it was written about 8 years ago. I include here, with the reminder that it is a not finished product, but some may find it interesting:

Two Special Cases: Prophetess and Deaconess

Two ecclesiastical roles in particular need to be examined here: prophetess and deaconess.

Prophetesses are found in the OT and NT. Miriam is called a prophetess in Exodus 15:20. She sings a song celebrating the Lord's victory over Pharaoh in the exodus. Two features of her song and its context are important for our purposes. First, her song comes after that of Moses. The man has primacy, and the woman follows his lead, echoing his word. Second, we are explicitly told she led the women in song and dance, whereas Moses led *all* the Israelites (15:1, 20). Miriam in no way usurped male liturgical leadership.

Later on, Miriam finds out just how serious the Lord is about male leadership in the covenant community. When she and Aaron speak out against Moses, she gets struck with leprosy, making her unclean and excluding her from the camp of Israel (Num. 12). Even though God had spoken through her as a prophetess (cf. Mic. 6:4), she was not to seize after an office of leadership in the community. She was punished severely for her act of usurpation, for trying to institute a more egalitarian order.

Hannah and Mary are not called prophetesses but both, like Miriam, sing prophetic songs (1 Sam. 2:1-10; Luke 1:46-55). Though they sang these songs in relative privacy,² the fact that these songs have been included in the canonical Scriptures means they are useful in teaching all members of the church. Huldah presents an interesting case because Josiah sent for her after the book of the law (i.e., Dt.) was rediscovered, even though male prophets such as Jeremiah and Zephaniah were available (2 Kings 22). As Keener points out, "2 Kings draws numerous parallels between the revivals under Josiah and, a century earlier, under Hezekiah – and Huldah's role in this narrative precisely parallels that of Isaiah in Hezekiah's day in 2 Kings 19:2-7."³

Anna in Luke 2:36ff is a unique example in that her prophetic ministry seems to be more public in nature, though it also seems to have been specially related to the birth of Christ. She prophesies to the people in the temple courts. As a representative of the Lord's bride, she announced the coming of the promised redemption.

² There is no indication either sang their song in gathered worship, though they may have done so at the temple.

³ Beck and Blomberg, 32.

Joel 2:28 promises that the coming of the Spirit would result in a new out breaking of prophetic activity by men and women. Peter points to Pentecost as the fulfillment of Joel's words (Acts 2:17). Thus, it is not surprising to find numerous women prophesying in the post-Pentecost church. Philip's four daughters are mentioned in Acts 21:9 and Paul refers to women who pray or prophesy in 1 Corinthians 11:2-16.

The Corinthian passage is very hard to interpret, but is obviously one of considerable importance. A full exegetical study of the passage will not be undertaken here, but we can summarize some of its details in bullet point form:

- All too often, a discussion of women's headcoverings or women speaking in church is allowed to overshadow two very important points Paul is making in this passage: first, male-female relationships are ultimately patterned after the economic Trinity; second, men and women are mutually dependent upon one another.⁴ In verse 3, Paul says every woman is under the headship of some man (such as husband, father, brother, or elders of the church, and of course, ultimately Christ). This does not mean women are inferior to men. After all, Paul says that Christ is under the headship of God (the Father) as well, yet Christ is not (ontologically) inferior to his Father.⁵ On the other hand, Paul says the man's glory is the woman (or women) under his care.⁶ Ultimately this is about Christ and the church, of course: Christ is the head of the church, and the church is the glory of Christ. But we need to track Paul's whole line of thought: Just as man (and especially the perfect man, the Last Adam, Jesus Christ) is the visible manifestation of God's glory, so the woman is the glory of the man (11:7).⁷ Apart from the woman, the man is unglorious, just as apart from a man the woman is headless. Remember, Adam was not complete when he was alone. God created the woman from his side for his sake. Thus, for Paul, the man and the woman need one another – the woman needs the man to be her head; the man needs the woman to be his glory. She “covers” him with the glory of her beautiful hair, which Paul calls her glory (11:15) – but because it is her glory, it is her head's glory (i.e., her husband's). Just as she covers him as his glory, he covers her with

⁴ Paul does not specifically have in view marriage in this passage, as some commentators have imagined, though the marriage relation most obviously exhibits these truths.

⁵ This also proves submission per se is not feminine. Everyone – male or female – is called to submit to God-appointed authorities, and ultimately to God himself.

⁶ If a man has no woman under his headship, presumably the church (the bride of Christ) is his glory.

⁷ There is an interpretive problem with v. 7: If Paul is saying the man depends on the woman for glory, is he saying God depends on man for his glory? No, strict parallelism simply cannot be at work here, for it would also force us to conclude that woman is not the image of God, contrary to Gen.1. The rest of scripture implicitly nuances Paul's position. The analogy is this: man was made for God, the woman for man. Man comes forth from God and exists for his glory, just as the woman comes forth from man and exists for his glory. See James Hurley *Man and Woman in Biblical Perspective* 163ff.

his protective and authoritative headship. Arguments over whether it is better to be another's head or another's glory will obviously be fruitless.⁸

- This mutual interdependence between man and woman is most explicit in 11:7-9, 11-12. Verses 8-9 are an obvious reference back to the creation of Eve from Adam's side. She was made for him. The first woman came forth from man. But now all men come forth from women. So men are just as dependent on women as women are on men.⁹ Again, equality without equivalence is asserted. Ontological equality does not necessitate economic equivalence. Men and women are equal in worth, but vary in function. Men and women need one another, albeit in differing ways.¹⁰
- What are the implications of this passage for the liturgical role of women? Did Paul actually advocate that women pray and prophesy in church? Is it possible he was trying to shut down the Corinthian practice of women doing these things in church? Or is he dealing with some other kind of meeting, besides the church's official liturgical gatherings? All of these questions can only be answered in conjunction with a study of 1 Cor. 14:33-35, where Paul forbids women to speak in church. How are these two passages to be put together in a way that does justice to them both? Let's consider a couple of options:
 - The traditional interpretation¹¹ claims that 1 Corinthians 11:2ff deals with small fellowship groups, not public worship. Paul allowed women to pray and prophesy outside of the liturgical gathering, as we see elsewhere in the Bible. On this reading, Paul begins to deal with matters of public worship in 11:17ff.¹² In 14:33ff, Paul explicitly forbids women to speak publicly in church. The kind of speaking in view here has already been described in 14:1-31, and it excludes just the kind of speaking that Paul allows in 1 Corinthians 11.¹³ Thus, the traditional position of the church: Women could pray or prophesy outside worship, but women -- *even inspired women* -- are forbidden liturgical leadership in the assembly.

⁸ See Neuer 110-12 for a fuller discussion of these relationships.

⁹ See Calvin *Men, Women, and Order in the Church* 47ff.

¹⁰ 11:7 does not mean that women do not bear God's image. That would contradict Gen. 1:26ff, Col. 3:10, etc. Paul's point is that she does not image God *in relation to her husband/head*. In the marital relation, the man images God/Christ and the woman images the church. In other senses, though, she too is the image of God. She is both the image of God and the image of the image of God. See Hurley 173, 206.

¹¹ I believe it is safe to claim this is the majority view in the history of interpretation. It is taught by Origen and virtually all the patristic theologians (Piper 275, Doriani 222f, Mitchell 11), as well as Lenski, Grosheide, Neuer, Waldron, etc.

¹² Note in 11:17ff the multiple references to "coming together," i.e., as an assembled body, and in v. 18 the reference to "first of all," as though this was the first matter to be addressed in a new section of the epistle.

¹³ I will argue just below that both prayer and prophecy in this context are inspired forms of speech.

- Another view assumes 1 Corinthians 11:2ff deals with a liturgical context. On this reading, the section dealing with gathered worship (the “traditions”) runs from 11:2-14:40, not 11:17-14:40. Paul says his instructions here concern a uniform practice in “the churches of God” (11:16), and “church” in this context is a reference not just to the institutional church but specifically to church assemblies. Plus, prayer and prophecy everywhere else in 1 Corinthians take place in the liturgical gathering, so why not here as well? Most importantly, Paul makes mention of “angels” in 11:10 and throughout Scripture angels are associated with gathered worship and God’s special presence (cf. Heb. 12:22ff; Eph. 3:10; references to angels in the temple are also significant here, e.g., Ex. 25:18ff, Isa. 6, etc.). Noel Weeks argues from this text that praying and prophesying are leadership functions that could only be performed by someone with an uncovered head.¹⁴ Thus, if a woman were to engage in these functions she would have to uncover her head as well. But this would bring shame upon her and her husband.¹⁵ 11: 5 could best be translated, “Every woman who praying or prophesying by means of uncovering her head, dishonors her head.” To pray or prophesy – which requires an uncovered head – brings shame on a woman (cf. 1 Cor. 14:35). Therefore, Weeks concludes that Paul was actually forbidding women to speak publicly in the gathered assembly.¹⁶ Weeks’ solution has the advantage of making 1 Cor. 11 easily reconcilable with other NT passages about the silence of women in regard to liturgical leadership, especially 1 Cor. 14:33-35.¹⁷

¹⁴ *The Sufficiency of Scripture* ch. 18.

¹⁵ It is doubtful that men were actually wearing head coverings when they prayed or prophesied so perhaps what Paul says about women praying and prophesying in this passage is also hypothetical.

¹⁶ *Tabletalk* July 26, ??? agrees with Weeks:

And even though Paul refers to women prophesying in 1 Cor. 11:5, there is no indication that he approves of the practice. If anything, his exhortation for them to cover their heads as a sign of submission would keep women from exercising authoritative gifts. In other words, if they were to teach and have authority over a man, it would be contradictory for her to wear a sign of submission on her head. But since she is supposed to have this sign, she cannot take a position of authority by teaching in the public assembly.

To oversimplify, the logic runs like this: If a woman were to pray or prophesy, she would need to uncover her head; but uncovering her head is a disgrace to herself and her (male) head; therefore she is to not pray or prophesy.

¹⁷ Hurley (186) argues against Weeks that Paul seems to approve of women praying and prophesying in public, provided their heads are covered. Why would Paul give instructions about how to do something he forbids? Of course, for Weeks, Paul is not giving such instructions, but pointing out the incongruity of the woman’s sign of submission on her head and the public exercise of authoritative gifts.

- While it may be very difficult to decide between these two views, their practical application is probably not all that different in our own day. On both readings, women are ordinarily forbidden a liturgical leadership role in the church, something affirmed by several other clearer Scriptures. We will say more about 1 Cor. 14:33-35 below.
- Is Paul requiring women to wear some sort of headgear in public worship or an informal group, or at least while they pray and prophesy? Nobody seems to know for certain what the covering referred to in these verses is. Hats, veils, hair bound up on the head,¹⁸ and other suggestions have been offered, but we simply do not have enough information to say for sure. Paul does, however, make an issue of hair length.¹⁹ It is natural (i.e., in accord with the design of creation and general revelation) for a woman to have long hair and a man short hair (11:14, 15).²⁰ Her long hair, ultimately, is her covering, the sign that she is her husband's glory and under his headship.²¹ Her own head is covered because her husband is her head. The man, however, is not to cover his head while praying or prophesying, and he is not to have long hair, because this dishonors his head, Christ. A woman with an *uncovered* head attempts to be her own head, thereby

¹⁸ Cf. Num. 5:18. See Bordwine 47ff.

¹⁹ Hurley translates 11:15, "Her long hair is given her *instead of a veil*" (163) and concludes that long hair is a sufficient sign of her submission. No hat, shawl, veil, etc., is needed. It seems her hair is a natural glory-covering for her.

²⁰ Paul may also be alluding to Ezekiel 44:20, applying Ezekiel's description of the restoration temple to the church. Ezekiel's priestly instructions about hair length would then be normative for all the men of the congregation (though it should be remembered Ezekiel's temple is not identical to the new covenant temple in the messianic age; he is describing primarily the post-exilic restoration temple). Of course, there were occasions when these norms concerning hair length were lawfully set aside. Men who took Nazirite vows were to let their hair grow into locks (Num. 6; Jud. 5:2) and women who were taken as war-brides shaved their hair completely off (Dt. 21:2). But Paul is describing a more ordinary situation in 1 Corinthians 11. Why is hair associated with glory? It's hard to say, but perhaps there is a chain of relationships: What comes forth from God is his glory (the Son/man); what comes forth from the man is his glory (the woman); what comes forth from the woman is her glory (her hair; perhaps also her children). Of course, in verse 12 Paul says that ultimately all things come from God so ultimately all things are for his glory.

²¹ Biblically, the question is not simply, Who wears the pants in the family? (cf. Dt. 22:5), but, Who has the shorter hair? The sign or badge of her submission to God's social order is her long hair. She hides her head because her man is her head. Of course, this is a far cry from prescribing any particular hairstyle for women (or men for that matter). If someone how asks concerning a man's hair, "How long is too long?" the correct answer is probably "Longer than your wife's is too long." See Doug Wilson *The Federal Husband* 40-50 and Bordwine 202.

dishonoring here true head, her husband.²² A man with a *covered* head dishonors his head, Christ, by denying that His headship covers us before the Father.²³ A man with long hair is attempting to glorify himself and cover himself. Paul's play on the word 'head' is essential to his argument, as he moves back and forth between the head as a part of the human body and the head as an authority and protector. The puns and ironies should not be missed.

- It is important to understand that the prophecy and prayer Paul has in view are inspired, revelatory forms of speech. According to the near unanimous testimony of the Reformed church these modes of revelation have now ordinarily ceased (WCF I.1).²⁴ We have the completed canon of Scripture and no longer need these partial, incomplete forms of revelation (1 Cor. 13:8ff). The argument that Corinthian prophecy was on par with biblical revelation is argued convincingly by many theologians and need not be repeated here.²⁵ Moreover, the only kind of prayer mentioned in 1 Corinthians is prayer in tongues,²⁶ which is simply prophecy in another language, and therefore also inspired speech. Even if both the church's traditional reading and Weeks' reading are wrong, 1 Corinthians 11 does not warrant women taking on roles of liturgical leadership. CHECK THIS If 'prophecy' means to speak revelationally [in 1 Cor. 11:5], then the role of women in the church today is clarified. Only so long as the revelational gift of prophecy remained alive in the church could women serve as instruments of the divine word. But if the prophetic word of God has found its perfection with the completion of the new covenant Scriptures, then the role of women as instruments of divine revelation has now ceased.²⁷ This will be explored more fully later in relation to leadership in the worship assembly.
- It is critical to understand Paul is not making a concession to ancient Greco-Roman culture in these matters. Paul's appeal is to the Trinity, the order of creation/nature²⁸ (i.e., general revelation/creation ordinance), and the uniform practice of all of the churches established by the apostles.²⁹ Moreover, Weeks, trained in both theology and Mediterranean studies, points out that there is no

²² This explains 11:5: Paul is basically saying that if women take glory from their husbands by praying or prophesying with an uncovered head, then glory should be taken from them, i.e., their hair should be shaved off. It's *lex talionis*: eye for eye, tooth for tooth, glory for glory.

²³ The contrast here is with the old covenant high priest who did pray before God with a head covering (Ex. 28:36ff; cf. 2 Chron. 26:16ff). Now that Christ has turned God's wrath away, men no longer need to cover their heads as they come into God's presence. Our uncovered heads are a sign that Christ has covered us by his atoning death and now we worship God face to face (2 Cor. 3; cf. Mt. 27:51).

²⁴ See Bordwine 42. Gaffin *Perspective on Pentecost*.

²⁵ See, e.g., O. P. Robertson *The Final Word*

²⁶ See 1 Cor. 13-14 for scattered references.

²⁷ Robertson, 20.

²⁸ Cf. the use of the same word 'nature' in Rom. 1:26.

²⁹ If anything, Paul has in view an apostolic, not a Greco-Roman, custom. He is describing what is true of the church's culture, not the world's culture.

evidence that women in the first century wore veils or head coverings in public anyway.³⁰

- We cannot provide an exhaustive application of this passage for our own day, but at the very least the passage teaches that gender distinctions remain relevant for church gatherings, including worship.³¹ We worship God not as neutered individuals; men worship as men and women as women. When we enter the worship assembly, we don't leave our gender behind. While men and women share the most important things in common in regard to salvation (Gal. 3:28), there are still differences. The sexes should be visibly differentiated in worship in what they wear³² and how they conduct themselves. This is part of the Spirit-generated orderliness that must characterize Christian worship (cf. 1 Cor. 14). There is to be a public, symbolic manifestation of God's creation design.
- Paul's discussion is clearly not based upon egalitarian principles. Man and woman are equal, to be sure, but that equality cannot be reduced to a blank sameness. Men and women have distinct parts to play in the divine drama of creation and redemption. But nothing Paul says is degrading to women in the least. Even if he is forbidding women to take the lead as in public prayer and prophesy in covenant renewal worship, lest they offend angels, he is also reminding them of their glorious status. The glory relationships Paul established indicated that what comes forth from a person is his/her glory.³³ Christ comes forth from the Father, so he is the glory of the Father. The man came forth from Christ (the archetype of humanity; cf. Col. 1:15ff), so man is Christ's glory. The woman came forth from the side of man, so she is the man's glory. Long hair comes forth from the woman, so her hair is her glory. But the hair is clearly symbolic of everything that comes forth from the woman. Thus, for example, children who come forth from the woman are arrayed around her as her glory as well. (Yes, that means pregnancy itself is glorious!) But, of course, in bearing children, she is also glorifying her husband. The husband glorifies his wife by acting as her head, protecting and providing for her as a servant-leader, but she in turn glorifies him by her beauty and by producing his children. This makes all the more sense if we recall the passage's close link between glory and image. The children are the image of both the man and the woman, and therefore the glory of both.

What generalizations can we draw from these prophetess passages? It is important to keep in mind the sporadic nature of the gift of prophecy. The Spirit's gift of prophecy came intermittently. Thus, prophetesses would have had at most an occasional teaching ministry. The regular office of teaching was held in the old

³⁰ 131f, 140ff. See also Bordwine 46f and Mitchell 80ff.

³¹ We could offer an *a fortiori* argument here to make the traditional reading applicable to gathered worship: If women were to show a sign of submission to male leadership even in an informal gathering, how much more must they do so when the church draws near to God in the Most Holy Place?

³² See Dt. 22:5, 1 Tim. 2:9.

³³ See, e.g., Isa. 43:7, 46:13. Israel comes forth from God in order to be his glory in the world.

covenant by priests (Lev. 10:11; Mal. 2:7) and in the new covenant by pastors and teachers (Eph. 4:11ff; 1-2 Tim; Titus). These offices are prohibited to women. If we believe along with the Reformed tradition as whole that the gift of prophecy ceased with the closing of the canon, we should not expect any new prophetesses to be raised up because the gift of prophecy is no longer operative.³⁴ Moreover, there were no prophetesses who had a writing ministry comparable to male prophets.³⁵ When the prophecies of women are recorded in Scripture, they are included in books penned by male authors.³⁶

In addition to prophetess, we see women serving in a role I will label 'deaconess.' We find women ministering at the tabernacle in Exodus 38:8. They reappear in 1 Sam. 2:22. We are not told what they were to do (though they certainly were not to be sleeping with the priests!), so we have to speculate a little. These women probably assisted the priests in caring for the tabernacle and doing chores necessary to the maintenance of the sacrificial system. Or, perhaps, they assisted female worshippers at the temple. Their role was one of service, but not leadership. They are clearly distinguished from the male priests.³⁷

Deaconesses reappear in the NT. Just as the old covenant tabernacle was staffed with female servants, so the new and true tabernacle, Jesus Christ (Jn. 1:14) had an entourage of women who traveled with him and ministered to him (e.g., Lk. 8:2-3). Paul seems to refer to a woman named Phoebe as a deacon(ess) in Rom. 16:1-2.³⁸ 1 Timothy 3:11 seems to give qualifications for female deacons.³⁹ Perhaps the list of widows mentioned in 1 Tim. 5:3ff form a special subclass of deaconesses. What would female deacons have done in the early church? Most likely, they would have engaged in mercy ministry, especially forms of ministry to women that would have been inappropriate for male deacons. It was ministry by

³⁴ This is not to deny the prophethood of the whole church. But the miraculous gift of inspired speech has ordinarily ceased.

³⁵ I realize the authorship of some biblical books is disputed, but I see no reason to reject the church's tradition on this issue.

³⁶ It is also note worthy that women who prophesy often did so in song (though none of the Psalms, the official hymnbook for Israel's gathered worship, were written by women as far as we know).

³⁷ I would argue for a variety of exegetical reasons that Jephthah's daughter was a tabernacle deaconess as well (Jdg. 11).

³⁸ Phoebe is called a 'deacon of the church in Cencrea.' This language seems to indicate she held some kind of official post in her church. Part of her role as deaconess might have been to deliver Paul's letter to the Romans (i.e., running an errand for an apostle). Certainly Paul valued her help in his ministry.

³⁹ I do not think 1 Tim. 3:11 can be read as a reference to the wives of deacons. Paul does not give qualifications for the wives of elders so to give qualifications for the wives of deacons (the lesser office) would be very odd. Moreover, 3:11 is sandwiched between qualifications for male deacons so it seems natural to read it as describing qualifications for their female counterparts. (Of course, deacons' wives may often be very good candidates for deaconesses.)

women to women.⁴⁰ Neuer explains: "What tasks deacons carried out at this time can only be guessed at. It certainly did not involve public proclamation of the word, teaching, or leading the church. Perhaps it involved serving the congregation, by bringing material help to the needy (Rom. 16:2), in serving women, the sick, and strangers."⁴¹

The office (at least in the Reformed church, which is our concern here) is one of service and sympathy, not leadership or rule. Generally, deacons engage in deed ministry, rather than word ministry (though there can be exceptions, and certainly are in the case of male deacons). Perhaps one reason many Reformed churches have emphasized word ministry far more than deed ministry is because we have squeezed out the place of deaconesses. We are far more ideologically driven than we are service oriented. Calvin advocated a female deaconate as a valuable role in the life of the church.⁴² Jordan summarizes the nature and necessity of the deaconess:

We must do justice to the 'office of women' in the Church as the Bible sets it out. What the Bible teaches is that women are radically different from men. For this reason, men often do not know how to deal with women's problems. Other, older women are, however, able to do so. Thus, the office [of women] as I propose it, is to be filled by older women who advise and counsel other women. Does the Bible show some women set apart for ministry in the Church? Yes. First, there were deaconesses who assisted women at the Tabernacle, such as Jephthah's daughter and the women mentioned in Exodus 38:8 and 1 Samuel 2:22. Second, the gospels call attention to women who served as deaconesses to the Lord Jesus Christ, along with the apostles. And third, the epistles mention such women and their appointed roles. In 1 Timothy 3:11, when discussing deacons, Paul gives instruction to women. Some have said that this refers to the wives of the deacons, but if that is the case, why is nothing said about the wives of the overseers in verses 1-7? Clearly, the reference is to deaconesses, women who serve *as women* in the Church. Phoebe is referred to as such in Romans 16:1. Paul refers to older widows who have a ministry of prayer and hospitality in 1 Timothy 5:5 & 10. The ministry of older women to younger is described in Titus 2:3-5. The former passage refers clearly to some kind of 'office' [of deaconess] because the woman is put on a roll and supported by the Church, but the latter passage refers to older women in general . . . Let me sum matters up thus far. First, women always serve under male authority. Second, women cannot be elder-overseers, pastors, or deacons in the Church. Third, there is a ministry of women to women, which is *organized* to some extent, and which has its

⁴⁰ Jordan summarizes the evidence:

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⁴¹ 121

⁴² Institutes 4. 13.15-19.

roots in the Old Testament. For this reasons, it seems to me that it would be good if the Church recognized the office of . . . deaconess. I believe there are two reasons why the post-Reformation Church has not imitated the early Church in this regard. First, the preaching-centeredness of the Reformation Church, and its post-tribal northern European culture, caused the Church to become overly masculine, obscuring the role of women. Second, in the modern age feminists have insisted that there is no difference between men and women and have argued that women should be ruling elders and pastors. Both of these trends, I submit, are destructive. Finally, a caveat: My model suggests that the ministry of women is most closely associated with the role of the Spirit. The Spirit, after all, creates the Bride for the Son, and so He is the sponsor of all things feminine. Women in ministry work with other women to make them better women, and thus their work is closest to that of the Spirit. But at the same time, the Spirit is invisible and untraceable in His work. Unlike the Father and the Son, who stand out as Official Persons, the Spirit is hard to grasp. For that reason, perhaps, the ministry of women in the Church should *not* be made official but should remain unofficial.⁴³

Though she is not called a deaconess in an official way, Dorcas in Acts 9:36-42 seems to be performing all the functions we'd expect of a female member of the diaconate. She was full of good works and charitable deeds. The entire community weeps at her passing. But Peter is used of God to raise her up so her vocation of ministry may continue.

Beyond prophetess and deaconess roles, women exercise influence in all kinds of non-official ways. Wives of elders and pastors will always exert a great deal of authority in the church indirectly. Their influence on their husbands gives them a great deal of unofficial power. A good man will take counsel with his wife and rely on her insights in reaching decisions and positions (1 Pt. 3:7).

Abigail is perhaps the pre-eminent model of a non-official exercise of feminine authority. Abigail's husband, Nabal, is a fool ("Nabal" means "fool"). Though David and his men have protected his land, Nabal refused to invite them to the sheep shearing festival, as was customary. David was planning to retaliate with deadly force when Abigail came out to meet him. This wise and beautiful woman persuaded⁴⁴ David to relent and he later thanked her for talking sense into him (1 Sam. 25).

In the book of Acts, the husband and wife team of Priscilla and Aquilla corrected Apollos in private (Acts 18:26). Paul calls the husband-wife ministry team his co-workers in Romans 16:3. Paul also refers to two Philippian women, Euodia and Syntyche, as co-laborers in the gospel (Phil. 4:2). Paul does not spell out the tasks of

⁴³ Rite Reasons #41.

⁴⁴ Notice her appeal is humble but highly theological. In an informal sense, she not only gave David a gentle rebuke, but also taught him.

these fellow workers, but obviously they had been a great help to Paul.⁴⁵ Paul singles out other women and commends them for their hard labor in the church (Rom. 16:2, 12 mention Mary, Tryphena, and Tryphosa). Like Paul, we should thank and praise women who faithfully serve the gospel and the covenant people. The efforts of women are of great value in God's kingdom and all too often have gone unappreciated.

Some have suggested that Junia, mentioned by Paul in Romans 16 along with Andronicus, was an apostle. The Romans text is freighted with several thorny issues. Some wonder if the name refers to a man or a woman. The Greek is subject to more than one possible reading. It's the same with the relationship of Junia and Andronicus vis-à-vis the apostles: were they well known to or among the apostles? To cut the discussion short, the best scholarship has concluded that Junia is indeed a woman, but she was *not* an outstanding member of the apostolic band. Rather, Paul says that she was well known to the apostles.⁴⁶ It is also likely that Andronicus was her husband; they were probably some kind of husband and wife ministry team, like Priscilla and Aquilla.

Note that the case of Priscilla shows us a woman helping to better instruct and inform a male pastor, Apollos, albeit in private and in conjunction with her husband (Acts 18:26?).

Order and Service

If we ask the question, "Does the Bible warrant or prohibit women in ministry?" we have to answer by saying that the Bible strongly encourages women to be involved in ministry. Indeed, Scripture calls all covenant members to use their gifts

⁴⁵ It would be stretching credibility in light of passages such as 1 Tim. 2:11ff to claim Euodia and Syntyche were fellow preachers with Paul. Paul's missionary work required his supporting cast to perform all kinds of functions, such as prayer, lodging, finances, etc. These women could have been useful to Paul in all kinds of ways without violating Paul's limitations on the functions of women specified elsewhere. Romans 16 gives a list of several of Paul's helpers and co-laborers, but it's doubtful all or even most of these were preachers. For Paul, there was no contradiction between praising the valuable labors of women and limiting those labors.

⁴⁶ Consult Daniel B. Wallace and Michael H. Burer, "Was Junia Really an Apostle? An Examination of Romans 16:7," *The Journal For Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, Fall 2001, 4-11. Schreiner points out three problems with basing anything conclusive on this text: "First, is Paul referring to a man or a woman? Second, are Andronicus and Junia(s) outstanding in the eyes of the apostles, or are they outstanding apostles themselves? Third, is the term 'apostle' used as a technical term, or is it used non-technically to refer to missionaries [cf. 2 Cor. 8:23; Phil. 2:25]?" Schreiner then concludes: "If Junia was an apostle [a big if!], she probably functioned particularly as a missionary to women . . . To sum up, the verse does not clearly identify Junia as an apostle, and even if this view is incorrect, 'apostle' is not used in a technical sense." Beck and Blomberg, 198.

and abilities to serve others (1 Cor. 12). Ministry is not an optional extra for “super Christians;” it is part and parcel of the Christian life for everyone who names the name of Christ.

Nevertheless, not all are called to minister in the same way, and the Bible does in fact put limits on the ways women can minister. We need to be careful here, lest we think of the Bible as an oppressive book. The walls the Bible erects around the functions of the woman are the walls of a playground, not of a prison. By respecting these walls, she is set free to serve in the multitude of ways that God designed.

We will look more fully at the rationale for these limitations later, but for now we may briefly survey the biblical prohibitions themselves. All church members should obviously be encouraged to engage in all kinds of ministry, but the actual shape of their ministries will be pervasively qualified by giftedness and gender. These kinds of limitations are nothing new. In the old covenant, no matter how gifted a man was at ruling, unless he was from the tribe of Judah, he could not be king of the united nation. No matter how qualified a man was to teach and lead sacrificial worship at the temple, unless he was from the tribe of Levi, he was excluded from these callings.⁴⁷

Obviously the new covenant pulls off a lot of these old covenant restrictions and boundaries by freeing us from the child-custodian of the Torah (Gal. 3-4). But some of them remain because they are embedded in the structure of creation itself and are necessary for maintaining good order in the church. It should be noted that there were no priestesses in ancient Israel. Many of the surrounding nations had priestesses, but God made no such provision for Israel. The office of priest was the old covenant forerunner to our office of pastor (1 Cor. 9:13f), an office women continued to be excluded from at the dawning of the new covenant age. The reason for this is easy enough to understand: Priests and pastors represent the husband, Jesus, to the bride, and guard the bride. Thus, they must be male.

C. S. Lewis explained this requirement, as only he can do:

I am crushingly aware how inadequate most of us are, in our actual and historical individualities, to fill the place prepared for us. But it is an old saying in the army that you salute the uniform, not the wearer. Only one wearing the masculine uniform can (provisionally, til the *Parousia*) represent the Lord to the Church: for we are all, corporately and individually, feminine to Him. We men make very bad priests. This is because we are insufficiently masculine. It is no cure to call in those who are not masculine at all. A man may make a very bad husband; you cannot mend matters by trying to reverse the roles. He may make a bad partner in dance. The cure for that is that men should more diligently attend dancing classes; not that the ballroom should henceforth ignore distinctions of sex and treat all dancers as neuter.

⁴⁷ Schreiner sees this as a fatal blow to egalitarianism: “God is not an equal opportunity employer – at least as far as installation into ministry is concerned . . . Groothius and other egalitarians are faced with the daunting prospect of saying that Israelites who could never serve as priests are of less dignity and value than those who were qualified for the priesthood,” Beck and Blomberg, 201.

Lewis was well aware of pressure to move in an egalitarian direction. But the church could not allow herself to be pressed into the culture's mold: "As the State grows more like a hive or an anthill it needs an increasing number of workers who can be treated as neuters. This may be inevitable for secular life. But in our Christian life we must return to reality."⁴⁸ Elsewhere he defends the Bible's masculine conception of God, saying,

Since God is in fact not a biological being and has no sex, can it matter whether we say He or She, Father or Mother, Son or Daughter? But Christians think that God himself has taught us how to speak of him. To say it does not matter is to say either that all the masculine imagery is not inspired, is merely human in origin, or else that, though inspired, it is quite arbitrary and unessential. And this is surely intolerable: or, if tolerable, it is an argument not in favour of Christian priestesses but against Christianity.⁴⁹

Lewis has put his finger on something very important. While many Christians have not thought much about it, the pastor/priest represents God-in-Christ to us in a unique way in the gathered service. We know – though for some it is only intuitive – that the one who preaches and officiates at the table is an "icon" of God/Christ.

This does not make the pastor any nearer to God. After all, in Christ, all of us share the same priestly office and covenant status. Ordination doesn't guarantee a pastor more glory in the future resurrection; it does, however, guarantee him a lot of headaches in the present!

The laying-on-of hands of the priesthood or episcopate specifically identifies the presbyter or bishop with Christ in his specific prophetic, priestly, and pastoral service as head and husband of the church. This does not make the priest or bishop higher, greater or better than anyone else. Nor does it give him privileged access to sanctity and salvation, not to speak of serenity, self-esteem and personal satisfaction, unavailable to other people. It does, however, place upon him the obligation of self-emptying love in sacrificial service to God and his fellow humans in a very particular way.⁵⁰

So, the pastor has a special, symbolic role within the community, as a type of our High Priest, Jesus Christ.⁵¹ But this means that a movement away from an all-male pastorate will lead, inevitably and inexorably, to a redefinition of God's nature. It is not all surprising that many, if not most, advocates of women's ordination to liturgical office, end up clamoring for a redefinition of God. It is not at all unusual for such churches to de-masculinize the baptismal formula from Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, into the genderless Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier.

There's a saying that goes, "You can't change just one thing." And so it with those who overthrow the church's tradition in the area of ordaining women to pastoral/liturgical office.

⁴⁸ 238

⁴⁹ 2 references C. S. Lewis (in *God in the Dock*) explains as only he can do: "."

⁵⁰ Hopko 164

⁵¹ Hopko 242f on pastor as one who symbolically can be said to "hold the place of God.."

The changes in the churches which ordain women to pastoral ministry – particularly when a theological, christological, sacramental, mystical, symbolic, and aesthetic significance and character is ascribed to the office – speak eloquently to the issue. The changes in translation, interpretation and use of the Bible, together with changes in the language, content and character of liturgical worship, the teachings about the Holy Trinity and human morality (particularly, but hardly exclusively, in regard to marriage, family and sexual identity and activity), and the ways of Christian witness and service in the world clearly demonstrate that the office of presbyter/bishop in the Church is an integral part of the Church’s faith and life with essential significance for the Church’s doctrine, worship, morality, and mission.⁵²

In other words, it would be a huge understatement to say that a lot is at stake in the battle over women’s ordination to the pastorate. While many otherwise orthodox persons have espoused such views, pressed to consistency, they lead to the undoing and undermining of the essence of biblical religion.

It may seem odd to think of the pastor as a kind of “icon” of Christ, a symbol of our great High Priest. But this is what he is. Behind his actions are divine actions. When he preaches and declares forgiveness, God is preaching and declaring forgiveness through him. God stands behind his speech (insofar as it is true to Scripture) to give it its efficacy power and trustworthiness. He represents the Father as the head of the ecclesial household (1 Tim. 3:15). Likewise, when he baptizes and officiates at the Lord’s table, the Lord is using him as his instrument and agent. This is why the qualifications for the office of elder/pastor/bishop are only directed to men (1 Tim. 3:1-12; Tit. 1:). God has revealed himself in masculine terms and categories; his public, ordained representative must be gendered consistently with that.

Two things should be noted here: [1] Every Christian, whatever his or her vocation or station in life, is called to serve as a living symbol and word of Christ. This is Paul’s point, in part, in 2 Corinthians 3: : The church is a living epistle of Christ, God’s love letter to the world, written in the power of the Spirit. As members of the body of Christ, we wear his name and represent his presence in all that we do. Thus, the symbolism of the pastoral office is not unique; rather, the pastor represents Christ in a special and official way within the Christian community at large. The pastor does in a more intensified way what all Christians do in a broader, more general way. This is really no different than the qualifications to become an officer, found in 1 Timothy 3:1-12 and Titus 1: . For the most part, these are characteristics that should mark all Christians, that both male and female members of the church should strive for. But a qualified pastor will display them to a greater degree than others. In the same way, we all symbolize Christ and embody his actions, but the pastor represents Christ in a special way in a special context.⁵³ [2] It

⁵² Hopko 161

⁵³ Thus, nothing advocated here calls into question the priestly character of the entire church community. We are all priests. We are all representatives of Christ. Indeed, as Luther said, we are all “christs” with a small “c.” But within the priestly community, there is a division of labor. We do not all exercise our priestly office in

should be obvious that if the pastor's actions in the worship service are really God's actions (preaching, baptizing, administering the supper), then changing from a masculine officiant to a female officiant is going to give a significantly different understanding of who God is. In this particular case, we can truly say that a change in the priesthood requires more than a change in the law – it requires a wholesale revisioning of God!⁵⁴ More specifically, if the pastor represents Christ as our High Priest, then it should be obvious why women are excluded. They simply cannot represent Christ *in this particular manner*. They can represent Christ in other ways, but to use a woman as a liturgical officiant confuses the gospel at its heart. We will return to these thoughts later.

Jordan explains the masculine nature of priestly office and the rationale for excluding women:

May women be priests? Clearly not, at least in the special sense. There are no priestesses in Scripture. Why not? Protestants (and also Catholics) are not clear on why. The question is this: What is the kernel of the priestly office that men have, and that women do not? The following answers are inadequate: [1.] The priest offers prayers and sacrifices on behalf of the people. But if the people are the Bride of God, then surely females would make better representatives. It cannot, then, be the case that the priest is simply a representative of the people. Besides, to say this and no more makes the priest the same as the prophet. [2.] The priest represents God in passing judgments on the people. Again, this is not enough . . . [I]f the Church is our Mother, rearing us as her children, why not have women as rulers in the Church? Besides, to say this and no more makes the priest the same as the king. The correct answer is this: The priest is a guard, and as a guard, he must guard something. What he guards is the Bride, and as the guardian of the Bride, he must be a figure of the Father/Husband/Son. That is, he must be a male.

We can go back to Genesis 2 and 3 for more insight into this. In brief we find the following: God gives man two tasks: the kingly task of dressing the garden, and the priestly task of guarding it. First of all, God teaches man about the kingly, shepherding, wisdom task. He brings animals to man, for man to name, acquire wisdom, and so forth. Man learns from the animals that he lacks something, something needed for his kingly task. God provides what man lacks: a helper fitted for him, a queen. Second of all, God teaches man about the priestly, guarding, sacramental eating task. He brings an animal to man, for man to guard against. The animal assaults the wife, offering a

the same way. Not everyone is called to represent Christ by filling a public office in the church. Traditionally, theologians have spoken of the royal priesthood (belonging to all the baptized, men, women, and children) and the servant priesthood (belonging to those men ordained to pastoral office on behalf of the rest of the body). The boundary between these two orders of the Christian priesthood is not thick, but it is a boundary nonetheless. The servant priesthood has special obligations to the entire community.

⁵⁴ See Hopko, 250-1.

demonic substitute for the sacrament. The man guards the wife, rejects the animal, and has a sacramental meal with God, feeding his wife. From this, the man learns that he lacks something, something needed for his priestly task. God provides what man lacks: a robe of judicial authority. Of course, this is not what happened. Man failed the priestly task. He stood by and permitted his wife to interact with the serpent. He failed to guard her, or the garden. He permitted her to partake of the table of demons. He received instruction from her mouth, and food from her hand, the reverse of the proper order. Now, the important thing to note at this point is that the woman was not present when the man entered into the kingly task. She was brought in to help him with it, making her a queen. But, when the test regarding the priestly task came about, it was precisely in terms of whether or not the man would guard his wife.

We have to note that the Bible repeatedly says that Eve was deceived (1 Tim 2:14; 2 Cor. 11:3). She was not constitutionally created to be able to guard the garden, and she is not blamed for the fall. But, when Adam is called on the carpet, he advances from failing to guard his wife, to attacking her openly. In this, Adam totally reverses the relation he should have, and becomes the precise antithesis of what he was to symbolize: God's relation to His Bride. Are women priests then? No, at least not in this ultimate, special sense. But what about the 'priesthood of all believers'? What the Reformers meant by this phrase is that any person can and should approach God without having to go through any mediator except Christ alone. (More accurately, they meant that any believer can be an intercessor for another; it is not necessary to have a special priest as one's intercessor.) In terms of what they meant, they were right. But, what they should have called it was not 'universal priesthood,' but 'universal Bridehood.' The privilege of approaching God is not a priestly privilege, but is the privilege of the Mother/Bride/Daughter. (More accurately, they should have called it 'universal prophethood,' since the office of intercession is prophetic, not distinctly priestly.)

All the same, women do perform priestly tasks. They do guard the home. They do instruct their children (and informally they can instruct men). They do prepare meals and serve them. Are these not 'priestly' tasks? Certainly, but we have to make two distinctions. The first is the same one we have already made concerning prophecy and rule. Women are never priests, but priestesses. A priestess can only guard under the authority of a priest. Second, we have to distinguish between the general and the special. There is a special meal, and special office, in the Church. In connection with these, the priestly task must be performed in an exclusively masculine fashion, in order that the relationship between God and His Bride may be set out clearly.⁵⁵

The French Reformed theologian Jean-Jacques von Allmen summarizes, by pointing to some obvious biblical data:

⁵⁵ Rite Reasons #

The New Testament, in spite of the chance of total renewal which it provides for women as well as for men, never testifies that a woman could be, in a public and authorized way, representative of Christ. To no woman does Jesus say, "He who hears you, hears me." To no woman does he make the promise to ratify in heaven what she has bound or loosed on earth. To no woman does he entrust the ministry of public preaching. To no woman does he give command to baptize or to preside at the communion of his Body and Blood. To no woman does he commit his flock.⁵⁶

Simply put, the Bible stands in the way of feminism and its desire to open all church offices to women. Harald Risenfeld explains:

Inasmuch as the man, as a householder, reflects in his relations to the church bride and to the congregation-household, it must have seemed self evident to the Early Christian mind that the officer presiding over the assembled congregation, and therefore at the Eucharist, should be a male. Even without this, ministerial duties as outlined in the New Testament could to a great extent be called masculine, particularly as regards authoritative governing and judicial functions. These, after all, are where the ministers act on Christ's behalf, and it is in full conformity with the idea of representation that the officers who founded churches and led congregations were men. Thus it is no mere chance that we find in the New Testament unanimous pronouncements as to the different functions of the two sexes, and can establish that the ministers of the church were invariably men, namely the apostles sent forth with full authority by Christ, missionaries who founded churches, and the heads of the local congregations. It is unlikely that the absence of female ministers should be due to any consideration paid by Christ and the early church to the socially inferior positions of the woman at that time. For one thing, there were priestesses in a number of Hellenistic cults; for another, Christianity was from the start no stranger to radical reassessments, in eluding those of social nature, and not least as regards women's status in marriage and their equal worth as human beings.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ Hopko, 26.

⁵⁷ Quoted in Jeff Meyers *The Lord's Service* 106.