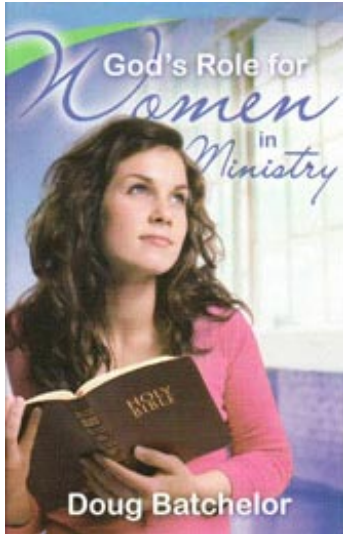


God's Role for Women in Ministry



By Doug Batchelor

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After reviewing hundreds of applications, a Fortune 500 company's search for a new marketing director had been narrowed to just three candidates. The first person called for the final interview was asked just one simple question: "What is two plus two?" Surprised by the inquiry, she wondered if it was a trick question—but in the end, she answered "four." The CEO thanked her for coming and ushered her out the door. The next candidate received the same question: "What is two plus two?" She thought about it for a moment and replied, "Statistically, it is the number between three and five." Though more impressed with this answer, the CEO thanked her for coming and ushered her out the door. Finally, the last candidate to be interviewed was also asked, "What is two plus two?" Without pause, she replied, "What do you want it to be?" She was hired on the spot.

In today's culture, when it comes to marketing, absolute truth is a rare commodity. Morals are more often determined by popularity or political correctness than by the simple truth. This is not how we should approach the Bible's teachings, no matter how sensitive the lesson to be learned can be.

When you consider that more than 60 percent of all practicing Christians are women, this dynamic between truth and popularity can be especially volatile when exploring the subject of women's ordination. The question of women's roles in the church, and whether or not they ought to be pastors and elders, is under serious debate within many churches. Both sides of the argument stir strongly held beliefs—which is why I want to approach this topic not only with great caution but, more important, much prayer and humility.

Laying the Groundwork

A discussion about the Bible, men, and women in this culture leaves the door wide open to impassioned and often false interpretations of biblical lessons, so I want to lay out a foundation of how we should approach this issue together. We must each ask ourselves: What is my view of the Bible? Is it God's Word, or is it just the thoughts of men? Does it contain errors, and if it does, can we decipher those errors from what is true?

For instance, many who advocate the position that the Bible sees no difference at all between men and women in the church and the family must often discard very pointed remarks from Paul's letters, sometimes without any textual reason for doing so. Paul, they suggest, made an error—but on what basis do they come to that conclusion?

Another question each Christian must consider is this: If the Bible teaches something that I am uncomfortable with, will I still obey it? That is, are we as individuals the final arbiters of truth? If we consider that we are the authors of truth, we put ourselves on a dangerous path. As Christians, we must resist falling prey to our "instincts," because the prevailing thoughts and value systems of the world can influence our thinking in unbiblical ways.

Indeed, the most fundamental basis for Christians is that Christ says if we love Him, we will obey Him. We must stand for the truth that God has shown us in His Word. That's why I have written this booklet based on the following principles:

1. “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness” (2 Timothy 3:16).
2. When God’s people have been unfaithful to Him, negative consequences follow.

With these ideals in mind, I firmly believe we can come to a biblical conclusion to just about any doctrinal disagreement between people who love God.

The Family and the Church

At the end of Creation week, God not only established the Sabbath (Genesis 2:1–3) but also the family (Genesis 2:18, 21–24). And in the last days, we will see Satan not only attacking those who remain faithful to the Sabbath, but he will also strike at man’s most intimate relationship—the family. In fact, this battle has already begun.

Any victory by the devil in the war against the family is ultimately reflected in the church. The very survival of both society and the church leans heavily upon the family unit. In this unit, seen not only in God’s Word but also His creation, we find a basic truth: Men are fathers, and women are mothers.

As we shall see later, men and women are without question equal as humans, but they are also entirely unique as creatures. They are not only distinct sexually, but almost every other aspect of their natures is different as well. I believe these differences should be apparent, maintained, and even emphasized in everything, from the way we walk and talk to the way we work and dress. Men should never try to be women, and women should never try to be men. Now, I am not a male chauvinist. I wash dishes, change diapers, and make beds. In the 1970s, my mother was a leading voice in the women’s liberation movement (now called the feminist movement) in North America. Very articulate and outspoken, she even wrote an entire album of songs dedicated to women’s rights. And like her, I firmly believe that men and women should get equal pay for equal work.

My mother also left the movement because it turned into something else. She saw feminism becoming more about angry women who wanted to be like men rather than attaining the rightful respect for being a woman. And this is the feminism, albeit more refined, that is pushing its agenda into churches with a frightening degree of success today. Of course, I expect this influence in the world. However, when it seeps into the body of Christ disguised as an “improvement,” it often signals a very serious problem.

This movement in our church is partly the result of some Christians, who have an earnest desire to reach the world with the message of salvation, naively trying to increase their influence by adopting popular social philosophy. In an attempt to reverse the injustice against women throughout the ages, they have allowed the feminist movement to push the church beyond voting rights and equal pay into the arena of unisex thinking.

And by substituting a politically correct but biblically inaccurate social philosophy as their guide, they are inadvertently erasing any biblical distinction between men and women. Often when an organization seeks to correct some wrong policy, it overcorrects. I fear this is the case of the church, which has a valid need to create more avenues for women to use their gifts of ministry. However, this need is being translated by some into a problematic desire for women to be ordained as pastors and elders.

When Men Fail to Lead

I should hasten to say that the blame does not lie with just the liberal feminist movement. In fact, the brunt of the blame must fall on indifferent and even lazy men within the church. They are failing to fulfill their roles as strong, loving, and servant-oriented leaders. As a result, women are naturally stepping into the vacuum.

Yet Isaiah 3:1–12 offers a sobering thought about this scenario. “And I will give children to be their princes, and babes shall rule over them. . . . As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths” (emphasis supplied).

It appears that when men fail to lead as they should, women and children fill the void as a negative consequence. This often comes with bad results, as was the case with Queen Jezebel, who usurped her husband’s authority. (See 1 Kings 18, 19, and 21.) While in power, she severely persecuted God’s prophets. Not long after, her daughter Athaliah took the throne of Judah—a six-year reign marked by bloodshed and confusion (2 Kings 11:1–16).

The Christian author E.G. White wrote, “The greatest want of the world is the want of men—men who will not be bought or sold, men who in their inmost souls are true and honest, men who do not fear to call sin by its right name, men whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole, men who will stand for the right though the heavens fall.”¹

When men fulfill this mandate, when they are spiritually strong and obedient to God, we find an outpouring of blessings. But when men do not obey God and are not spiritually strong, whether they are weak, lazy, or cowardly, God responds in judgment by allowing an unnatural and unintended role reversal to take place.

We can take this to mean that God has clearly established men to be the rightful leaders in the home, church, and society. The word husband means “house-band,” because men are to be the head of the household and bind their families together in the love of Christ.

God’s Love Equal for Men and Women

We need to be clear about one thing before moving forward. The value of men and the value of women are perfectly equal in the eyes of God. “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:28, emphasis added). The spiritual standing of every human being, regardless of nationality, class, or gender, is the same. The ground at the foot of the cross is level—women matter as much as men. This is abundantly clear from the life and ministry of Jesus and the apostles.

For instance, Jesus taught women directly and was ministered to by them. “Now it came to pass . . . that He entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received Him into her house.” (See Luke 10:38–42.) He was also supported financially by women (Luke 8:3), and women were among the first to accept the gospel (Acts 16:14, 15).

Yet the fact that men and women have equal rights and access to salvation does not negate the need for submission to leadership in the home or the church. Indeed, Jesus and the Father are equal, yet Jesus submits to the authority of the Father. “The head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God” (1 Corinthians 11:3).

Of course, men should be responsible leaders in our home and churches, firm if necessary but always kind. (Colossians 3:19 says, “Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them.” In studying the phrase “be not bitter,” I found the idea to be that a man should not treat his wife harshly, because it will eventually make her bitter.)

Moreover, in America, “equal rights” does not negate the authority or leadership of society’s leaders. You have the same civil rights as a police officer, but you are expected to submit to their authority. Likewise, equality in salvation does not negate the God-established system of male leadership in the home and church. “Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right” (Ephesians 6:1, emphasis added).

It is true that for far too long, men have misunderstood the proper role of women in the church, often treating them as second-class Christians. Because of this, many gifted women have been left without an arena in which to use their gifts. Perhaps this is why many Christian women reacted to their unfair status by following the “prevailing winds” of the world, ultimately desiring things that God forbids.

The fact is that the pendulum of the role of women in the church has swung too far in both directions. But where humans have failed, God promises victory, peace, and restoration. That’s why both sides in this debate need to seek wisdom and guidance from God’s Word in order to grow in the unity of the faith.

Finally, in considering women’s roles in the church, remember also the broader idea of ministry itself. There are role distinctions in the church that are not in dispute. (See 1 Corinthians 12.) You don’t hear the argument that a man gifted in teaching is more valuable than a man gifted in encouragement. The nature of a body is that different members perform different roles, yet each member is equal in importance. Different does not mean better or worse.

So as we continue our study, please note that this booklet is not designed to be an exhaustive study on the subject of women’s ordination, neither will it deal with every single argument regarding women as pastors or elders. Rather, it is a simple presentation of “Thus saith the Lord,” which should always be our guide in determining the truth on any issue.

In The Beginning

Let’s begin with Creation. It can be said that God made creatures in the order of their value and complexity. First, He created the base elements of earth, water, and air; then, He made vegetation and light. Next, He made the birds and fish, and then land creatures.

Finally, God made a man and, as the concluding act of Creation, a woman. We can take this to mean that women are the most beautiful and complex creatures on the planet. They even tend to live longer than men and use more of their brains in concert.

Note, God did not create the first man and woman in the same way. He made the man from dust, but He made the woman out of the man (Genesis 2:21, 22). And while God named the man, it was the man who named the woman. “This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man” (Genesis 2:23; see also Genesis 3:20). So God’s creation process itself suggests a very distinct difference between men and women.

Later, after sin entered the picture, God also established a system of authority to maintain harmony in the family, the church, and society. It is a system in which man would lead. “Unto the woman He said ... thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee” (Genesis 3:16). The word rule means “to govern, or have dominion.”

It is important not to rush past this pivotal verse, as some have argued that the passages regarding man’s leadership role reflect the biases of a male-dominant culture. But notice that the command in Genesis 3:16 comes directly from God; it did not come from Moses, King David, Peter, John, or even Paul. It is God’s own voice speaking.

Likewise, it’s been said that we must disregard these passages because they were based on ancient eastern traditions that don’t apply today—after all, there were also laws regarding slavery and polygamy in Bible times. That’s certainly true, but God never directly commanded people to have slaves or multiple wives either. Rather, as Jesus said, it was because of “the hardness of your heart [that Moses] wrote you this precept” (Mark 10:5).

We also need to back up a little and understand that the supporting role of women was established before the fall. (See 1 Corinthians 11:7–9.) Eve was created to be Adam’s “help meet” (Genesis 2:18). Thus from the very dawn of Creation, the role of a woman is to support her husband.

Women In Church

Let’s now dive into a controversial but eye-opening passage that deals with women in a church setting. Paul writes, “I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarrelling; likewise also that women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire, but with what is proper for women who profess godliness—with good works. Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness. I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet. For Adam was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. Yet she will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith and love and holiness, with self-control” (1 Timothy 2:8–15).

Here we discover Paul advising the young Timothy on appropriate church life, offering practical guidelines for structuring the church and choosing its officers, with qualifications for each position.

Paul also addresses women’s attire, requesting that they avoid the appearance of worldliness by dressing modestly and focusing on propriety, because “ostentatious dress, in the ancient world, sometimes could signal a woman’s loose morals and independence from her husband.”² Of course, these general teachings are widely accepted in principle by most churches, but what Paul writes next often causes a serious stir.

For women, Paul says, their role in worship is to “learn quietly with all submissiveness.” That is, within a worship gathering at the church, a woman should remain quiet. But what does he mean by quiet? Paul clarifies, “I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man.” So this isn’t an absolute quiet, but rather “quiet” in the sense clearly described—without teaching or exercising authority over men. This understanding is in complete agreement with Paul’s discussion in 1 Corinthians 11, which is a passage that demonstrates women participated in prayer and prophecy in the early church.

The Heart of the Matter

To understand this limitation on the ministry of women a little better, we need to clarify what the word teach

actually means. First, it is clear this passage is in regard to spiritual matters within the church. The epistle itself is pastoral in nature, providing instructions for the church and appropriate conduct therein. Therefore, it doesn't preclude women from occupations that require instruction of or authority over men outside the church structure.

But considering its usage throughout the Scriptures, the term teach is used "to denote the careful transmission of the tradition concerning Jesus Christ and the authoritative proclamation of God's will to believers in light of that tradition."³

Therefore, according to Paul, women are not to exert spiritual authority over men. This isn't limited to the husband and wife relationship, but rather encompasses all male-female relationships in the church.

The same sentiment is echoed in 1st Corinthians 14:34, 35: "Let your women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak; but they are to be submissive, as the law also says. And if they want to learn something, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is shameful for women to speak in church." In this passage, Paul also tells the women of Corinth to learn in silence. (In this particular incidence, he is addressing the proper evaluation of prophecies.)

Many have argued that though Paul restricts women from teaching men, it was based entirely on cultural traditions that have no place today. However, although it certainly is important to understand the historical and cultural background of every Bible teaching, Paul simply does not leave room for us to disregard this passage in that manner.

Why? After giving the restriction, Paul gives a timeless reason for it. "For Adam was formed first, then Eve" (1st Timothy 2:12). Here Paul grounds his teaching directly to the creation of all things, implicitly stating that men and women were created differently and have different roles in the natural, pre-fall condition of humanity. Therefore, there is no room to say this is a teaching for the Ephesians in their time and place in the world.

The reality is that Paul often writes about the roles and distinctions between men and women among other role distinctions. For example, in Ephesians 5 and 6, he calls on women to submit to their husbands and for servants to submit to their masters. Indeed, this passage follows another in which Paul talks about putting on the "new self" in Christ (Ephesians 4:23, 24). It is the newly converted man who understands the created order and is able to live in submission to God. Thus Paul never abolishes roles; rather, he explains that Christ has abolished any distinction with regard to spiritual position: We are each justified by faith alone and are equally granted the right to be children of God.

Not Just Women

Some suggest that because there are generally more women than men in the church, leadership roles should be divided according to those percentages. But by using this reasoning, it would follow that in a family with three children, kids would be entitled to the largest share of leadership!

On the contrary, authority in church does not come through a popular vote, but rather from the Word of God, which equates the spiritual authority of man over woman with the authority of Christ over man. (See 1 Corinthians 11:3.)

Furthermore, wives should willingly acknowledge the headship of their husbands. "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the Saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing" (Ephesians 5:23, 24). See also

Titus 2:4, 5, and 1 Peter 3:6 for even more about a Bible-centered relationship.

Paul also says pointedly that elders are to be husbands; that is, men: “A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife” (1 Timothy 3:2). (Note: The terms bishop and elder are interchangeable.) “[Paul] did not say that just any man could be a bishop, even as in the Old Testament not just any son of Aaron could be a priest. The office has always been limited. The Christian leader Paul spoke of must be ‘blameless’ and married, ‘vigilant, sober, of good behavior,’ etc. There is a long list of requirements that eventually eliminates most men and leaves only a very few eligible.”⁴ Women aren’t the only ones who are ineligible to be elders and pastors; so are most of the men!

Of course, every Christian, male and female, is called to minister in some capacity, but not in every capacity. “And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ” (Ephesians 4:11, 12).

The Church Role of Women in the Bible

What then is the role of women in Christ’s church? The Bible is very clear that women ought to leap into ministry with both feet! Indeed, one of the greatest weaknesses in the church is the lack of women’s ministries truly focused on Christ and growth in the Word.

Plus, throughout the Bible, women are shown as equal in the nature of their ministry. Several examples include Deborah, who was a judge of Israel (Judges 4:4); Huldah and Anna, who were prophetesses (2 Chronicles 34:22; Luke 2:36); Priscilla, who was active in evangelism (Acts 18:26); and Pheobe, who was a deaconess (Romans 16:1).

Women also played a prominent role in the ministry of Jesus and ministry to Jesus (Matthew 28:1–10; Luke 8:3; 23:49; John 11:1–46; 12:1–8). Further, no spiritual gift is limited to men in the lists in the New Testament (1 Corinthians 12:27–31; Romans 12:3–8; 1 Peter 4:8–11), and women were commanded to edify the body of Christ, which included teaching (Titus 2:4) and prophecy (Acts 2:17, 18; 21:9; 1 Corinthians 11:5).

As you can see, women have an incredibly important role in God’s church throughout the ages. That hasn’t changed. However, even though men and women both serve the Lord in significant ways, we should not conclude that God has intended men and women to function in the same capacity.

Yet just because 1 Timothy 2:12 explicitly teaches that a woman is not to teach a man, women are nevertheless free to teach in many other ways. In fact, women are commanded to explain the gospel to everyone, including lost men (cf. Acts 18:26). Within the church, women may teach women and children. With men in the church, women should discuss spiritual matters in a manner that informs but is not authoritative. This does not mean that a man cannot learn from a woman’s conduct or from a conversation with a woman and apply what he learns to his life. Rather, what it means is that the woman’s purpose in talking with a man is not to instruct him as a leader would.

Of course, Paul’s limitation on women in teaching and exercising authority over men has been challenged in other ways. Some suggest his words in 1 Timothy 2:12, “I do not allow,” are his personal preference, but not something for the church at large. However, this undermines Paul’s apostolic authority; he commonly spoke in the first person in directing the church (1 Timothy 2:1, 8, 9). Others even contend that Paul was simply wrong, but this must be rejected on the grounds of the doctrine of inspiration of Scripture (2 Timothy 3:16).

Even though we can conclude that a woman should not assume the office of a pastor or elder within the

church, it is clear that women are important to the church and do important things. The woman who fulfills the role God established for her is not inferior in any way to a man; rather, she is acting as a godly woman.

A Powerful Influence in the Church

While it is abundantly clear that women are not to be pastors or elders, because doing so would place them in a leadership role over men (1 Timothy 2:11–14; 1 Corinthians 14:34, 35), there are other things that women can and should do. Their ministry revolves around support, service, and ministry to women and children.

For instance, women can teach other women. “The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed” (Titus 2:3–5). Therefore, mature Christian women are to disciple younger women, teaching them to exercise self-control, to be affectionate to their own husbands, to correct their children wisely, to be restrained in their passions and desires, to be modest, and to be upright in character.

Further, women should minister with the Word to other women. In Acts 21:8–11, Philip the evangelist has four unmarried daughters who minister in this way. While some point to this passage as evidence that women can be pastors, the context shows differently. Paul stayed with Philip and his family and was ministered to, but when God wanted to reveal something to Paul prophetically, He did not use any of Philip’s daughters. He used a male prophet from another city to instruct Paul.

Women can also share the gospel in a private context. For instance, Priscilla and Aquila shared the gospel with Apollos privately. It was a team effort, but it is clear from the passage that Priscilla took part (Acts 18:26). I believe the Bible allows that women can share the gospel with a man in a non-public setting if the opportunity presents itself, as long as: 1) it is done with the husband’s permission; 2) it is done discreetly; and 3) it is done in a way that avoids the appearance of evil.

Women should also be involved in supporting roles in the church and missionary work. Philippians 4:2–4 says, “I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord. And I entreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellowlabourers, whose names are in the book of life.”

Servants of the Church

Even though the Lord has chosen many women to serve as prophets through the ages, He has never hinted that a woman should be ordained as a priest. Pastors and elders, of course, are roughly the New Testament equivalent to the Old Testament priests. Pastors and elders lead out in communion, which is the New Testament equivalent of offering a sacrifice—a role that was performed by a man. And while many priests were prophets, no women prophets were priests. Amram and Jochebed had three children—Miriam, Aaron, and Moses (Exodus 7:1; 5:20). All three were prophets, but only the boys served as priests.

Of course, women have served a vital role in the church from the very beginning, but men were assigned the role of church leadership. The apostles were all men, the churches were started by men, the Scripture was written by men under inspiration, and the churches were led by men. This does not mean that women are less capable of teaching than men; it simply means that God created us this way. Perhaps by spending more of our time understanding God’s purpose in creating this structure, we’ll find lasting satisfaction—rather than trying to find it by bucking against the teachings of God’s Word.

Romans 16:1,22 says, “I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at

Cenchrea: That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also” (emphasis supplied).

The word translated servant is the Greek word diakonos (dee-ak'-on-os). It literally means “to run on errands; an attendant, a waiter at tables or in other serving duties.” The word in the masculine gender, diakoneo(s) (dee-ak-on-eh'-o), appears in the New Testament about 68 times and is translated as “serve, minister, administer.” Every time but five, the word refers to the office of a deacon that can be held only by men (1 Timothy 3:8–13; Acts 6:1–7). I bring this up because some say that Phebe held the office of a deacon. She did not. She was a servant, a helper around the church, and she succoured (assisted, helped, or was hospitable) to many such as Paul.

In 1 Timothy 5:9, 10, we learn, “Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man, well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints’ feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work.” I have turned us to this passage because it gives the qualifications for a widow considered worthy of regular support by the local church. She was to have a history of good works, have been a faithful mother, hospitable to strangers, and willing to serve fellow Christians in humble ways. In short, she was to have a history of diligent labor for the Lord. One such example is Tabitha, or Dorcas, found in Acts 9. She made clothes for many of the believers; she was a woman with a true servant’s heart.

Embracing Our Roles

F. B. Meyer said, “I used to think that God’s gifts were on shelves one above the other and that the taller we grew in Christian character the more easily we could reach them. I now find that God’s gifts are on shelves one beneath the other and that it is not a question of growing taller but of stooping lower.” Remember, it was Mary Magdalene—who was content to kneel at Jesus’ feet—who was also honored to be the first to see the Lord after His resurrection and share that good news with others (John 20:17).

Submission is the putting of oneself under the authority of another. It is an act of humility, something that both men and women in our churches should practice much more. Within the church, Paul teaches that women ought to submit to the authority of men in the church. But this must never be an excuse to foster inequality. Christ submitted to the Father, yet He is equal to the Father in worth and essence. Therefore, submission is about order, not value!

At the same time, there is a tremendous problem of ignoring the clear statements of Scripture in respect to the role of women in the church. Christians who sweep aside plain statements of Scripture as outdated traditions or local customs are building on a foundation of shifting sand. Soon every other Bible truth will be in danger of sliding away, so that even the Lord’s Supper, baptism, and marriage will one day be mere ancient traditions that no longer apply to a politically correct world. We should not undermine the Scriptures so easily.

The fact of the Bible is that there is not a single example of a woman being ordained as a priest, pastor, or elder. Indeed, Jesus only ever ordained men. Was He just conforming to the popular customs of the day? Well, the truth is that in His time, most of the pagan religions had women priests. Moreover, the notion that Jesus confined Himself to following the traditions of His day is completely opposite of His teachings. He said, “Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?” (Matthew 15:3). Jesus laid down His life in defense of truth, irrespective of popular trends. We should always be willing to do the same.

When the Lord made woman, it was the crowning act of His creation. So this isn’t about honor or pride or our social standing before humans. It’s about following the plain teaching of the Bible. Interestingly, the Bible uses a woman as a symbol of His precious church. “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church

and gave Himself for her” (Ephesians 5:25). In Scripture, we find the greatest success comes to the church when she humbly embraces her role to serve Christ in saving others.

Before the baptism of the Holy Spirit, the apostles were striving for higher position and arguing among themselves about who was the greatest. The Holy Spirit was poured out on them only after they humbled themselves and resolved to accept the calling God had placed upon them. I know the Lord wants to shower His Spirit upon His people again, but first we must turn away from the politically correct teachings of the world and with the mind of Christ humbly submit to the clear teachings of His Word.

Special thanks to Pastor Richard O’Ffill for his invaluable and insightful contribution to this book.

1. E. G. White, *Education*, p. 57.
2. Douglas Moo, “What Does It Mean Not to Teach or Have Authority Over Men? 1 Timothy 2:11–15” in *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, ed. John Piper and Wayne Grudem (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1991), p. 182.
3. Douglas Moo, *ibid.*, p. 185.
4. S. Lawrence Maxwell, “One Chilling Word,” *Adventists Affirm*, Spring 1995, Vol. 9, No. 1, p. 41.

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